

Report to Waldringfield Annual Parish Meeting on the Village Hall (17th April 2012)

The Village Hall has had another busy year. There are several regular users of the hall including the Art Groups, Bridge and Wine Clubs and the Tuesday Social and Sports Evenings. Organisations such as the History Group and the Wildlife Group continue to hold their meetings here. There is a variety of fitness classes including yoga, Pilates and now Zumba. The committee has again organised a range of events to provide social opportunities as well as to raise funds for the hall: these have included a very successful harvest supper attended by over 120. A similar number attended the winter party which this year took the form of *Waldringfield's Got Talent* - a most enjoyable evening organised by Mark Wootton that involved a lot of families and young people. We are grateful to Pat Nunn for continuing to take charge of the catering for such occasions. Other events have included Liz's cake stall, a visit by *Eastern Angles* travelling theatre and the Christmas Quiz again admirably mounted by Max and Margaret Pemberton. The usual series of winter talks has taken place arranged by Stan Baston and culminating in a talk and accompanying exhibition on the Titanic by Malcolm Crawford.

We have a beautiful and widely admired hall and the committee sees as a priority the maintenance of this major community asset in a good condition. We have this year arranged the repainting of the Kennedy Room and of woodwork elsewhere. In November we were shocked to experience the theft of a large area of lead covering the canopy at the rear of the building. After considerable consultation the committee decided that, rather than simply replacing the lead and continuing to be vulnerable to repeat offences, it was prudent to spend £3,500 beyond our insurance claim to pay for all the remaining lead work to be stripped off and for slates to be installed to cover the entire canopy. It was further decided to improve the exterior lighting to improve security. Our facilities have been improved not only by the availability of the display screens bought by the History Group and also the happy arrangement under which the school stores its easily mountable staging in the village hall and makes it readily available for use. Looking ahead the committee is considering the purchase of a complete set of new chairs with padded seats to provide improved comfort at major events.

Our income comes from a variety of sources: our fund raising events, the Lottery with over 200 members run by Max Pemberton, and hire fees from organisations and private individuals. We continue to be very grateful for the annual maintenance grant from the Parish Council. As with any building there is always something or other to be done and we need to maintain a reserve to enable us to cope with major expenditure in the future.

We are fortunate in having a committee that works very hard for the hall, not least with practical tasks on occasions such as the recent spring clean morning. We are especially grateful to Sally Hopper who has looked after the bookings and the production of the Focus newsletter for several years during which the range of activities has expanded considerably. We are pleased to have Dona Morgan join us as the new Bookings Secretary and Libby Ruffle as the new Editor of Focus. As a new chair I have benefited greatly from the guidance and support of the Secretary Trisha Eaton and the Treasurer Stan Baston, both of whom have contributed a great deal to the hall over the years.

The committee has recently reminded itself of the charitable objectives of the Trust which is to maintain the hall *"for the use of the inhabitants of Waldringfield and the neighbourhood without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions and in particular for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants"*. The committee decided to use the opportunity of the parish plan consultation to ask residents how they would like to see the use of the hall develop and we look forward to your responses over the year ahead.

Colin Reid Chair of Waldringfield Village Hall Trust