

BRANDESTON VILLAGE HALL & RECREATION GROUND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

24th November, 2011

Present: Darryl Morgan - Chairman
Frank Eyles – Treasurer
Sue Thurlow – Secretary
Together with 16 residents of Brandeston

Welcome

The chairman welcomed all to the seventh AGM of the new village hall.

Apologies for absence

Kathy Churchill, Anne Hayward, Rick and Pam Reade, Jackie Hounsell, Ruth Garratt, Helen Buckingham.

Minutes of the 2010 AGM

The minutes were agreed as being a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising from last minutes

- **Table tennis contribution to hall funds:** The payment from the Table Tennis group wasn't shown on the treasurer's report on contributions from regular events. This was sorted out the next day; it was shown in a different list and hadn't been picked up in the transition to the new treasurer. We had been running with a payments in and out spreadsheet where it had been properly logged. The money hadn't been lost – it was in a different column and had no impact on our results..
- **Clippings in the ditch:** This was sorted amicably by Mary Baker.

Chairman's Report

First of all, the hall has had another successful year in the number of regular users we have, the events we put on and financially. Several records have been broken and I'll go through all of this in some detail shortly.

We have had a stable committee over the year with no changes; Pat Peck continues to be the hall cleaner for which we are grateful. All committee members have a role and the group works efficiently although there is always room for more volunteers.

Financially, the hall turned over just under £13,000 during the year making a profit before depreciation of £2933 compared with £6184 last year on an income of about £12,800 – this is 47% of last year's profit . In spite of this drop, it is another good result for the hall - Frank will go into the details later.

Casual hire continues to be reasonably good with around 30 weekends having some booking.

There have been several changes in the regular users of the hall. We have lost the Yoga, Adult Ballet Classes and Brandeston Hall Fencing classes but have gained two Zumba classes, a Drawing Class, Street Dancing from Brandeston Hall and Petanque. The full list is:

- Pilates (2)
- Drawing Class
- Table Tennis
- Coffee Morning
- Zumba (2)
- Mothers and Toddlers Group
- Wine Club
- Village Lunches
- Film Club
- Whist Drive
- Parish Council Meetings
- Brandeston Hall Karate Class
- Brandeston Hall Street Dance
- Brandeston Brownies
- Petanque

We reviewed, simplified and adjusted the fees last March but we ended up with an unplanned anomaly which we subsequently corrected. During the time we took to sort it out, we removed the fee structure from the web site. The anomaly affected those who only wanted to hire the main hall for an hour. In simplifying the charges, we had priced ourselves out of this market. A review of other halls also showed that we were uncompetitive in some areas for non Brandeston casual users and we adjusted the fees accordingly. We are now competitive without being the cheapest – we think the facilities here warrant the fees charged.

Our income from all hirings through Cara, our bookings manager, topped £6000 for the first time – a record for the hall.

After last year's AGM, we became aware that we were facing a potential loss of around £2000 from village hall events. This would arise because we did not have a major event planned, such as the Neil Innes concert; we had failed to book Eastern Angles; the Southwold trip did not run and we had not charged for the Harvest Horkey. The loss of income from these and one or two other events came to £2000. We arranged some other events to compensate – two quiz nights, a vintage film night, and the very successful French Lunch. Frank will report that we ended the year only £1300 down.

Fund raising events serve the twin purposes of providing entertainment for the village and raising money for the hall. These are the events we arranged over the year:

- Christmas Dance
- Quiz
- Archive Film Evening
- Village Fete (with All Saints PCC)
- Bonfire Night
- Harvest Horkey

- French Day

Last year, we made the Horkey free as a last attempt at keeping it going as numbers had been steadily falling and it had become increasingly difficult selling tickets. We limited the number to 64 – a function of our ability to cook the dinner – and it was a success in that every seat was sold. We decided that we would repeat the free event again this year and we pushed the numbers up to 72 and once again it was sold out and enjoyed by those attending. The Horkey has been going for over 30 years and is just about the oldest village tradition. These last two years, it has been a carefully costed event which aims to break even at worse and we feel that it will be with us for a little while yet as long as numbers keep up.

As usual, the main fundraising event of the year was the village fete held jointly with All Saints. It was once again held at the Queen's Head with Alan Randall's support. Takings were slightly down by £220 but considering the financial climate in the country and that there had been an Open Garden event a few weeks earlier, the hall and the church thought that it was a tremendous result and much better than either organisation was expecting. A lot of planning goes into the fete (indeed, several steps have already been taken for next year's fete) as well as learning the lessons from the previous year. The obvious question is what will we do next year with the pub being under new management. Well, we'll have to wait and see where discussions with the new landlord lead us.

