



Lavendon Village Hall



Lavendon Village Hall is strongly supported by the MK Community Foundation

Chair's AGM Report for the year ending 30th September, 2022

Introduction

The Village Hall has a charitable status and as last year has 4 Trustees, myself, Nigel Stickells, Geoff Simmonds and Stewart Jones. It is our job to ensure that the Hall's activities and practices follow the guidelines laid down by its Constitution and those of the Charity Commission.

It also has a Management Committee, which is charged with the day-to-day running of the Hall. The Committee members are: John Salter-Chair; Nigel Stickells-Secretary; Geoff Simmonds-Treasurer; Sally Emes; Rev. Richard Lake; John Lay; John Panter; Alex Mountcastle; Rebecca Garratt, Judith Slinn Jones Panter. Bev Shaw our Bookings' Secretary is not on the Committee but occupies a key position.

The Trustees have developed a strategic document which sets down some guidelines for the Management Committee to follow. This is currently being updated.

The four pillars of this Strategy are:

1. *Maintaining and improving the fabric of the Village Hall* – the recent improvements to energy conservation and heat loss are tangible evidence that we are constantly trying hard to achieve this.
2. *Managing the Hall's financial affairs prudently* -we try to ensure that our income covers our expenditure - a very difficult task, when Covid and the subsequent reduction in bookings had an adverse effect on income. Our Treasurer ensures that we adhere to good accounting practices as well as making sure that our charitable status is protected.

3. *Promoting the Hall's facilities to existing and potential users* - we do not have a promotional/advertising budget so we rely on using notice boards, web pages, Facebook, Phonebox magazine, MK Pulse magazine, leaflet drops, school book bags and so on – all relatively low cost. However, the major means of attracting users is through personal recommendation.

4. *Addressing “sustainability” issues* - which in our case means using resources like water, gas and electricity responsibly. The recent upgrading of the lighting to LED will make it far more efficient than the old system. We also try to ensure that we do what we can to contribute to and sustain village life in a number of ways - entertainment, education, social (e.g. combating loneliness) and exercise – as well as keeping hiring costs as low as possible.

Chair's Report ending 30th September, 2022

Hall activity has been very encouraging during 2022, with Birthday Parties, Bingos, Quizzes, Bowling, Dance and Keep Fit groups, a Race Night, Afternoon Teas and of course the forthcoming New Year's Party. Michelle Corbett started hiring the hall in May, in order to prepare meals for the School and Nursery, which involved her using the kitchen before, during and after the lunchtime period.

The one disappointment has been the film shows. They started with Jungle Book, which we thought would appeal to a wide section of our target populations – but no. The attendance was under 15 and this disappointing support of our film shows continued, despite the wide range of film being shown. These included Knives Out, Green Book, Tenet, WW1 1917, Military Wives, Fisherman's Friend, Darkest Hour, The Father, Sing 2, The Duke and West Side Story – none of which attracted audiences approaching 15. As a consequence we lost money on the licence fee and the per net rental, averaging just under £200 for each showing.

It is difficult to know what to do to attract audiences. The next film “Christmas Chronicles” will be shown on a Friday, instead of the normal Saturday, to see if that makes any difference.

Fortunately, we were able to attract a significant amount of money in grants, as can be seen in our treasurer's report, which helped to offset these losses.

In February we installed a DVD/Blu Ray player, which made quite a difference to the sound quality in the hall and that was followed up in March, by changing

the existing lighting with LED lights. My, what a difference to the brightness and the big advantage is that this system is a lot more economical on electricity. Energy savings of 50% have been quoted, not that we will see much reduction in cost!

In May, Eddie our caretaker decided to semi-retire and agreed to cover the caretaking role during week-ends, so that we could employ a couple who would cover the week-days. They left in May and Stephen Evans took over the week-days role.

The trustees decided that over-cladding the main Village Hall roof would be a suitable project to attract Section S106 funding so after a considerable time putting together a proposal, it was submitted in November. The proposal project price was £25,704 including VAT and the funding would cover most of the cost. Since the submission, we have been asked to submit the actual quotation for the work, which has been sent, but it looks as if the assessment process is going to take quite a while yet. This will delay the start and finish dates late into the Winter, which would in turn reduce the opportunity to reduce this year's Hall's heating bills.

Bev Shaw carried out some research on the competitiveness of our prices in the market place and her findings indicated that there was scope for us to increase them, without losing our competitive edge. These findings will be reflected in the Village Hall's "Hire Agreement and Terms and Conditions", which will hopefully be revised and re-issued dating from 1st January, 2023.

Our financial position at the year-end is very healthy, thanks to our fund-raising and grant-obtaining efforts.

I would like to give fulsome thanks to our Secretary, Nigel Stickells and Treasurer Geoff Simmons and to someone who does not serve on the Committee, but nonetheless contributes greatly as Bookings Secretary, Bev Shaw. Then there are three other non-committee persons, who deserve well-merited mentions. Eddie Adams, our week-end care-taker, who leaves his trademark of conscientious and thoroughness on the Hall; Barry Testro, who never fails to produce a range of puzzling questions for the quizzes and his wife Margaret, who not only assists with the quizzes but also tots up the hall takings for the evening.

Thanks also to the other Village Hall Committee members, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the hall ticking over.

Without these willing helpers, the Hall would cease to function.

Finally, a big thank-you to those of you in and around the Village, who support the Village Hall in your various ways, particularly those of you who support our various events.

John Salter, Chair, Lavendon Village Hall Committee

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Note: this report will appear on the Village Hall's Webpage

www.lavendonconnection.co/home/villagehall

19th November, 2022