

HADSTOCK VILLAGE HALL PUBLIC MEETING MONDAY 29 APRIL 8PM. CHAIRS 'REPORT.

2023-2024 Has been a busy year for us.

At our first meeting, in May 2023, following the election of our committee, which is responsible for the general management and control of the Village Hall, we agreed to aim to ensure a sound financial basis with which to maintain and improve the physical condition and fabric of the building and surrounding area. Following advice from RCCE, on Village Hall finance and management, we adopted their suggestions that it would be good practice and financially prudent, to try to maintain a current bank balance covering our annual costs [roughly £6,000 at the time] plus a reserve policy for emergencies of £6000.

May 2023 was a time of financial uncertainty for us. During the period of Covid restrictions, we were forced to close the Hall, then operate with very reduced bookings, whilst continuing to pay running and maintenance costs. We were still recovering financially. As many of you are aware, each year we receive financial support from the proceeds of Hadstock fete and Tim Boyden, who had very successfully led the Fete organisation team for many years, had given notice that he aimed to relinquish the role after the June 2023 event. At the time of our meeting, no-one had come forward to replace him. Faced with a potential loss of income, we determined to actively seek more hirers for the hall and increase our fund raising activities. The results are evident in our financial statement and lettings report.

Over the last year, many village events and activities have taken place in the hall: Silver Band practice, Pilates, Yoga, Dance, Parish Council meetings, Hadstock Society meetings and Crocky's talks, Hartbeeps infant and toddler classes, Book Group, Sustainable Hadstock initiative, Pub Social Group, Haverhill Veteran Brass Band, Harvest Supper, Quiz night, Fete teas and post-fete supper. We have acted as the venue for local elections, hosted a well-attended Defibrillator training evening and of course , the very successful Hadstock Pantomime. We have also welcomed a range of one-off hires including, childrens 'parties, baby showers, and wakes.

In terms of maintenance, following the large expence of repairing the heating last year, the plumbing and urinals in the Gents have been replaced. We have purchased 2 new sets of step ladders, a new lawnmower, a new fridge and an induction hob in the kitchen and expect delivery of a replacement dishwasher this week. Five replacement toilet seats have been fitted. Following a full building inspection of the hall we have employed a handyman to work through very long list of minor repairs. This work, together with our regular maintenance schedule, is continuing. Our website is updated regularly and our Terms and Conditions, regularly refreshed in response to the increased range of activities and events in our schedule.

The original metal framed windows are a very attractive architectural feature of the hall, but they let out more heat than they retain. We aim to clean and repair them, then add secondary double glazing. This will, unfortunately be very expensive and our attempt to obtain a grant for part of the cost was rejected. However, we are currently looking for other finance options and remain optimistic that this project will be achievable.

Kirsty and I wish to thank all 5 members of our committee for their continuing support plus John Lockton and his team who maintain the garden and Amanda Davies who advises and supports us on all building related matters. We must also mention other financial support that we receive: The Village Hall 100 club is managed by Barbara Bye and supported by almost 100 payees hoping to win one of the monthly prizes. Also, Tim Boyden and the Fete Committee, who plan and organise the logistics needed to mobilise everything making up Fete Day; 6 months of meticulous planning which underpins the 4-hour event. Also, a special thanks to Laura Corob Cook and Jill O'dwyer for

initially floating the idea that a Pantomime would be a good idea, then driving the concept through to fruition and outstanding success. They were supported and assisted by so many villagers [and non-villagers] too numerous to name but also deserving of our gratitude. Their joint effort coupled with audience numbers of in excess of 150 made us all proud to be involved in the management of our village hall.

On that note, we must add, that our committee currently comprises 7 members, and we really need 9 or even 10 to ensure that new ideas and perspectives revitalise our aims and ambitions for the hall. We meet once a month, for about 2 hours and would greatly welcome your help.

Lynn and Kirsty.