The Thursday Coffee Morning continues to be a focal point for villagers and a steady source of income for the hall. Sue Etheridge and her team deserve a lot of thanks for running this.

We have to keep looking at the hall to see where it can be improved and what maintenance is needed. Earlier this year, we found that the steps leading off the balcony had rotted and were dangerous. These were replaced very quickly – they are part of the escape route from the hall in an emergency. We also painted the hall – the first major maintenance on the hall since it was built.

The commercial dishwasher was bought through our 100+ Club funds to save VAT and installed. There were several ancillary tasks associated with its installation – removing a work surface, replacing the hand wash basin and installing a water softener for the machine. This cost us over £2000 in the end. Running costs in consumables appear to be fairly low – probably two gallons of detergent and one of rinse aid in a year amounting to less than £20. The machine has reduced the washing up times significantly although there have been minor problems with outsiders not cleaning it properly. We've also installed a shelf over the machine at the request of the Lunch Club. The Village Lunch Club runs independently of the hall but provides cooking utensils year-on-year for the hall's use.

Key management has been a problem for the last few years and we think we have solved it at last. We have installed a light just to the right of the door which illuminates a key safe. Hirers are told the code for the safe which gives them access to a key. We have had to disable the hall alarm and so far we have had few problems. We discussed this, of course, with the

insurance company. With safety responsibility moving to the hirers, we decided to attach keys to the two other doors so that they could be unlocked quickly in an emergency

We are also installing lights on the gate to help when leaving the hall. Fred dug a trench by hand and had to dig out bricks, concrete, flint stones and heavy clay. Aaron has installed the cable and we just have to choose and fit the lights.

Most of the fittings on fire doors on the left had to be changed as the doors would neither lock nor could they be opened.

With the change in the way the hall is opened for users, we started to receive complaints about the temperature in the hall. We decided to run the heating continuously and control the temperature through the thermostat. This seemed to work and we are about to move once again to that way of working. We don't know what impact, if any, this had on our running costs as we have far more users than we used to but we know that we won't now lose them because the hall is cold.

The tables we acquired jointly with All Saints plus those that Alan obtained for the pub are now all stored at Eileen Leach's barn until our relationship with the new landlord is established. They're all marked "BVH & AS".

We also arranged for the oven to be professionally cleaned for the first time in its life.

Fred continues to look after the maintenance of the hall with his usual superb efficiency. The garden around the patio is looked after by Anne Hayward with some pruning help this year from Brian Smerdon. Thanks to both.

Communication within the village continues through the web site, newsletter and the Parish Magazine, the first two being under our management. We have published four editions of the Brandeston in the last year. The web site figures continue to be strong with a 5.4% increase in visits to a record 15,039 over the last twelve months. The number of pages viewed was 3.5% up on last year at 56,454 but is totally dependent on the number of photos I put up. The number of countries accessing the site has gone up from 57 to 66 but probably reflects the criminal interest in hacking the site more than anything else. Both media have been short of material. Peter Thurlow is constantly on the lookout for news items and stories from villagers. Similarly on the web site – I would like to update it every two days or so but I need people to send me articles and photos. The Parish Council continues to pay for the hosting of the web site and it's listed in various local government sites..

Once again, I would like to thank the Parish Council and Mark Hounsell in particular for managing the 100+ Club on our behalf. Numbers have been going up steadily and this year we've had a record 140 entries. We are trying to encourage people to pay by standing order to help the collectors and Mark although this sometimes causes problems. We have about £2100 available in the account. Thanks to all who take part and to those that distribute and collect the forms.

We have not had any formal complaints during the year although there have been several suggestions.

Plans for the coming year include maintaining the play area, changing the round tables, possibly tarmacing the entrance drive to make it easier for wheelchairs, further consideration of storage space, constructing a petanque area, improving the audio/visual facilities and the Jubilee celebrations – more on this item in AOB. Some of these items will be done using grants. We are also discussing the possibility of a Rosemary Conley class and a photographic group hiring the hall.

As I have reported every year, with all voluntary organisations, a lot of work, not always visible to those who attend various functions and events, is carried out by a few people and I would like to thank them, the management committee, all our helpers and everyone who attends our events for supporting the hall over the last twelve months.

Comments from the floor:

David Risk raised the tarmacing of the drive to help disabled access. Darryl said that the brushing of the chippings on the west side of the drive had not worked as cars push the chippings back onto the cleared area. So therefore we will have to tarmac this area. It was suggested that the local authority may be worth investigating.

