

# Kirklevington Village Hall

Chairman's report for the period since the previous AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

Presented at the Covid delayed 2020 AGM on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

## 1.] Introduction

The following notes attempt to summarise topics discussed at our monthly meetings & external events impacting upon the hall over the last year [15 months] & the completed actions arising from them.

Our Trust Deed calls for an AGM, open to all residents over the age of 18, to be held in April of each year, or as soon as possible thereafter. At our last normal Trustees meeting in March 2020 Mike Page announced that he would be standing down as Chairman at the next AGM – which was provisionally scheduled for May. Andy Alton put his name forward as a candidate to succeed him & this was supported by two Trustees, Jennie Beaumont & Mike Page.

## 2.] Covid-19 / Past 6 Months Update

The Covid-19 pandemic that resulted in the national lockdown in late March 2020 has had a profound effect on the hall's normal functions, accessibility, & income stream. This is ongoing & will doubtless continue into 2021.

Owing to the Covid disruption & the suspension of monthly Trustee meetings, Andy Alton's appointment was confirmed by an email ballot of all Trustees in June.

With the easing of lockdown restrictions from mid-July we have been able to re-open the hall on a limited basis for regular group hires, having undertaken & published a rigorous risk assessment, implemented physical control measures, posted Covid-Secure signage, and provided sanitising products etc., all in line with local & national recommendations. Bookings for private hires for birthdays etc. are not currently being accepted & this will be reviewed every three months in the light of prevailing Covid conditions.

As part of the UK Government measures to mitigate against the Covid economic impact we were advised that we would be eligible for a "business rates relief" grant of up to £10,000. In discussions between Jennie Beaumont, Grant Grieve, & Andy Alton it was initially felt that our finances were robust enough & that we would not apply. Examination of our recent annual accounts indicate that we have sufficient cash reserves to cover essential/non discretionary expenditure for 2-3 years assuming greatly reduced/minimal hire income throughout that period, this being the "worst case scenario".

Subsequently, with encouragement from our local authority & our insurers & the prospect of a second wave of the pandemic running into next year before the availability of a proven vaccine, a grant application was made as we were advised that there were still funds available, but only for a limited period. This was successful & we have been given the maximum amount of £10,000. How this money might be used will be a subject for discussions & endorsement at future Trustee meetings.

One factor over which we have no control is that, despite groups returning to use the hall, members of such groups may be reluctant to resume their activity/involvement due to their personal circumstances & assessment of their own risks. In all probability, this means that our hire income will be adversely affected well into 2021.

If unforeseen maintenance/other discretionary requirements do arise then, for expenditure exceeding £350, 3 competitive quotes will be required before such work is authorised by a minimum of 3 trustees.

### 3.] Report

#### Hygiene Products/Services (Rob Knowles)

Quotations were obtained for the supply of consumable products & waste collection & disposal services in our kitchen & toilet facilities.

The cost would have been in the order of £1000/year & after much debate & user/hirer inputs it was decided that we would not proceed.

#### Baby Change Facility

The provision of a table/mat was discussed & it was agreed that an installed unit would not be appropriate but that a portable unit should be sought & purchased – ongoing.

#### Routine Walk Around Safety Checks (Mike Page, Rob Knowles, Andy Alton)

To complement the initial comprehensive check list developed by Mike a simplified report pro-forma was developed with the intention of breaking down the hall into four inspection areas. A draft schedule was also produced that would assign two trustees to check & report on each area every two months on a rotating basis. Owing to Covid no further progress has been possible to date. Notwithstanding this, since late March our cleaner, Angie Hall, has been carrying out work in the hall on two days per week & certain maintenance tasks have been completed which entailed either/or/both Jennie & Andy visiting the hall & surrounding areas to ensure no problems were evident. The external areas weed & ant control, plus grass cutting have also been maintained over the last six months.

#### Revised Hire Rates (Jennie Beaumont & Rob Knowles)

A review of our various hire rates was carried out & updated/simplified rates applicable for casual/one off/private hires was implemented on 01/10/2019.

#### Regular Trustees Meeting Day (Grant Grieve)

Changed from Wednesdays to Mondays to fit with Trustee's other commitments.

#### Additional Trustees

In July 2019 Jenny Wren & Paul Banks became Trustees representing the Guides, & Beaver/Cubs/Scouts Groups respectively. It was hoped to secure representation from the Indoor Bowls & Choir groups but this is still pending due to unforeseen circumstances.

#### Improved Chair Mover (Andy Alton)

Following feedback from members of the Ladies group about the difficulty/potential hazard in using the original chair movers a more substantial & stable mover was purchased for use mainly in the large hall with upholstered chairs. The original movers have been withdrawn from use & are currently in the west balcony storage room.

#### West Balcony Storage Room

It was the intention to carry out an inspection & subsequent clear out of redundant items in this storage area which is under the control of the Trustees – this is still outstanding.

#### Fire Risk Assessment – FRA (Bryan Claybrook, Mike Page, Andy Alton, Grant Grieve)

It was decided to use TE Woolley to undertake this & the inspection & subsequent report was carried out in July 2019. This included a required actions list which was reviewed at a meeting with TE Woolley held in November 2019. The actions involved physical work/modifications, communications, & procedural changes. Most of these were carried out before the end of the year. Some changes/additions to the ongoing update/revision of our "Standard Conditions of Hire" were also required & this document was finalised in June 2020.

The fire assembly point has been changed from the car park to the play area & a general updates of fire related signage & diagrams were completed in March 2020.

