

Chairman's report for Parish assembly 16th April 2024

The Village Hall has had an active year.

Committee

Chairman Liz Sedgwick
Treasurer Graham Inskip
Maintenance John Hurley
Bookings Vacant

Parish Council representative Alistair Dougall
Others Maureen Gilpin, Beryl Jones, John Hurley, Jenny Hebburn.

Regular Events

Coffee mornings.

These have been very popular and well attended. Several charity fundraisers have been held with great success.

Table tennis and pickleball continue and there are plans to purchase a badminton set for further activity sessions.

The WI use the hall for their regular Monday meetings.

Annual events

We held a BBQ last summer to celebrate the Coronation of the King. It was again a great afternoon and we picked the right day for weather!

A Christmas wreath making event in December was popular and it will be a regular event as a fund raiser for the hall.

The Houghton Trail is back in its proper place and happens on May 12th.

There has been a steady stream of private bookings which Graham is managing via the village hall page on the Houghton website.

I should like to extend my thanks to all the committee members who have continued to work very hard attending meetings and helping at events and turned up tirelessly to make coffee, bacon sandwiches.

Also, thanks to Terry Heffernan and Michael Faosin for stepping up to the BBQ plate!

Refurbishment

After many meetings and village consultation we have at last got some plans in process for a small extension and removal of the stage area. This should give more capacity, more storage and an exit through double French doors onto the recreation ground. The kitchen will be updated and the entrance moved to the side to allow the front porch and entrance to be included in a larger lavatory area. We will also seek funding for repairs/replacement of the roof, drainage system and electrics.

In anticipation of the planners, we have had an initial bat survey done and this has (of course) revealed bats so we need a more detailed survey before anything can start!

We have had a Green Energy survey undertaken.

We plan to seek a more environmental heating system, investigate solar panels, improve insulation as well as replacing the kitchen and installing an up-to-date audio-visual system. Richard Knox Johnson is helping with his contacts!

We have discussed this with the Parish Council and let the trustees know what we are hoping to achieve. We will be taking advice from **acre** and looking at funding from grants and the Houghton Community Benefit Fund.

The new environment group in the village are giving input and helping with finding funding for the “green” elements. We now need more volunteers to share expertise as we get further down the line. Brian Stansfield and Michael Woodhall have been invaluable. It’s been a long process.

The Welcome pack is still being distributed as we hear of new residents.

Finally, many thanks to Nick Harding and Graham Inskip for running the Village Draw.

EJS

10/04/2024

