

## **Alderholt Village Hall**

### **AGM 21 October 2020**

#### **Chairman's report at end September 2020**

The early part of our year from October 2019 was 'normal' but Coronavirus closed the Hall with the national lockdown from mid-March. We are only just beginning to recover with the Hall having been allowed to reopen from late July and the first public event, the Alderholt Craft & Produce Fair, held on 15 August.

The Management Committee has continued with virtual monthly meetings and have had just two meetings face to face, using the Hall instead of the Committee Room. We carried out a Covid-19 Risk Assessment and determined what measures needed to be put in place to allow the safe use of the Hall. Signage abounds and we have provided hand sanitisers, new locks to the Toilets where access is now restricted to one person at a time, a ramp for the French window which will be the exit from the Hall when events require (a useful upgrade of our accessibility to all).

The opportunity has been taken to clear several maintenance jobs: the Kitchen has been repainted, emergency lighting repaired and upgraded, the electrical installations tested and the outside container cleared to accommodate the ramp. Our next task is clearing unused items from the Storage Cabin. More needs to be done but our list of tasks is being whittled away!

We have also prepared the necessary policy documents which have been adopted and are available on our new website – thanks to Chris Walker for liaising with the website designer on this – and thanks to Derek Agent and Paul Haynes for taking on the redecoration of the Kitchen and to Lin Lyons for taking on the task of cleaning all the cupboards, washing and restocking contents! We have also re-established the Alderholt Village Hall Facebook page which is managed by our Secretary Naomi. Thanks also to Norman for maintaining the planting to the front bed and with Tina for clearing the overgrown hedging to the boundary and garden.

Regular groups who had to stop meeting in March are cautiously considering return to the Hall but some have advised they will not return immediately; some not till after Christmas and some not at all. Life under Covid restrictions will affect us all in different ways for a long time to come.

The Hall continues to offer facilities for private hire although bookings are severely restricted by the Covid rules. Our Entertainments Sub-Committee is 'resting' but a first event has been staged with the Jazz Night on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Events and the monthly Market are restricted in numbers to maintain social distancing and we are limited to 25% of the capacity of the Hall for any event at this time. The Drama Group has reluctantly made the decision not to stage a panto for the first time in decades, due to the restrictions.

To balance the severe loss of income we have received a grant from the Government Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund which is intended to help cover loss of income and cost of measures required to cope with Covid-19 restrictions. An application has been made to

the Alderholt Community Fund for grant towards new Audio-visual equipment which will enhance our facilities and encourage new activities and an application is being made to the Dorset Council Leisure Development Small Grants Fund. Thanks again to Norman for his efforts in applying for grants to other sources. We hope the Community will recognise that the Hall is available for meetings of any groups who may previously have used smaller venues but need more space to meet the current restrictions.

Our Bookings Officer Mandy Robbins has announced her retirement from the Committee and we would like to express our grateful thanks for all her efforts on bookings and the Entertainments Committee. We are looking to the whole community to find people who are able to help with the management of the Hall – please contact us if you would like to help.

We are looking forward to a more active year in 2020-21 but have to accept that it will be a long and slow recovery before we can all get back to normal. Please look out for information on and support events in the Hall which is the best reward we can have for all the organisational effort these require. Thanks to you all for your support.

Richard Wood

Chairman of Alderholt Village Hall Management Committee

18 October 2020