

The Trustees of Waldringfield Village Hall: Annual Report by the Chair (April 2016)

The Village Hall continues to be much used. Regulars include the Art Groups, the Bridge and Wine Clubs and the Tuesday Sports and Social Club. Organisations such as the History and the Wildlife Groups continue to hold their meetings here. There are various fitness classes including Pilates. The monthly coffee morning goes from strength to strength. The Trustees (who form the committee) have continued to organise events to provide social opportunities and to raise funds for the hall. There was a very successful and well attended harvest supper with an entertainment organised and produced by Gareth Thomas and a winter party which included a Race Night providing another very enjoyable evening organised by Mark Wootton. We are again grateful to Joyce Forsdike and Pat Nunn for organising the catering for these occasions. Other events have included two visits by *Eastern Angles* travelling theatre and a challenging and hotly contended Christmas Quiz organised for the first time by Tim Elliot. A series of interesting winter talks was again arranged by Gareth Thomas. The village school makes use of the hall for weekly gym sessions and one-off events.

The committee continues to give priority to maintaining our much admired hall in a good condition. Apart from the regular weekly clean and specialist work, we depend on volunteers. Tony Lyon and David Eaton have done a range of small repairs, while a team of others, led by Max Pemberton, has continued to undertake garden maintenance and grass cutting. Much is achieved in a convivial spirit on the annual spring clean morning. The facilities of the hall have recently been improved with the addition of a better speaker system, the Kennedy Room is soon to be recarpeted and the wooden floor in the Main Hall resealed.

Our income comes from a variety of sources to cover the annual cost of running the hall. We have for several years kept our hire charges (reduced for village residents and organisations) at the same level. External hires, notably for weddings provide valuable sums. We generate well over £1,000 p.a. from the Village Hall Lottery with over 200 members which has been run for many years by Max Pemberton. In May he will be handing over this responsibility to Nigel King who will thenceforth coordinate the team of volunteer collectors. Our bookings secretary, Chris Lyon, puts in a great deal of work meeting prospective hirers on whom we are dependent for a significant slice of our income. We have also benefitted from the annual grant from the Parish Council. We are grateful for the efforts of many villagers in contributing to our fundraising efforts, notably Liz Kennedy who once again raised over £230 from making and selling marmalade. We have benefited from the reduction in the price of heating oil and from the income from the solar panels on our roof, but there has been a growth in many areas of our expenditure. With a narrowing of the annual surplus the Committee will have to consider whether it will soon be the time to increase hire charges. We are determined to continue to run the finances of the hall prudently, building up a reserve to provide for future unforeseen needs and the major maintenance of the building and the car park. All villagers are welcome to attend the AGM on Monday 6th June at 7.30 pm when the accounts will be presented and the trustees will be elected.

The committee works very hard for the hall both in meetings and in other practical ways. Liz Lord keeps our minutes and Libby Ruffle is editor of the FOCUS newsletter, which the parish survey showed to be much valued by the village. Meanwhile much of the administration is carried out week in and week out by our Secretary Trisha Eaton and Treasurer Sue Larsen.

The survey conducted by the Parish Plan Group confirmed that the hall is very widely used and appreciated. It also produced ideas for additional clubs and activities. Although very few regular time slots are available we look forward to folk coming forward with their initiatives. Visitors from outside the village often comment on the community spirit in Waldringfield, evident not least in the speed and good cheer with which all lend a hand to clear up after events in the hall.