

## Broughton Playing Fields & Village Hall Association

### Annual General Meeting October 2020 Chairperson's Report



The Association is a registered charity which was established in 1979 to manage and look after the Village Hall and Playing Fields for the benefit and amenity of all the residents of Broughton and Little Cransley. The Management Committee is made up of volunteer trustees and is responsible for the management, maintenance, and development of the facilities.

When sitting down to write this report it felt it would be dominated by Covid-19 and all the issues in a world dominated by lockdowns and restrictions associated with the pandemic. Thankfully, that is not the case, since my last report in June 2019, lots of great things happened in the 9 months leading up to March 2020 and in the 6 months since. The Committee have done a wonderful job in managing the hiring of the facilities, responding to the challenges Covid-19 has brought, whilst completing several development projects. The finances remain in reasonable shape and grants and fundraising have continued to supplement the development fund, helping to support the improvements and ongoing plans for the village hall and grounds.

I believe we can all be extremely proud with what has been achieved over the last 15 months – a very big thank you to the committee members for all their efforts and for another successful year.

On a cautionary note, developing the capacity and capability of the Committee remains a priority if it is to maintain the levels of activity and progress of recent years.

So, what has happened over the last 15 months:

- It was decided to change the year end to 31 March from 30<sup>th</sup> April partly driven by Covid-19 financial concerns and to also to avoid mismatch of funding of project expenses. On a 11 month pro-rata basis income showed a 4.6% increase year on year and a comfortable surplus over running expenses. Utilisation of the facilities pre Covid was at an all-time high - a real success story but managing it is not without its challenges and would not be possible without the commitment of our two booking secretaries, Bryony Gates & Barbara Zutshi.
- During the financial year various projects were completed at a cost of £19,500 with 83% funded by grants and fundraising activities, the remainder coming from development funds and operating surplus. The projects included, alteration and refurbishment of the changing rooms and toilets incorporating spectator access to toilets, a defibrillator on site, alterations to the Meachem room to accommodate Under 5s expanding their offering and a community project creating a petanque court.
- Since the year end:
  - We have received a Covid grant of £10,000 from the government and suspension of rates to support the Associations finances during lockdown and ongoing restrictions affecting our ability to hire out the building

- The new Skate Ramps have been successfully completed, funded by the Village Hall and part of the S106 funds relating to the Cransley Green development. The ramps have proved extremely popular and a great addition to the village hall amenities.
  - A joint drainage project with Kettering Football Club to improve the waterlogging of the football pitches and flooding of the car park, saw 24 volunteers from the Community and the Club, laying 350 metres of drainage pipes, barrowing 32 tonnes of gravel and backfilling the drainage trenches over 3 days. The project was funded jointly by Kettering Borough Council, Maud Elkington Trust and the Village Hall.
  - To improve visitor experience, the entrance doors have been replaced, the floor levelled with a new surface laid and improved lighting installed, part funded by Kettering Borough Council capital grant.
- We are particularly grateful for the grants, funding and support of the Maud Elkington Trust, the Constance Travis Trust, the Bernard Sunley Foundation, The National Lottery Fund, Northamptonshire Charitable Foundation and Kettering Borough Council. Their collective support of our community makes it possible to improve and develop our facilities.
  - The Committee have various policies in place to support the governance of the committee's activities including, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Procurement which are subject to ongoing review. Revised policies and procedures have been put in place to ensure the building is Covid secure and safe for hirers to use subject to additional special conditions of hire. The Committee have followed Government guidance and ACRE advice in developing its Covid-19 policies.
  - Broughton Under 5s is an important group for both the village and the village hall. We have worked closely with them to enable their offering to be extended to sustain the group into the future. During the lockdown period The Village Hall subsidised the Group whilst they remained open to support key workers children during lockdown.
  - We are delighted to have formed a long term relationship with Kettering Football Club to use the pitches at Broughton for their Girls, Ladies, Boys and Disabled Teams. The club have helped level and grass an area for a 5-a-side pitch, helped install land drainage and have marked out both 11 and 9-a-side pitches to accommodate the various age ranges.
  - Covid restrictions resulted in the closure of the Hall in March. With a lot of effort from Bryony and Barbara, we managed to reopen the Hall towards the end of July, but the ongoing restrictions have made it difficult for a number of our regular user groups to return. We look forward to welcoming them back as restrictions ease.
  - Our User Groups and Clubs are an essential part and purpose of the village hall and ongoing support by the local community is necessary for them to thrive. As Covid restrictions are lifted, I hope they are successful in attracting the support they deserve to maintain the diversity of activities taking place on the site.
  - In the next few weeks we should see Broughton's Community Fridge scheme up and running which the Village Hall will host – more details to follow in the coming days.

