

## Chairman's Report to Catterall Village Hall AGM 2022

It has been a busy twelve months for village hall trustees, but it is pleasing to report that the hall is thriving. The calendar is full most days through the week, and many weekends have parties.

The village hall committee has continued to ensure that we provide a first class, safe, accessible, well maintained and well-presented village hall. To that end, the hall has been well used over the last twelve months with varied day time activities covering each weekday and clubs, societies and community groups using the hall most evenings with many bookings for private events taking place at weekends. The website and facebook page have been useful routes to receive enquiries. I must say a massive thank you to Joan Mackenzie for taking on being point of contact for the bookings, as I know it has been a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating task to schedule everyone in and thank you to Amy Holland for offering to take this over for the next year. Our new online bookings system which is about to come online should hopefully make this role easier too.

The Treasurer's Report provides more detail of our year-end (30 September) financial situation, and I am pleased to report that the hall finances are in a good state, thanks to the many covid related grants to which we have been entitled to receive and the increased number of bookings in the hall. Grateful thanks go to our Treasurer, Kev O'Hanlon, for carrying out the role which I know has not been an easy task particularly matching invoices to payments when hirers don't pay the correct amount. Thank you to Deborah Cliff for taking this role over going forward. Hopefully the use of the new FreeAgent software will help make the role a lot easier.

I must also thank Towers + Gornall who carried out the work on our final accounts for submission to the Charity Commission free of charge.

The positive financial position has meant that we have been able to make improvements to the hall for the benefit of users. We have installed new LED lights in the remaining rooms, a new window in the parish council office, a new sound system (which has been very popular with users), new blinds on the fire doors for privacy, purchased a new fridge and replaced the wooden fascias with UPVC which will reduce maintenance. These improvements have put the hall in a far better position for the future, with plans to continue to make other improvements going forwards such as replacing the guttering, buying new tables and chairs, and hopefully upgrading the toilets if we can obtain grant funding. At the same time, we review our contracts on a regular basis. As the parish council no longer use the waste container we have reduced the size of the container which has made a saving on the waste removal contract and fixed our energy contract at the beginning of April which has cushioned us from some of the later price increases.

One of the most visible improvements is the resurfacing of the village hall car park. The cost of this work was far higher than the village hall finances would allow, and we will be eternally grateful to Catterall Parish Council who agreed to fund the work for the benefit of both hall and playing field users. The hall committee agreed to fund some supplementary work such as installing channelling for installing lights on the car park in the future and this work was carried out at the same time as the car park was resurfaced.

As ever, the health and safety of hall users has been a priority and our risk assessments have been reviewed on a quarterly basis. All necessary fire and electrical testing have taken place and the relevant certificates can be viewed on our website [www.catterallvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.catterallvillagehall.co.uk). One of our priorities has been to remove as much flammable material from the hall and, to this end, the parish council has removed all paperwork from the loft and the Gala now have their own container at the back of the hall to store all their belongings. Thanks go to Amy Holland for the regular health and safety checks. I know these add a few minutes per week to her busy Brownies sessions!

The mobile post office has been a continued welcome addition to the village hall and is well used by residents. The new Rainbows group and the existing Brownies group are both continuing to be very popular as our village grows, as is the gardening club. The regular pop-up shops for CRY are raising much-needed funds for heart screening sessions for the local children.

We carried out a review of our income and expenditure so that we had a clear understanding of our financial position and made a long-term estimate for the maintenance and updating of the hall. This meant that we had a

much clearer idea of how much we need to raise through bookings. This resulted in a small increase in our hourly rate for users, but this should be enough to cover the costs this year, as long as electricity costs don't rise any further than we have contracted for. To supplement money raised through bookings we will look to secure grant funding to support upgrades of equipment and facilities to make sure that we meet our obligations as trustees and ensure that the hall is attractive, safe, and around for many years to come. Thanks go to County Councillor Shaun Turner who provided a grant of £300 from his Local Member's Grant allowance to go towards the cost of new tables and chairs.

We have developed a strong and effective working relationship with Catterall Parish Council over the last two years and I must thank the parish council for the support of former parish clerk Gillian Benson, the current clerk Emma Millington and Lengthsman Paul Hartley at times through the past year, taking in deliveries and supporting minor maintenance occasionally. Thanks must also go to Catterall In Bloom for the fantastic flower displays that were around the hall over summer. We must of course also thank Elaine Davies for her years of service cleaning the hall. Elaine left at the end of August, and we wish her well in the future. I would like to welcome Paige and Alanna Wright, our new cleaners who are doing an excellent job.

With the support of Community Futures we reviewed and updated our governing document which was written in 1991 and had not been reviewed since then. As a registered charity we must keep abreast of not only charity law but also changes in modern life such as online banking and virtual meetings. We now have an up to date governing document which is fit for purpose. We have also attended several meetings of the Lancashire Association of Village and Community Halls, which have provided us with valuable insight and information from our peers.

Last but not least I must thank our secretary, Jan Finch for all her hard work on almost every aspect of running the hall, there have been a lot of legal aspects to be mindful of and monitor, as well as the amount of administrative tasks, and Jan has worked through everything so thoroughly to ensure that everything is safe and legal.

Finally, a big thank you to the rest of the committee for their inputs and keeping the hall running during a very busy year! We are looking to recruit new committee members going forwards to help share the load of running the hall, as we currently operate with several vacancies for trustees. 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.

I look forward to another successful year for the 2022-23 financial year

Simon Kirkman

Chairman – Catterall Village Hall