Again re. disabled access Darryl reports that we needed to change the steps from the balcony to a ramp in case the fire doors there had to be used in an emergency.

Mark Hounsell suggested that our local county councillor has a “locality fund” (a grant fund) which may help here if needed.

Brian Smerdon reported that a local resident had stopped him spraying the bottom of the perimeter fence of the play area because of possible danger to children. Brian asked the committee to confirm that if he was using glyphosate this would be ok.

Treasurer’s Report

Frank reported that the trading profit before depreciation was £2,933.78 – a significant reduction on previous years for the following reasons:

- Reduction in fund raising of £1,302 – 26%. There was no comparable event to the Neil Innes concert which raised £1,200 in 2010.
- The fete income was down but only slightly.
- A substantial increase in heating oil costs.
- Insurance increase of 7%.
- Major maintenance costs - £2,500 for external painting.
- One-off costs – installation and ancillary costs of the dishwasher.

On the plus side – hall hire was up by £1,117 - a pleasing 21% increase, the electricity supply was renegotiated giving a 17% reduction in charges and the bank interest doubled because the bulk of the funds have been transferred to the Scottish Widows deposit account giving a better return.

Donations were received from Brandeston's' Clubs – the Whist Drive, Coffee Morning, Table Tennis – all identified in the accounts.

Key Balance Sheet indicators:

- Cash and deposits increased by £2,067.
- Net Current assets increased buy £2,647.

In summary, the total trading income is on a par with last year, but the profit is significantly reduced with the impact of major expenditure costs and the general inflationary increases in many areas. The hall continues to run profitably.

Depreciation, a non cash item, has been assessed on the Property and Fixtures & Fittings on the usual basis (2% straight line and 20% on the value respectively).

Frank said that he would like to thank Cara for her hard work with the tracking of the fee income, Sue Thurlow for the immediate production of the cash & balance sheets for many of the events and Sue Etheridge for handling the substantial Coffee Morning accounts. Also thanks to the clubs for their contributions to hall funds and to Steve Williams for his help and advice on the accounts audit.

There were no questions from the floor.

Election of Officers

Darryl commented that the Committee are 2 members short and we are looking for volunteers to come forward to serve in the next financial year.

Elected Unopposed:

Chairman: Darryl Morgan

Secretary: Sue Thurlow

Treasurer: Frank Eyles

Bookings Manager: Cara Duffy

Maintenance Manager: Fred Muggleston

Publicity: Peter Thurlow

Play Space Levy: Helen Fletcher

Representatives:

Parish Council: Kathy Churchill

All Saints PCC: Mary Baker

Mark Hounsell proposed Terry Robinson as a new member for the committee which was seconded by David Risk. Terry was willing to stand and was therefore elected unopposed for the 2012 year.

Any Other Business

- *Celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee* – The village hall will be coordinating and supporting all events for the jubilee; the Parish Council has also offered its support. Darryl reported that the meeting had taken place in August to set the ball rolling and some work had already been done re. the Street Party (leader – Karen Piper) and the Jubilee Ball (leader – Kathy Churchill). The other idea, as a permanent memorial, was to have some new steps leading from the balcony to the terrace and showed a wrought iron banister designed by Mary Moore. An avenue of trees leading to the kissing gate was abandoned because of the underground power cable and difficulty in cutting the side hedge mechanically, although a small clump of trees may be planted somewhere on the playing field. Don Evans mentioned the possible need for fund raising to cover the costs.
- *Coffee Morning* – Sue Etheridge reported that a group of cyclists call about every 2 months and this has boosted the income. She also reported that most Thursdays Anne Hayward worked on the terrace garden and thanks should be recorded.
- *Playing Field* – Sue Etheridge also asked the committee to look at the goal posts which were becoming very tatty looking – perhaps their replacement with 5-a-side goals should be considered.
- *Commemorations* – Roy O'Brien asked whether a plaque was appropriate for the bequest by John Elliott. Darryl reported that this was already in hand and would be placed on a new bench being purchased. Also that would be a plaque to commemorate the donation of the sundial by Peter & June Underdown.
- *Hall chairs* – Nick Hayward asked if the committee would consider the purchase of some new chairs as he viewed the current ones as being very uncomfortable.
- *BBQ* – There had also been a request from the Bonfire Night BBQ team to look at buying a new machine as the currently one is badly rusted and rather unstable.

Finally, David Risk thanked the committee for all their efforts and for running the hall so efficiently.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

SRT/30.11.11.