

Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall

AGM – 7 June 2022

Chairman's Report for period May 2021 to April 2022

After a significant period of closure due to government guidance over Covid-19 control measures, the Village Hall opened its doors for use at a graduated pace and in adherence to social distancing rules (that precluded use by a number of our regular hall hirers) in mid-2021.

At this time a few group activities resumed and over the past six months bookings have been slowly building, but to date the hall bookings by both regular hall users and one-off bookings are not yet back to pre-pandemic levels.

Government grants gifted to the Village Hall whilst the hall was closed under the restriction have more than covered the deficit of revenue, significantly adding to the halls financial security over this pandemic period. The surplus of funds enabled the committee to allow regular hall users free use of the hall from the time of re-opening through to the end of the year 2021. Although not all regular hall hirers took advantage of this free hire period, those that did appreciated the opportunity to rebuild their activities and businesses at significantly reduced overheads, and it is hoped that the free hire gesture has not only helped the hirers and users get back to normality but also gained the Village Hall a loyal group of regular users.

Due to the Covid restrictions and reduced use over two years, the Village Hall has seen reduced wear and tear to the interior of the hall, so generally it remains in a good state of repair and decor. During the closed period the opportunity was taken to re-decorate the main hall, entrance lobby, toilets and kitchen. In addition, the wooden floor in the main hall was sanded and resurfaced, much improving the finish of the floor. This will enable a regular reduced maintenance schedule for a number of years.

The hall's finances are healthy and the availability of sufficient funds, above the agreed reserve, has enable limited replacement of equipment and improvements to the hall infrastructure. However, recent significant increases in energy prices may require an increase in the hiring fees to keep revenue at a level close to expenditure for the long-term financial stability of the Village Hall charity.

Village Hall Committee members continue to organise and run varied and well supported activities for the benefit of the community, as well as to support the Village Hall itself. The committee has gained some new members who are providing invaluable knowledge, skills and fresh ideas to the committee meetings and have undertaken a number of initiatives to modernise and improve the efficiency of hall administration. Unfortunately, at this AGM, we also lose some very valuable committee members who for many years have selflessly given much of their time to support the Village Hall, organise events and generally keep the hall running smoothly for the benefit of our two villages.

Overall, it is a positive reporting period following two years of uncertainty. Although the hall use is not yet back to pre-pandemic levels, as Covid subsidies and confidence among the community returns, we look forward to a positive and healthy future.

Andrew Eckersley

Chairman