Despite the more recent challenges, the last 15 months has seen increased usage of the hall and grounds and it was particularly nice to see so many people enjoy the outside space over the summer.

Whilst I say this every year, I am very aware the Committee are all volunteers who give so freely of their time to manage the bookings, look after the finances and help look after the building as well as progressing plans and fundraising for the future development of the site. I am extremely grateful for all the time and effort so willingly and enthusiastically given by both the members of the Village Hall and Village Show Committees throughout the year as, without their support and commitment, the running of the Village Hall and Village Show could not happen.

It is with great sadness that after a short battle with cancer our long serving Committee member Richard Tyler passed away. Richard (Skid) Tyler as he was known to many, had been involved with Broughton Old Boys football team for over 50 years and was a great supporter of the village hall, acting as liaison with other local teams as well as marking out pitches and acting as link with the Council. A real gentleman who will be sadly missed.

We have also said goodbye to Mary Rust after 11 years serving on the Committee following her move to Northampton. Claire Tilley has decided not to apply for re-election due to work commitments – Claire was instrumental in the funding and installation of the defibrillator. A big thank you to them both.

The increased level of bookings activity has made the current Occasional Bookings Secretary's role unsustainable in its current form and this will need to be changed if it is to continue to be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

Whilst we have achieved a lot this year, in one area we have been far less successful. We have failed to find new and younger members of the village to get involved. To make sure the Committee is representative of the Broughton & Little Cransley community as a whole and has all the appropriate skills, energy and numbers to carry out its responsibilities on behalf of the residents. It will be essential that we find new volunteers this year.

Now for one or two specific thanks and acknowledgments:

- The 11<sup>th</sup> Village Show & Fun Day was held in September 2019 with a great turnout from the village resulting in a lovely community event. The weather was kind for a change and we had a really enjoyable afternoon. The Village Show Committee once again did an excellent job in managing to stage this community event, attracting around 250 entries to the produce and craft show. The event, which was supported by HSBC through Katie Hodgson and Barclays Bank Community Scheme raised in excess of £6000 which was used to help fund the various development projects. This event could not take place without the help and support of the Show Committee and the many helpers from the village – to you all a BIG THANKYOU.
- It was great to see Santa on his sleigh again in December – thanks to Gaynor Ireland and Derek Lawrence for arranging his visit to Broughton just before Christmas and for the kind donation to the Village Hall from the funds collected on Santa's journey around the village.
- Kettering Borough Council have once again looked after the playing fields and surrounding area, mowing the grass and maintaining the grounds for which we are most grateful.

- Maintaining and managing our regular and occasional bookings is no easy task, income and activity from both has increased again this year and I would like to thank Bryony Gates and Barbara Zutshi for all their time effort and hard work in undertaking this responsibility and making sure our hirers are looked after so well.
- I am very grateful to Phil West and Ravi Zutshi for keeping on top of the maintenance, taking care of contractor visits and for carrying out running repairs and maintenance themselves which has made a big difference to the presentation and upkeep of the building.
- My thanks to our Secretary Gaynor Ireland for keeping a record of the meetings and agreed actions as well as looking after Social Media amongst her other responsibilities.
- Tim Durdin our Treasurer also requires a special mention as he keeps a tight rein on the Association's finances and governance and continues to manage the Village Hall Development Plan for which I am particularly grateful. Tim has put us on notice that he intends to leave the village in the coming months, so we need to find a new Treasurer. Thanks Tim, you have been a real asset for the Association, we wish you well for the future.
- And lastly, a specific thank you for the flexibility and support of our Cleaner Tony Brooks who looks after the building, often undertaking the cleaning at unsociable hours to fit between regular hirers and outside parties and events to make sure clean and tidy facilities are available to all.

Finally, we managed to knock a few items off our "To Do" list last year but a number still remain:

- Finding new committee members to provide continuity into the future will be critical.
- Investigate options for improving the efficiency and performance of the heating in the main hall
- Continue discussions with Kettering Borough Council to extend the term and area of the existing lease to incorporate the football pitches.
- With funding for a MUGA looking ever more challenging in today's environment, to look at alternative outside facilities to improve the health and wellbeing of all ages of the community.
- Put on an open day for the Village Hall and its user groups in 2021 to promote both and establish priorities for the community.
- To investigate possible phasing of the extension of the changing rooms, Hall and build of the community room to optimise funding opportunities. Our development fund and the S106 money should help us attract grant funding for these projects.

There are plenty of things to progress during the coming year as well as keeping the Village Hall running day to day, but most importantly, I hope the Village Hall and Playing Fields continue to provide great facilities for use by our community in the months and years to come.