

Tiverton Village Hall Management Committee

Chairman's Report for 2018/19

Our activity as a managing committee must be viewed against the objectives stated in the 1960 Trust Deed:

To provide a Village Hall for the use of the inhabitants of Tiverton and neighbourhood, particularly for

- Meetings
- Lectures and Classes
- Other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving their conditions of life.

Any income that the management committee raises is used in the following order of priority, as required by the Trust Deed:

1. Expenses of administration
2. Hall maintenance, upkeep insurance and other operating expenses
3. Furthering the objectives of the Trust Deed

Any money not needed for working purposes will be treated as capital and invested.

These objectives are delivered through a management committee which has maintenance and the good appearance of the Hall as its priorities. Where necessary, the committee promotes and organises events to raise funds for maintenance of the Hall.

To this end, the following activity was promoted by the committee in 2018/19:

- Managing an on-going programme of maintenance inspections to satisfy the requirements of licensing authorities and our insurers, for instance the annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection and monthly Emergency Lighting checks.
- In the absence of any project work, we have held 3 committee meetings during the year, including an AGM.

We continue to find it difficult to attract new committee members who will play a full part in the management of the village hall. We currently have a vacancy for 4 committee members (out of a total committee membership of 10)

On a positive note, our rather gloomy prognostication of barely break even for this financial year has fortunately not materialised and the year ended with an overall surplus of £200, largely due to the successful Pilates class that now runs weekly.

We have also benefited from the generosity of the Parish Council who have continued their annual contribution of £150.

Income from hire of the hall at £2,424 is slightly up on last year, so we are holding our own in a competitive market for hall space. Casual hire at £226 has improved from last year.

This supports our view that we can continue to offer up to date facilities at a modest rental (subject to a £20 minimum charge).

The cost of cleaning at £789 dominates the hall expenditure followed closely by insurance at £488. Insurance costs have risen unexpectedly as a result of a more searching valuation of the hall building which has resulted in a larger sum insured and hence larger premiums.

We have refilled the oil tank again this year; fortunately heating oil costs have remained stable despite the continued Brexit uncertainty. The boiler inspection anticipated in last year's report has been carried out with no problems exposed, though an unexpected repair to a central heating leak did result in a one-off cost of £132.

In anticipation of fluctuating and increasing electricity charges, we have been able to negotiate a favourable fixed price contract out to 2024 which helps stabilise costs.

Our Premium business account at Barclays continues to pay interest on deposits, although modest at £21.

Apart from the central heating leak, we experienced an unexpected drain blockage from what turned out to be a flannel flushed down a ladies' toilet. Unfortunately, this is not the first time for such a problem which costs in the order of £65 to rectify.

Garden maintenance has been a big issue in the year with reliance on volunteer effort proving to be difficult. Re-engaging an outside specialist has been deferred until the Committee can be quite certain that it is affordable, ie with a clear surplus on the current account balance. Given the healthy position at the end of this year, garden maintenance will be high on the agenda for the coming year. The priority is removal of buddleia roots that have multiplied over the years and are choking the eastern boundary.

The Committee continues with its policy of not undertaking an external audit of its accounts as the base turnover is well below the £25,000 threshold at which the Charities' Commission requires independent examination of the accounts (CC31). The Chairman, who carries out the internal audit, has no access to money or bank accounts; this clear separation of responsibilities enables the Committee to have confidence in the process.

To summarise, 2018/19 has been about maintaining the hall in good condition and vigorously controlling costs to ensure that we are able to offer the hall at a very competitive rate to existing and new users.

S A Armitage Chairman