

WILLASTON MEMORIAL HALL



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REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

First, I thank every Trustee for your efforts and input in what has been a challenging year.

You are a dedicated and hardworking group of volunteers who have achieved much during the last year to the benefit of the Hall and therefore the Community generally and so it greatly saddens me that your many hours of work have not always been appreciated by some sections of our Community.

We appealed for a Treasurer during the last two years and we are now asking for volunteers for various small jobs around the Hall and a Bookings Secretary. The total absence of any response from the Community to these appeals to date perhaps says much about the true character of the naysayers.

On the positive side, the structural survey carried out in 2015 has been followed by the completion of an extensive refurbishment of the exterior of this splendid building which has ensured that it should remain safe and secure for the foreseeable future. The Committee are now turning their attention to rejuvenating the interior by replacing the radiators and uprighters in the main hall, the carpet in the Committee Room and all the curtains; a certain amount of redecoration will then be required with the opportunity to refresh the décor. Grant applications have been submitted to cover much of the costs of this project and the decisions are now awaited.

A successful grant application early last year to Awards for All enabled the replacement of the cooker, the purchase of a steam cleaner and the replacement of the broken manual high window opener with an electric system.

Finances of the Hall continue to be healthy with no current plans to change the rates of hire. We are pleased that there has been an increase in the number of regulars making casual bookings and that a change in a recurring hire has resulted in greater use of the Hall during quiet times. These offset the loss of various groups in recent years and, because of the resulting increased revenues, should secure the finances of the Hall for the immediate future.

The hard work of our bookings secretary, Liz Young, must be acknowledged as it is only through her efforts that successful casual hires are secured. Liz has now decided to retire and so the Committee are looking for a new bookings secretary. The Committee welcomed a new Treasurer in 2016, Keith Greenfield, who has a wealth of accounting experience and so we know that management of the finances is in very good hands. We also welcomed John Ingle to the Committee and his experience was greatly appreciated during the exterior maintenance project. Lastly, and following the launch of our own website with an online diary last year, we have recently recruited a volunteer to assist with social media to better promote the Hall and to advise the Community of developments.

I must also give specific personal thanks to our Secretary, Rob King, for his guidance, his words of wisdom and unstinting efforts to ensure that we make the Hall the best possible. Be assured, that the members of this Committee will, whilst they are in office, continue to operate with due diligence, in accordance with the Trust Deed and in the best interests of the Hall and the Community.