

# **SHEARSBY VILLAGE HALL CHARITABLE TRUST**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

### **2019/2020**

#### **Introduction**

**This report is normally presented at the Trust's Annual General Meeting in early May. As a result of the exceptional circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic, Government has instructed all Community buildings to close until further notice. Consequently, a public AGM is not possible at this time. The Committee is following Government and Charity Commission advice during this period.**

**The Hall closed on March 19<sup>th</sup>.**

Shearsby Village Hall Charitable Trust was established in 1997 to fund and manage the re-building and management of the Village Hall, previously the Church Hall. After intensive fund raising the Hall was purchased by the Parish and leased to the Charitable Trust, which funded the re-building programme supported by grants and village fund raising. It re-opened in February 1998, involving many people in the Village at the time.

The subsequent years have seen the Hall become firmly established as a centre of village life, providing a modern, comfortable and versatile facility.

#### **The Committee**

The committee during the year consisted of Martin Littlejones as Chairman, Jill Stanley as Treasurer and responsible for bookings, Paul Chawner (maintenance), David Durran, Jon Gunnell and Phil Adams (secretary).

The representative members of the user groups currently are Richard Kew representing the Community Association, David Durran and Nora Burton the Church, Nora the Women's Institute, Andy Sharp for Group Users, and David Durran the Parish Council.

Thanks go to all the Committee for helping with the running and upkeep of the Hall. There is always something to be done to maintain the structure, fitments and appearance of the Hall in a good, safe condition that meets all hirers and legal requirements, within a tight budget. As such, much of the work done is voluntary by the committee and others within the village. It is a public building, open to all to hire, with the Trust's primary objective, registered with the Charity Commission, to serve the local community of Shearsby Parish. It remains a key asset of the Parish, contributing to the unique nature of our Village.

New committee members are always welcome to bring new ideas and skills.

#### **Finances**

Our thanks go to Man Lan Adams who has again prepared the Hall's end of year accounts. They record a closing balance of £6611.09, up from £6056.51 last year. This is a good performance resulting from an adequate income level, and few major expenditures. Currently, the Hall closure means that we have lost some income and do not know when it will re-commence. Fixed running costs are, fortunately, low, so the impact can be minimised for now. The accounts note a substantial increase in energy charges, but this is partly a timing issue relating to direct debit payments, some of which were against the previous year's usage.

The funds help provide the necessary contingency against major expenditures that crop up from time to time.

A Film night fund raiser was held during the year.

Harborough District Council continue to rebate the Business Rate charge to zero.

The state of the finances enable us to maintain hire charges at the current levels for the time being.

All relevant returns were made to the Charity Commissioners by the Chairman.

### **Use and Bookings**

The Hall is used regularly for a mix of village events, private lettings, clubs and organisations. These come primarily from the village, but some outside users also find the Hall's facilities suit their requirements. It is used by Harborough District Council as a venue for a Polling Station.

Regular users include Shearsby Community Association, Shearsby Parish Council, Pilates, Table Tennis, WI, Bridge, Harborough District Council and the Church, including coffee mornings and Tea Breaks. It is these regular bookings that have a significant effect on income, so it is important that the village supports and attends these events mostly organised by villagers. More groups and ideas for regular bookings, as well as one off events are always welcome to ensure the Hall's financial wellbeing.

The year recoded 118 booked sessions (morning, afternoon or evening), slightly down from last year's level of 123, but there were 12 cancelled bookings following the closure of the Hall. The year's total would, therefore have been 130, maintaining the improved levels of recent years.

### **Maintenance and Equipment**

Service, maintenance, electrical, gas and safety checks were carried out as required.

Most maintenance was routine. 60 bone china mugs were added to the inventory to replace cup breakages and provide more choice for users.

The cleaning provider changed during the year.

### **Summary**

The Hall continues to be a focal point of village activity. Providing a venue for administrative meetings, elections, and fund raising as well as activity groups and private events. Most residents use it or attend events there at some time or another.

It needs constant attention to maintain its condition and comfort and the help of resident's and hirers to keep it that way is always appreciated. It cannot, however be taken for granted, so to keep it viable, support in one form or another is always needed.

Thanks to all those who have offered help and advice during the past year.

**The year closed amidst the uncertainty of the pandemic and the closure of the Hall. At this time we have no idea when the Hall will be available for normal use again. Fortunately our fixed costs are low, so the loss of income can be managed for the time being.**

**Martin Littlejones**

**Chairman**

**30 April 2020**