



April 2018

The year has been challenging with various changes.

Lighting has been upgraded from normal tungsten lights and energy efficient lights to LED lighting. Several ceiling fans have been repositioned in the Lounge bar. There are more fittings to be upgraded in some corridors and storage rooms.

The use of card payment has been installed and with the recent changes to the banking sector. For Debit Cards and for Credit Cards we adhere to the banking guidance. This is normal for a small business. This new method of payment, for us, has been used a lot on function events.

The pool table located in the Compton Lounge has now been converted to use New pound Coins, £1 for three games. Young people have been in to enjoy using the Pool Table.

General refurbishment is ongoing. New, internal notice boards have been installed. All the electrical equipment has been PAT Tested, as per statutory requirements.

The path on the right hand side, School side, has been re-laid to stop puddles forming and a new drainage gully system installed to remove any standing water also to remove any potential trip hazard

The new cladding is holding up to the winter and double glazing is assisting to reduce our heating bills.

The committee welcomed Wayne Allan, from Barham Parish Council; they had not had a representative for over a year, since Gordon Musson stood down. The meetings have been lively and there is an impetus for forward movement.

The Claydon representative, stepped down in February and a new Claydon representative has been selected from the Parish Councillors, Gerald James.

Membership has increased, however the old members are beginning to pass on.

As everyone is aware, the Café Business left the Community Centre. They owed three months back rent and refused to pay. We tried to sit down and formalise our agreement as agreed with them at the outset one year after their commencement. This was in June and they were asked to discuss, formalise and negotiate some existing and some minor changes to their tenure. Initially we were told that they were seeking legal advice and as time went on and they stopped paying their rent a quarter in advance as per their initial agreement. And then became a couple of

months in areas, we tried to meet with them to draw a Formal Contract with them and they refused to have any part of these negotiations. Always stating we had increased the rent. We wished to enter into discussion upon the rent. It had not been increased but due to an increase in utilities we felt that this needed to be broached and an increase was necessary to cover the overheads.

When they started the Café it was on a trial basis and based upon their business plan with stated objectives i.e. paying £2100 a quarter in advance. The first 12 months reducing to £2000 per quarter for the next period.

We should have insisted on a legally drawn contract, prior to the start of the cafe. However the committee wasn't afforded any time to make the decision. The agreement between the Café Business and The Community Centre was a verbal agreement from the onset. This we now know was our mistake. However at the time we had good faith with the Café Business.

The times of opening changed from 10.00 - 2.00 and ended up 8.00 - 16.00, for the same rent. This was unacceptable and the Café Business Owners would not discuss the matter. On their leaving date, they contacted the local Press and implied we asked them to leave, this was not the case. Eventually a way forward was agreed, and a meeting was held the following week at the Vicarage and to be chaired by the Vicar. This happened. Various things discussed and both Sides had tasks. The Community Centre carried out the entire agreed required tasks. We have heard nothing from the Owners of the Café Business and they still owe £3,000 in back rent.

We are currently refurbishing the Hall Kitchen area, with the view of having a Café in the Community Centre in the future. Also to be able to offer an area where functions can be catered from, as previously this facility was not available and it is believed that this will encourage growth of the community Centre.

Peter Avis

9<sup>th</sup> April 2018