

Chairman's Report for 2020/21

We have suffered from a second year of Covid-19 restrictions and use of the hall is only just starting to come into its pre-Covid levels, but the outlook seems encouraging.

Regular inspections were carried out to ensure the fabric remained in good order and to pick up on any maintenance issues. Usage picked up slowly from mid-year, lead by Pilates, and by the end of the financial year all users had returned to the hall, along with some casual hire. Thus the income stream is picking up, although still very modest at £346 for the year.

Whilst the Committee have undertaken to keep the hall clean and Covid safe whilst usage has been light, we now have to look at re-starting a regular cleaning contract. This will have a big impact on our cost base.

The Sundries items at £115 are mostly down to Covid related materials such as paper towels, disinfectants and hand sanitisers (£106)

Other items are unavoidable charges which occur even if the hall is unused, such as insurance and utility connections. Happily, fuel oil usage has been minimal during the year and we start the next financial year with an almost full tank, bought at the Covid-depressed price of 22.8p/L, now already more than doubled.

The accounts show an operating deficit for the year of £783, due entirely to the Covid restrictions and our need to maintain essential expenditure. Cumulatively over the past two years, this has amounted to £1290 which has been more than covered by grants from CWaC.

The garden was planted extensively as part of the steps project back in 2006, and has matured to the extent of needing significant effort to keep it in check. Our committee is unable to provide such effort on a voluntary basis, and we needed some extensive shrub management to avoid the garden becoming a wilderness. We have engaged the services of a competent local gardening contractor, so the garden now looks tidy.

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.

Despite the continued Covid setbacks of the 2020/21 year, we surprisingly emerged in a sounder financial position due to generous government support. There are many projects to consider now we have significant reserves, but as usual we are struggling to find the manpower to execute such works.