

HIBALDSTOW VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

TRUSTEES REPORT 2014

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The committee consist of members of the village who work on a voluntary basis to help run and manage the village hall and playing field as a Charity. We are fortunate in that we have been running with a full, or nearly full, management committee for the last year and also getting regular support from others outside of the main committee.

Having said that, I should record our thanks to several members who have had to step down during the year.

- Stan Smith has served on the committee for several years and stepped down following the completion of the new BMX facility having had spearheaded this development.
- Jim Toyne joined the committee in the last year but was frustrated that as an electrician we couldn't use his skills within the hall because of third party liability concerns, relating to any work completed, from our insurance company. This is a frustration that was shared by many members of the committee and is unlikely to come to a satisfactory conclusion for Jim or any others who would wish to offer their skills to the Hall as individuals, rather than as a representative of a bonafide business.
- Adam Barker had to stand down after taking up employment in another area and moving away from the village.
- Mike and Margaret Barton have served on the committee for several years but have recently stood down from the committee for personal reasons.

Again, thanks to all of the above, and all those who have helped the Village Hall in any way over the last year.

HALL AND PLAYING FIELD USE

The pattern of use of the hall and fields is little changed over the last 12 months. The hall and playing field remain well used by regular user groups covering all age ranges, from infants through to senior citizens and giving a great diversity of activities.

For most of the year the Hall has been used for a significant proportion of the day Monday to Friday. At weekends the hall is used for parties, special events and by the bowls, football and cricket clubs but there is still scope for more use at weekends.

However, the Pre-School group was forced to close at Christmas as it's numbers had dropped to unsustainable levels. This means that the Hall is now available for significant periods during the day

(Pre-School operated 6 hours per day Wednesday's to Friday's). These periods are now available for any other groups that may want to make use of the hall. The loss of the Pre-School will put significant financial pressure on the Hall in the coming years if replacement hirers are not found. Pre-School provided around 25% of the Hall's income.

The play area, tennis court, skate park and the field in general continue to be well used.

One less pleasant side to managing the Hall occurred during the summer when we were the victims of a break-in. Whilst the damage was relatively inexpensive to correct, the intruders managed to cause chaos in the building taking many hours to tidy up afterwards. All this for a packet of biscuits (that was the only thing that was found to be missing!) It appears the intruders were responsible for a series of break-ins at public and commercial properties in Hibaldstow and Scawby over that weekend. The Police quickly apprehended the culprits, who were charged and eventually sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.

VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT

Following the last AGM, one of the first changes agreed was to try and change how the VHC conducted business. In the past all business had been funnelled through the full committee which meant that without very frequent and long meetings it was difficult to make progress on anything other than day-to-day business.

We resolved to carry out most day-to-day business via a series of sub-committees with clearly stated responsibilities. Generally speaking they were to prepare budgets for the operation of their area which once approved by the main committee the sub-committees had authority to execute. Any variation to what had been approved by the main committee would of course need referring back to them. In this way we aimed to get most routine matters moved away from the main committee to allow them to concentrate on longer term issues.

When this approach was adopted the Committee understood that it would take most of the first year to establish this method of working. This has proven to be the case, with some Sub-Committees operating more effectively than others for various reasons. There is still a bit of work to do to fully establish this way of working, but we believe it is already showing benefits.

The next sections cover the activities of the four main committees:

1. SOCIAL

The VHC is now running several social events each year with plans to extend the range of activities in the coming year. Last year we ran two successful quizzes and an excellent Christmas fayre.

This was the second year in which we have ran a programme of social events and the Social Committee is learning a lot as we go, as we get a better feel for what events the people of Hibaldstow want. We had to cancel a bingo night because there was insufficient interest. The Christmas Fayre was a good event, but it didn't generate enough trade to make it worthwhile for the stall holders. But as they say, "you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs". We have

learnt lessons and will repeat the popular events and drop the less popular. 2015 has a programme of events prepared which will see the return of the ever popular quizzes and race night and will also include some new events. Keep your eyes on the noticeboards and Village Voice for more details.

2. HOUSE

The House committee has had a very positive influence on the hall over the last 12 months. More minor improvements have been made in the last year than in many years. We are not talking major investment, just a series of minor improvements which taken together start to make a real difference to the Hall users. We are talking about things like improving cleaning equipment, installing soap dispensers, installing cupboards in toilets, improvements to plumbing etc. All worthwhile tasks that never got proper attention in the main-committee.

The House Committee also supervises our caretaker, Andrew Garlick, who continues to do an excellent job. Following a review of his duties, following a recommendation by the House Committee we now employ a cleaner for a few hours each week and this has made a real difference to the appearance of the Hall.

3. GROUNDS

The Grounds Sub-Committee has probably not been as successful as we had hoped, this was largely due to changes in members. Adam Barker was just starting to build up some momentum as Chair of this Sub-Committee when he moved away from the village and as the only member of the main committee that represented the main sports clubs, the momentum was lost and little more than routine maintenance was completed.

As ever we are indebted to Jon Taylor for the work he voluntarily puts into maintaining the fields. This has included working with the 180 Club to get a grant for spraying equipment for the field.

4. FINANCE

A full income and expenditure breakdown is given in the treasures report. The only point we will make here is to repeat the threat of severe financial pressure for the Hall if we do not replace the income that the Pre-School generated.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

These are not forgotten and work has been going on slowly in the background. However, having reviewed the activities of the VHC over previous years we realised that we would continue to struggle to find time to develop improvement plans and seek funding until we could make time for the main committee to give them the attention this would need. Hence the focus for the last twelve months was on establishing the Sub-committee way of operating to free time for the main committee to pursue longer term issues. We are just about at this point, and we would hope for more emphasis to switch back to this in the next year.

Alan Smith
January 2015