

## **Stock & Bradley Village Hall - Annual report for 2022**

2022 has been the year of the Covid recovery plan. We had money in the bank at the start of the year, thanks to the efforts of the previous committee, and were able to deploy some of that to improve the hall and improve its awareness and use.

### **Awareness and Marketing**

We started by enhancing external visibility from the road, to increase recognition of the hall and its potential, by passing traffic. And what better way than with a 'Fly the Flag' initiative on behalf of the people of Ukraine which raised just under £1000.

The central hedge was replaced with open post and rail fencing around which some daffodils were planted. New and bold signage was installed on the building.

The frontage was improved with a tidy-up of the site. With hanging baskets and with some limited painting, the hall was made to look more inviting.

New curtains were purchased, and a baby-changing station was fitted in the disabled toilet.

In parallel, we developed an on-line presence led by Keith Lawrence along with electronic communication between the team members using WhatsApp and email. We registered a new domain name (sbvh.org.uk) and created email addresses off it to allow bookings and other communication to happen online. (Eg [bookings@sbvh.org.uk](mailto:bookings@sbvh.org.uk); [100club@sbvh.org.uk](mailto:100club@sbvh.org.uk) etc).

We have taken over control of the old website and redesigned it, adding downloadable documents, a ticket booking system, new photographs and more content and features. The 100 club was also more strongly featured on its own page.

A Facebook page has been developed but much yet remains to be done to fully exploit this and to add Instagram alongside.

The website continues to need advertising widely as this is the direction in which society has moved and, for the most part, will operate in future. But we do need to continue to support those who do not have access to this new world of electronic communication. To improve advertising, we overhauled our regular feature in The Chronicle and for a period were advertising in both The Feckenham News and The Inkberrow 'WhatsOn'. However, the former has now become too expensive to continue and the latter has ceased publication for the time being. We would like to do more but must look for new opportunities. Meanwhile, the problems with the printed word have not stopped us using the Village What's App platform or using our own website and Facebook options to get the word out.

### **Administration**

Meanwhile systems modernisation has improved financial management under Keith's leadership. The book-keeping system went computerised part way into 2022 using a system provided by Lloyds Bank and as a result our financial control is now more sure-footed and will be even better in 2023, as the new system will have been used throughout the year for the first time.

### **Team Membership**

The team of volunteers has changed little over the course of the 2022 year. Beyond the wholesale change which occurred as the new team took over at the last AGM, Wendy Ralphs decided to stand down after so many years of service and was replaced by Lisa Hogarth. My thanks go to all of them for their enthusiastic help through the year and it has also been very encouraging to see so many spouses of the various volunteers piling in to help at events and I would like to thank those people greatly.

### **And speaking of events in 2022.**

We reinstated the 100 Club Summer event and the Annual Quiz with the latter being very well supported. We brought along new events - Wreath Making and Village Hall Natters - a series of talks with an opportunity to socialise. In the Autumn we started running a series of survey questionnaires to establish what people might enjoy and from this we have introduced Pilates, Yoga & Zumba in early 23, thanks to some sterling work by Sue Lawrence. Also - we need to do more of these surveys and introduce further new events in the year ahead.

### **Maintenance**

Quite a lot of small/medium jobs need attention - and while some of these have been addressed, much remains to be done; some of which will involve bigger 'building' input - eg the damage done to the South side emergency exit door in a gust of wind. We need to develop a plan for these things in the light of the broader development of the building to avoid spending money twice.

Clearly, the income from the running of the hall will not cover the costs of such large repairs and will require the use of savings or other forms of funding.

Some Bird Nesting boxes were put up around the site - these were offered free by the RSPB, and we thought the opportunity too good to miss.

### **100+ Club Annual Report - 2022**

The 100+ club has grown in membership year on year since a low in 2020 to 2021 which was caused by the pandemic. It is very encouraging to see so many new members joining over the last two years.

2020-21 89 (Pandemic low);      2021-22 107;      2022-23 120

2022-23 The contribution of the 100 club toward village hall funds was £1050 for the year.

The Annual Draw was held on Saturday July 16<sup>th</sup> 2022. Unfortunately, numbers were low, but this was due to a rise in Covid cases after the Jubilee Celebrations. Having said that, a good night was had by all, and the buffet was well received.

New payment methods over the last couple of years have helped to accommodate members' preferences. The number using BACs rose significantly and this was the most popular method

of payment. This year we hope to also use the payment system on the website that we use for other events as an alternative.

### **Booking volumes**

These have increased - particularly toward the latter end of the year but we have no reliable data from previous years (e.g. pre-Covid) with which to make a comparison.

### **Financial summary**

Prices had to reluctantly increase mid-year under the pressure of inflation of general costs but particularly energy costs. It is likely that they will have to increase again this year and will be kept under review as the inflation problem has not gone away.

The previously existing village social group calling themselves MAD (Making A Difference) wound up their operation during the year and donated some £400+ being half the balance of their current account. Their operations had, in years gone by, favoured the church and the village hall and we are grateful for their contribution.

Subject to audit of the final accounts, we had an income of £21,395 and spent £17,417 in total leaving a surplus of £3,978 and of which a Covid grant made up £2,667. Our surplus - net of the Covid grant was therefore £1,311. Covid grants of this nature have now stopped and will not benefit us in 2023. Our year end bank balance stood at £30,607.

Roger Pask – Chairman – 12/04/2023