

SIDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL

Centenary Year

Chairman's Report 2021

My report to the Parish Meeting in April highlighted the negative effect the pandemic was having on the life of the hall. Since then much has changed. Restrictions on social distancing have been removed, enabling many of our regular users to return. Bookings for ad hoc parties have resumed with a resultant increasing to income, which, whilst not yet at pre-Covid 19 levels, the signs are promising.

The Playgroup numbers are growing, with attendance averaging 18 children of preschool age. This is good for parents living in the Siddington and Kemble areas who recognising the facility as a beneficial local amenity, it also gives the hall a regular income stream.

One unfortunate aspect of the pandemic has been the further postponement of our plans for a total refurbishment of the hall toilets. We have the plans and finance but not a builder willing to take the job on. Thanks to trustee John Hayward a builder has now agreed to undertake the work in 2 phases, one during the Easter school holiday with completion during the summer holiday 2022. This will avoid disruption for the Playgroup and will be timed to cause as little inconvenience as possible to our regular users.

The big news for this year is the hall's centenary in December. To mark the occasion, the annual carol evening being held on December 21st will be expanded to include a rededication in the presence of Lord and Lady Bathurst. The land and stone were given to the village by the 5th Earl in 1921. Children from Siddington Cof E Junior School will be singing Christmas favourites and displaying artwork they have created especially for the occasion. Mince pies and mulled wine will be offered and there will be a collection in aid of The Children's Society.

The trustees have shown remarkable fortitude over the past 2 years. During the period of closure, the hall was kept clean and in good repair, it was then transformed to meet Covid19 requirements once a limited reopening was permitted in May. A debt of thanks is owed to them all.

Trustee Mary Deller will be standing down at the end of the year. Mary has been a trustee since 2006 and has served as the representative for Siddington and Preston WI and also as Bookings Secretary. Mary's commitment to the hall cannot be overstated. She works tirelessly and efficiently to ensure that hirers are well informed about the hall and made to feel valued and welcome. Thank you Mary, you will truly be missed.

Regrettably the summer event we were hoping to organise and the Speakeasy evening both fell foul of the pandemic. If all is well next year the trustees hope to join forces with other village groups and residents to hold a community event for all to enjoy.

After such a difficult time I wish us all good health and a return to some normality in 2022.

Denys Young (Chair of the trustees).

