

Report of the Management Committee

A good level of usage of the Hall has been maintained in the year to the end of March. We have kept all the physical activity classes, such as Monday Circuit Training; Pilates on several days, and at several levels of difficulty; regular Skittles during the winter and Indoor Rowing on Fridays.

The observant will have noticed a second blank Noticeboard by the road-side. I am awaiting delivery of another board, matching the first one, on which the timetable for all these activities will be displayed together with contact details for the organisers.

The more gentle pursuits such as the monthly Ikebana flower arranging and the WI meetings will also be mentioned on the activities board.

The Hall has also been used in the year for regular meetings of the Parish Council, Tarka Young Farmers and the Hunt. It has hosted a wedding reception, a birthday party, an inter-club skittles competition and has been used for several charitable fund-raising events.

In the financial year revenue from Hall rental was up on the previous year by about 6% and normal running costs down by about 8% largely due to lower utility bills. Together with the generous donation from the '50 Club' the rental income once again adequately covered the Hall's recurring costs and so for another year I can report that there are no current plans to increase the hourly charges for renting the Hall.

In view of this robust financial position we have again donated the proceeds of raffles held at our events to other deserving charities; from the Quiz in April 2014 a donation was made to Headway North Devon and from the more recent Quiz a donation went to the Multiple Sclerosis Society. There is also a demi-john on the Bar for loose change which will eventually go to three nominated local charities. If anyone has other suggestions for favoured charitable recipients please let me know.

For capital items, such as the purchase of new equipment and any significant improvements to the Hall, we rely on the social and fund-raising activities organised by the Entertainments Committee; on grant applications and on contributions from the Parish Council.

During the financial year just under £3,500 was spent on such capital items (which is £1,700 less than in the prior year). The larger items include the resurfacing of the rear car-park where the cost was kept to just over £ 700 by the generosity of Peter Hutchings who performed the work without charging the Hall for any labour or plant costs. So once again, Peter, thank you very much for doing such a good job at such an advantageous price.

Another significant item was replacing the large Marquee. The Parish Council has bought the new one and donated it to the Hall and the Hall has purchased some accessories such as separate bags for the different poles, which anyone who has attended a Marquee raising

will know are much needed. The Parish Council contribution is shown under donations and the total cost shown under expenditure in the financial statements. The Playing Field Committee also made a £ 200 contribution in lieu of making any other payment when they use the Marquee, BBQ's, portaloos etc at their events. The overall expense was further defrayed by the sale of the old marquee.

Other capital costs in the year included new kitchen cupboards and a small stand-alone PA system, both of which are one-off expenditure items. Also the costs of electrical work included P.A.T testing of all electrical equipment in the Hall which is only necessary every few years.

I will let Marcelle as Chairperson of the Entertainments Committee tell you about the individual events but I will mention that there was an increase in Bar profitability partly due to a modest increase in wine prices, so I'd like to thank - without naming them - some significant contributors, you know who you are.

Although we account on a cash basis, which sometimes gives rise to timing anomalies, it is still pleasing to report that we have returned to a decent surplus for the year just ended.

Our capital spending plans for the forthcoming year are again quite modest. We are looking at the possibility of electric hand dryers in the toilets and some external storage for the BBQ's and other portable items.

Additionally, in view of some important upcoming sporting events we are also considering a large screen smart TV which could also be used at other times for presentations. Mark Goldman has suggested the alternative of a smart Projector with a drop down screen which would possibly be a safer option and could provide the same multi-functionality. I have asked Mark to look further into this possibility.

We are also looking into the possibility of installing broadband in the Hall as a local provider provides the service free to Village Halls as a community initiative. We just have to pay a few hundred pounds for the one off installation, possibly with grant aid. An internet access facility could create several opportunities – perhaps the possibility of computer classes in the Hall.

Other than these items to purchase we are looking, as always, at the fabric of the Hall. Rob Daniels and I have formed a small informal sub-committee to get advice and put together proposals which will address such things as damp issues; insulation and effective energy utilization. Once this is done I will be arranging for the long overdue internal painting of the Hall which has begun to look very scruffy in places.

Finally, a request has come from the Parish Council to the Village Hall Committee asking whether the parking difficulties in Hele Lane might be alleviated by allowing parking in the rear car park at the Hall, now that the surface is much improved. After considering a number of issues, including insurance, it has been decided to trial for a 12 month period the grant of a limited number of parking permits – at the moment eight is the number fixed

upon - to park a vehicle at the Hall for a fee of £ 10 per month. Full details of this initiative will be circulated by email and announced in the Prior but it is hoped that, if successful, this will raise some additional funds for the Hall and provide a solution to what has become an irritation for some in the village.

Now for a few brief words of thanks. Firstly, thanks are due to Maureen and Arthur for cleaning and caretaking at the Hall over the past year. Also a particular thank you to Maureen this year for donating part of the sale proceeds of her book to the Hall.

Thanks to Dave Debnam for continuing to do the little maintenance jobs during a very difficult year for him and Sylvia. It is a small consolation that Dave was the winner of the Social Night Grand National sweepstake, having randomly picked out the unlikely 25-1 Many Clouds which went on to win.

Heartfelt thanks again to Mel Goldman for enduring her own supermarket steeple chase to keep the bar well stocked. I know that when she is wintering in Spain, and I take over the pursuit of Stella Cidre in bulk, it can be a daunting task to track it down.

Finally thanks to all the members and officers of both the Management and the Entertainments Committees for their hard work over the year.