

CLAYDON AND BARHAM VILLAGE HALL ANNUAL REPORT

25 March 2017 until 21 March 2018

I'm touching wood when I say that the previous 12 months have been a good period for the village hall. The fabric of the building is in fine shape, the roof still doesn't leak and all the vital services are still working. Now a quick look back at what's been happening in the hall.

March/April 2017

Regular hirers such as Slimming World, Silver Surfers, Claydon PC, Barham PC, Young Families, Mums and Tots, Sunshine Service, Table Tennis and Craft Addicts accounted for most of the weekday bookings during this period. Four out of five of the Saturdays in April had private bookings, which is good to see.

May/June 2017

Bookings income was boosted by elections on May 4 and 8 June. At this point of the year we anticipated the upgrade to our power supply provided by UK Power Networks. This was to be a village-wide affair. The WiFi system in the hall was upgraded to cope with the increased demand of the very successful Silver Surfers group. Mums and Tots group, a long-running hall hirer, closed in mid-June.

August/September 2017

August is a quiet time for the hall in terms of bookings, giving us the chance to catch up with some maintenance or upgrade tasks. So in mid-August we had a new electrical distribution board fitted and hand dryers in the toilets. At about the same time UK Power Networks ran the main 'new electricity' supply cable to the back of the hall but stopped short of connecting it to our system. So we were unable to complete our electrical inspection and planned upgrade to a ring main in the kitchen. (As I write this, UK Power Networks have yet to complete their 'village-wide' electrical upgrade.)

Rehearsals for the next Bar-Clay Music Makers panto started in September. The BMM group is a major hirer for the hall.

October/November 2017

Minor upgrades during this period included a bookshelf in the 'kitchen' committee room (sales of books from this shelf pay for all the consumables in the cleaning cupboard), two new water heaters in the toilets and more 'invisible' magnetic locks for regular hirers' cupboards in the kitchen.

One of the most interesting bookings took place on Saturday 21 October, when Wardell Armstrong mounted an exhibition of archaeological finds 'thrown up' during groundworks for the new Anglia One wind farm off our coast. Well attended by interesting people.

At the end of November Anne Dunford stepped down as the Claydon and Whitton PC representative on the Management Committee. We thank Anne for her hard work and wise counsel during and between our meetings.

December/January 2017/18

Just before and after Christmas the hall stage was painted grey and a few holes filled in around the edges. The result was a clean-looking platform that really 'shone' during *The Little Mermaid* panto very successfully put on by BMM during the last two weekends of January. Doing this 'freshen up' exercise reinforced our thinking that the stage should be our next major upgrade project. We have asked local builders Mark Basham and Clive Webb to carry out a first look at the stage and offer ideas on how it could be improved or rebuilt. We hope to start that 'consultation' process soon.

February/March 2018

As a follow up to the archaeology exhibition held in October 2017, a new exhibition on 20 February at the hall showcased the practical business of laying the electricity cables, including tunnelling under the A14, that will connect to the Anglia One wind farm. The future is already here, and on our doorstep!

On the bookings side, we received a request for a wedding reception – the first I have dealt with. It's for Friday August 31 and we hope the young couple have a good experience in our humble hall.

On the upgrade/maintenance front we have recently replaced a closer on the door into the hall from the foyer and, as I type, new hard-wearing flooring is being laid in the foyer to replace the shabby green carpet that has felt the weight of many footfalls during its long career. And, last of all, we are about to choose a new display cabinet for the front wall of the hall. This will be able to display eight A4 posters and so give more clubs and groups room to advertise their wares.

So, our work goes on, but we are in good heart.

Geoff Rogers

Chairman, Village Hall Management Committee, 21 March 2018

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