

Elford Village Hall.

Report to the Parish Meeting: May2020 to May2021

Elford Village Hall did submit an annual report to the Parish Council last year for the cancelled 2020 parish meeting which was down loaded on to the Parish Council website. Therefore this report covers literally a 12 month period during which the country has been under some kind of COVID-19 restrictions.

EVH belongs to ACRE(Action with Communities in Rural England) who have during the pandemic provided very comprehensive and useful information and guidelines for Village Hall's. Consequently at each stage we've known exactly what we could/couldn't do and actions that needed to be taken.

During the summer of 2020 we were allowed to open under various restrictions and installed comprehensive Covid measures as per the guidelines. However understandably there were very few people/organisations that wished or were able to hire the hall during this period. Therefore the only hirers were the martial arts class and the post office.

However the circumstances did not negate the need for continuous management items by the committee.:

Needless to say a full set of management accounts needed to be produced on a monthly basis and our treasurer Adrian Viles had to circumvent the idiosyncrasies of insurance cover, a change in electricity billing and etc. There was a continuous flow of cash out of the bank account with minimal income and we were therefore grateful for the grant we received from Lichfield district Council.

In the early days of the lockdown (and as allowed) we continued with the planned internal redecoration work which was able to go ahead uncumbered by the users of the hall. A new timer has been fitted to the central heating system and most importantly the hall has been regularly inspected for safety during these void periods.

Probably our greatest concern at present is the decision as to the re placement of the now-defunct ground source heat pump that runs one of the two heating circuits in the hall. Understandably experimentation on the alternative system and cost analysis has been pushed back as the hall was not used but will be considered within the next 12 month period especially as the second GSHP is showing signs of problems.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the unsung heroes who are not members of the committee but have continued to undertake Allied roles through the last year: Roger Kent has been doing the regular "Fire" test and checking the alarms and fire doors for many years now and it was still a requirement during lockdown due to insurance regulations. Alan Tooth has for many many years taken on the responsibility of flying the appropriate flag outside the hall. Often to be seen first thing in the morning hoisting the relevant flag and following the appropriate regulations particularly noticeable during the mourning period for HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

Whilst activity in the hall has been negligible nevertheless continued management has been required and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee and especially Adrian Viles for managing this difficult financial period and to Sue Watkins for dealing with the need to keep up to date with current regulations in order to deal with all the bookings enquiries

With much less to report this year it has given me the opportunity to reflect on the past as a couple years ago Alan White reminded me I would be reaching the 20 year mile stone on the committee and as chairman of Elford Village Hall.

Some of you may remember that the hall had been without a committee for several years and the Parish Council tiring of the management responsibility was considering closure.

I joined a new committee as the representative of both the Mayfair Committee and as Chairman of the Friends of the Howard School LITTLE expecting this to then extend to the responsibility of Chairman of the village hall.

There was little to no money in the account and the hall was a glorified garden shed designed in the 1920s and built in 1930 without any permanent walls. Once we'd got the accounts to an acceptable level we turned our thoughts to rebuilding the hall. This was to incorporate various features to overcome the short falls of both the size of accommodation, adherence to current regulations and the requirements of the 21st-century.

2 to 3 years of fundraising and on/off rebuilding program over a year together with superb accounts management by our treasurer Christine Corless we were able to celebrate the completion of the new building with its opening by the Duke of Gloucester in 2008.

That is unbelievable that that was 13 years ago and in the meantime the hall has gone from strength to strength and is an indictment to the hard work of the relatively few Committee members who have worked tirelessly over that period organising some 80 fundraising events, running bars, managing the building and the accounts over the last two decades. I would like to thank each and everyone of those committee members for their contribution to our village life.

Gregory J Watkins

Chairman

Elford Village Hall Management Committee (2001 to 2021)