

**Beckley Village Hall AGM
Wednesday 20th January 2021
Chairman's Report**

1 Opening remarks

Our first AGM was held on 27th March 2019 and this is our second which we delayed due to the Covid uncertainties.

The calendar year of 2019 was our first fully mature operating year and its results give a very positive indication of where we would hope to be once we are back to a new normal.

2020 has obviously been a difficult year.

Hence my report and our Treasurer's report deal separately with the 2019 calendar year and the current year.

This report covers some of the ground covered in my first report but I believe this will be helpful as the repeated points remain relevant

2 Approval of 2019 AGM Minutes

Chairman to seek approval.

3 Our Structure

3.1 Legal Structure

Our Minutes of the 2019 AGM explained our legal structure under which we have been running since then.

3.2 Committee Structure

Our current committee (Trustees and non-Trustees) comprises the following members:

Trustees registered with the Charity Commission:

Bob Bixby (Secretary)
Peter Gosney
Ann Henman
Geoff Mills (Chair)
David Scott

John Walsh (Treasurer)*

Non-Trustee volunteer members of the Committee

Liz Bixby
Helen McBeath
John Stradling

All of whom will resign at this meeting as required by our Constitution.

All have said that they would be prepared to stand for re-election.

I and we would very much welcome nominations for other potential candidates.

I am particularly grateful for the regular help from Adrian Hampshire in keeping our website fresh and up-to-date. His input is very regular and his response is always immediate.

We are supported on a commercial basis by a very able Bookings Secretary, Stuart Marshall, a Facility Manager, Nathalie Soanes and a cleaning team of Jackie and Paul. I thank them for their commitment and support.

We also have a number of villagers whom we call on from time to time for additional support. They know who they are and I thank them for their continuing help.

Indeed, as a village we are very fortunate with the extent of community support we receive.

4 The CIO "Objects"

I would like to share with you the Objects defined in our CIO Constitution that govern our activities. I have underlined some key provisions. From this you can see that we have very wide discretion so long as we respect these Objects.

The objects of the CIO are to establish and run a village hall and to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish of Beckley and Stowood ("area of benefit") without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, religious or other opinions the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

5 Balancing Commercial Activities and Village Support

So, we are definitely not a commercial business. We are bound by law not to make a profit and we are bound by our Objects to act in your best interests. However, we can't deliver those objects without income and so permitting some limited commercial use of the Hall is important to us. Nevertheless, we fully recognise that we must balance income generation against the potential impact to local residents and particularly near neighbours of making too aggressive a use of the Hall for commercial reasons. We have indeed turned away business because of concerns about impact to near neighbours. Indeed, I am pleased to report again that that after some early teething difficulties we have had no adverse comments from the village although some constructive suggestions.

6 Booking Report

The more detailed report is available separately and I am indebted to our Booking Secretary – Stuart Marshall -for its preparation and for his continuing support. This can be summarized as follows:

6.1 2019 Report

- Our total income for 2019 was £25,144 an increase of 37% from the previous year.
- Our commercial income continued to be an important income stream to allow us to hold down charges for village activities. Of the total annual income of 25,144.00 for the twelve-month period some 15,915.50 was from commercial and non-village hires.
- We supported 32 village hires in 2019
- In addition, there were 8 regular leisure/interest group activities in the hall, comprising 261 hires including:

Yoga, Table Tennis, Pilates, Spinning and Weaving, Senior Fitness, Art Group, Bells and Village Events like Ceilidhs, Burns Night, Guy Fawkes night etc.

6.2 2020 Report

Now moving to our 2020 booking report I would draw your attention to the following:

- Covid restrictions and periods of hall closure from March onwards resulted in a reduced number of hires. At the end of March 2020, the year to date hire income was tracking 5% ahead of the previous year over the same time period. As a result of the Covid impact to hires, our (anticipated) income for 2020 is 8,830.25, a 65% drop on 2019.
- Of our total annual income of 8,830.25 for the past twelve months 5,756.25 was from commercial and non-village hires.
- We have supported 13 village hires, and in addition there were 7 regular leisure/interest group activities in the hall, comprising 91 hires

7 Facilities Manager's Report

Earlier in 2020 Nathalie took over the duties of our gardener so that she is now responsible for all aspect of the care and maintenance of our physical infrastructure including the management of our cleaners.

In particular, she put in place the physical provisions associated with Covid and the associated notices, hand sanitizer stations and periodic additional deep cleaning.

We have had problems with mice eating cables in the roof space over the foyer requiring replacement of some emergency lighting units. There are no mice within the hall so this infestation is clearing from entry from an external route which we cannot trace and may be behind the gabion wall. Nathalie is keeping this under control with mouse traps that are regularly checked. Improvements have been made to our waste management and recycling arrangements with the introduction of a recycling bin and locks on both bins as they were being abused by some who were disposing waste not originating in the Hall.

The car park gates are now being kept locked, with the access code being released to hirers. This is to deter travelers.

8 150 Club

We are indebted to the 150 Club for their past financial support and to Dave Drew who took over from Ted Cloke (who took over from Peter Carter). We had thought that we might have to wind the club up but given the Covid pressures we are delighted that David has taken this on and to all those who continue to support us.

9 Landlord's Support

Finally I would like to thank our landlord (the Parish Council) for the ongoing investments that the PC has made since we took over and specifically:

- The new Tennis Court – not part of the Hall responsibility but clearly as an immediately adjacent complementary facility a great asset.
- Ongoing external maintenance and car-park resurfacing (the latter being a shared cost with the Hall)
- Landscaping improvements beyond our immediate boundary

10 Covid

Covid has of course had a significant impact on our 2020 activities. We were required by law to close during the two lockdowns but throughout the year from the start of the pandemic our bookings have been impacted. In some cases (such as weddings) this has been because of statutory restrictions on group numbers, otherwise the general and understandable reluctance of hirers to promote a group activity has significantly dampened demands. We received government grants to help through the lockdowns and our prudent financial management and the continuing support of the 150 club has meant that we our reserves have been sufficient to see us through 2020 without the need to seek further financial support.

We put in place management procedures to ensure a Covid-safe environment for the permitted reduced level of activity and made appropriate amendments to our hire terms and associated hirer guidance notes and risk assessment. We were supported in this by the invaluable advice of Community First, the Oxfordshire charity that advises village halls and community centres.

Our Booking Secretary and Facilities Manager accepted a reduced income through the lockdown periods when their continuing services were still required. Whilst we had no contractual obligation to do so, we continued to pay our cleaners, who are contracted to us and not employees. Their remuneration is closer to the minimum wage and they are dependant on us for their income. If we had terminated their employment and they had been forced to find alternative employment we would have been left with no cleaners when we re-opened.

Our bookings fairly quickly began to re-bound during the summer after the first lockdown was over and so we are confident about 2021 so long as the vaccination programme delivers the expected results although as at the time of writing (2nd Jan 2021) we are back in lockdown and presume we are potentially likely to remain so until the Spring.