

Chairman's report for the Annual General Meeting of Forest Row Village Hall Management Committee held on Monday 17th May for the year May 2020 to May 2021

Object of the Charity

“The provision and maintenance of the village hall for the use of the inhabitants of Forest Row and the neighbourhood without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.”

Trustees

At present the trustees are; Miss V. Hill, (Shalesbrook Morris); Mrs. J. Hills, (co-opted); Dr. J. Josephson, (Forest Row Parish Council); Mr. N. de Knoop, (Aikido) and Miss A. Yard (co-opted). Non-trustee members of the committee are Mrs. Carolyn Aitken, (Royal British Legion), Mr. Shane Hannan, (Forest Players), Mrs. J Oliver, (Ashdown Pantomimers) and Mr. R Pike, (Forest Row Film Society).

Management and staffing

Our previous AGM was held in November 2020, instead of in May 2020 and it was reported then that the management committee met monthly while Coronavirus regulations allowed. When we could not meet the chairman and staff gave reports to members by e-mail and letter. In this way we were able to consult each other and to make decisions.

Regulations have not allowed any meetings since November; this AGM being held on the first day that face-to-face meetings are permitted.

Throughout our excellent hall managers Mrs. Samantha Tossa and Mrs. Sarah Harvey have continued to work at all the hall administration, either from home or in the office, which is still closed to the public. In recent weeks there has been a great deal of work as regular and new hirers request their usual or different hiring times as events are gradually being permitted. Our thanks to them for their efforts, flexibility and efficiency. Our cleaner Miss Ella Atkins has ensured that the halls, with very thorough cleaning, adhere to present regulations.

Policies and Procedures

Once the committee can meet again regularly we must recommence regular policy reviews, taking into consideration the usual Charity Commission guidelines

Our working methods and data storage are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Registered Charity/Charitable Incorporated Organisation

The East Sussex Record Office is now re-opening, this will allow us to research and ask for a certified copy of the documents that the Land Registry require.

Finances and funding

As at end February 2020 the financial position was reasonably healthy even though we had had a new boiler fitted at a cost of approximately £15,000. It was hoped to begin work on the Peter Griffiths Hall floor and the Freshfield kitchen windows.

The closure of the hall due to the pandemic had an immediate effect on the hall's finances. We were fortunate that the tenanted offices remained open and provided some income, nevertheless I calculated that we would have to close permanently after seven months as savings became exhausted. Fortunately, the government realised the value of community halls and a grant of £10,000 was given by Wealden District Council specifically to help with running costs. This was invaluable. Since then some other grants have been awarded to community buildings including FRVH. Our finances look healthy at present and hirers are returning. We hope in this coming year to resume improvements as well as essential repairs but as the coronavirus situation is still uncertain we must continue to keep a careful watch upon our finances.

The building

The Peter Griffiths Hall roof urgently needed replacement flashing and mortaring around the perimeter. Sarah Davies, one of our regular hirers, arranged a grant of £2,000 from a Fund of which she is a trustee. This covered the cost of those repairs and our thanks are due to her and the Lord Merthyr Fund.

During the year May 20-21 only basic maintenance has been carried out. We do need now to smarten the general appearance of the building indoors and out and to consider which improvements can be undertaken next.

In conclusion

This has been a difficult and uncertain year for us all. The committee members and I would like to thank our excellent staff for all their work under extraordinary circumstances. The hall could not function without their work, help, ideas and care.

As chairman I am very appreciative of the support of committee members at a time when communication has not always been easy, the future has been uncertain and when decisions still have to be made, my thanks to everyone.

For the future we look forward to gradually resuming our role as a meeting place for the people of this diverse and energetic community. We hope to continue to maintain and repair this wonderful building so it can continue to be an asset to the village.

Forest Row Village Hall

Financial Activities

March 2020 - February 2021

	TOTAL
Other Income	
Donation	20.00
EG Lions	550.00
Total Donation	570.00
Electricity refund from supplier	121.86
Interest income	63.25
RBL - Donation	225.00
Waitrose - Donation	210.00
WDC Covid 19 Grant	17,811.43
Total Other Income	£19,001.54
NET OTHER INCOME	£19,001.54
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£8,047.98

CHECKED AND FOUND TO BE CORRECT

 10/9/2021

Robert C Dyer [RETIRED BANKER]