

## **Grendon Underwood Village Hall – Registered Charity 300271**

I agreed to be the Grendon Underwood Parish council representative on the village hall and became a trustee in November 2021.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> May this year with the re-election of David Hedgecox as Chair and Paul Jackman as treasurer.

It was noted that there was a significant impact on the operation of the hall in 2021 due to the covid restrictions with a number of regular users unable to meet and a very low number of occasional bookings being made. However, despite that the finances for the year ended 31 December 2021 were tabled showing assets as at that date of £34,968.08. This was an increase from £17,995.02 at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 due mainly to business continuity grant income during the period affected by covid.

The hall has more than six months running costs in hand and also has a surplus on the electricity meter due to low usage but this is expected to be reduced especially given the higher electricity prices in 2022. Hire charges should exceed running costs by at least 20% to provide a reserve for extraordinary expenditure – in 2021 the running costs were £4316 and income, excluding grants, was £3524. This again shows the impact of the pandemic and the need to maintain a healthy reserve. Hire charges were agreed to be kept as they currently are (set in 2014) for another year but subject to earlier review if the exemption from business rates was removed and/or electricity costs were to significantly increase.

The policy for continuous improvement was also hampered by covid restrictions but despite that a quote was obtained and accepted to replace the dressing room floors and the football club agreed to fund 25% of the £1900 ex VAT. The work is expected to be completed in 2022. New stage curtains have been installed and although the village hall agreed to ring fence up to £1000 this was not required and costs were covered by monies raised by a New Year's Eve and Burns Night events held in 2019.

Looking at plans for the future, the completion of the car park remains the highest priority along with other external improvements, however, these projects would require significant levels of funding as would an increase in storage area by an extension at the rear of the hall and an increase in the bar area both of which have been discussed in the past.

Although the hall has no formal relationships with other Charities, the adjacent village sports field and recreation area is owned by the Charitable Saye & Sele Trust and there is frequent informal cooperation between both parties when events are arranged which includes use of both facilities. The trustees allow visitors to the school, including parents dropping off and picking up children, to use the car park free of charge, thus helping the road parking congestion.