There is a requirement for Trustees to review the FRA on an annual basis. This can simply be a minuted discussion at a Trustees meeting that confirms that, either no material changes have occurred, or if they have, what resulting actions may be required.

There is a requirement for a certified authority to carry out an FRA every three years, i.e. this will be due again in July 2022.

#### Electrical Installation/Fixed Wiring Inspection (Bryan Claybrook)

This was carried out in November 2019 by AGELEC Ltd.. There was a requirement to improve the low level shielding /mechanical protection of some cables in the kitchen & storage areas. At the same time work was carried out to adjust the phase load balancing of the installed circuits. This in part being required due to equipment changes from the original installation, e.g. LED lighting replacements.

This type of inspection by a certified authority is required every five years, i.e. this will be due again in November 2024.

#### Safety System Information & Inspection Record Books (Bryan Claybrook)

New/replacement books were obtained, set up with basic data, information & drawings, & the records of the various periodic inspections to be carried out. These are now located in the main entrance lobby covering a) Fire detection & alarm system. b) Fire extinguishers. c) Emergency lighting. From the onset of Covid restrictions the emergency lighting tests have been maintained at a reduced frequency level by Andy Alton. TE Woolley carried out the annual inspection of our fire alarm system & extinguishers in July 2020. The old inspection record folder [above key box] has been removed but the records retained.

#### Other Maintenance Activities

a) All external hand rails cleaned down, abraded, & repainted with Hammerite red.

b) North pitch roof repairs done by Barclays mid 2019 involved replacing all tiles on the centre apex section & flashing checks along the top edge where the balcony meeting room projection & roof pitch meet.

c) Water pipe-work joint leaks in large hall chair storage room & also in staircase lobby repaired.

d) A number of double glazed panels in the large east end gable window & elsewhere were replaced by Alu-Fix after seal failure/internal condensation became evident.

e) All portable electrical equipment [including regular hire group's items stored at the hall] were PAT tested in early December 2019.

f) External electrical meter box door hinge & catch repair.

g) Gas boiler service in late June 2020 by Trevor Hodgson – condition is still OK but circulating water inhibitor check revealed a low level of active chemical. Recommended product purchased & injected into circulation circuit by Andy Alton.

h) Large hall floor cleaned, abraded & resealed by David Wesson/Crusader in late June 2020.

i) Outside notice board display section replaced.

j) 18 roof cracked roof tiles replaced, SW guttering cleaned out & loose flashing in NE corner sealed down by Advanced Rooflines in September 2020.

#### Updated Standard Condition of Hire (Mike Page, Jennie Beaumont, Andy Alton)

Following a Tees Valley Village Halls Network presentation in late 2018 where the ACRE model hire conditions were presented there has been a lot of work done to produce a Kirklevington Village Hall specific version which, whilst not losing any relevant & necessary content, has strengthened our hire conditions from a legal [Hall & Trustee protection] perspective & separated them from the actual hire agreement pro-forma [see below]. The key areas which required clarification & refinement were on a) child & vulnerable persons protection, b) general insurance aspects, in particular the public liability & third party service providers aspects & c) the requirement for TENs [Temporary Event Notices]. After circulation for comment to all Trustees this document is now in use & is being circulated to hirers as their groups resume after the initial Covid lockdown.

Under the Childcare Act 2006 & The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 hirers having access to/responsibility for children under eight, or vulnerable persons, must have DBS [Disclosure & Barring Service] checks/certification in place & the Hall Secretary shall be provided with copies of these. Paul Banks has supplied these for his Scout groups, Jenny Wren still needs to supply these for the Guides group.

It was established from our Insurers, Allied Westminster, that we do in fact have a public liability cover extension in place for non-commercial hirers but we were advised not to state this in our document, and to only make it known to those "not for profit" groups or private individuals at the Trustees discretion. All hirers bringing third party service providers into the hall must ensure that these providers have their own public liability insurance in place.

Hirers who require a TEN from Stockton Borough Council for certain licensable activities/services must supply the Hall Secretary with a copy of the same as the Hall has an annual allowance/limit of 12 TEN's

#### Updated Hire Pro-Forma & User Information for Hirers (Jenny Beaumont, Andy Alton, Rob Knowles)

The adoption of the new standard conditions of hire meant that the previous hire pro-forma also required revision. There was also a requirement to customise it for the different categories of hire, i.e. commercial hires, not for profit social groups, & private/one off hires. An essential aspect of the new hire pro-forma is that the hirer acknowledges receipt of a copy [paper or by email] of the Standard Conditions of Hire & agrees to be bound by them.

A separate user information document has also been drawn up covering the essentials....& for those who may not read the Standard Conditions of Hire.

#### Marble Plaque on Forest Lane side of the Village Hall

The correction to the spelling of Castlelevington will be investigated further with the stone mason.

#### 4.] Recognition for Services Rendered

As is stated in the introduction Mike Page has now stood down as our Chair of Trustees & it is fitting to put on record our thanks to Mike, not just for his period of chairmanship, but also for his long involvement as a Trustee of the hall & an active member of the group of people that put in a great deal of work in the 80's & 90's to build & equip the fine modern, & much admired facility that we have in the village today. A Thank You card & gift will be given to Mike in the near future.

And lastly, but by no means least, thanks go to Angie and to Jennie for all their hard work; to Angie for all her much appreciated work in keeping the hall looking like new & maintaining a service & watchful eye throughout the Covid lockdown; and to Jennie for being both our Treasurer and also our busy Bookings Secretary. The additional work required to update all of our hire documentation & to introduce & explain the changes to hirers has involved a significant amount of additional effort in the last year.