

# Claydon and Barham Village Hall

The year from April 2018 until April 2019

A report of the past year in the life of our hall can be divided into three categories:

- 1 The fabric of the building.
- 2 What goes on inside.
- 3 News from the committee.

So let's start by catching up with any 'works' that have been undertaken in the hall during the last 12 months:

## Infrastructure

- New electricity distribution boards were fitted and the hall was finally connected to the new 100amp electricity supply. We were then able to instruct our electrical contractors to finish the electrical inspection of the hall (needed every 5 years) and install a new ring main in the kitchen.
- Smart new noticeboards and accompanying nameplates were fitted to the front of the building, funded in part by Claydon PC. These look great and make putting up new notices so much easier than before.
- The carpet in the foyer was replaced with hard-wearing 'vinyl' flooring. About time.
- A rainwater leak from the flat roof above the toilet block was cured.
- The dimmer lighting system in the main hall was repaired and the push/twist dimmer controls moved higher up the wall from the on/off switches. This will prevent people leaning against the dimmer controls and inadvertently turning the lights off.
- New 'quiet' extractor fans were fitted in all the toilets. A grant from the District Council helped to fund this work.
- Related to infrastructure works: The gable end of the roof overhanging the flat toilet block roof has been unstable for some time and threatens to fall down. Scaffolding has appeared at the other end of the Hamilton Smith building and promises have been made about stabilising the gable end near the hall.
- Future upgrade plans include the stage. This will be a long-term project and we are taking very early steps in the next few weeks by taking down redundant scenery backdrops suspended close to the back wall of the stage.

## Activities and bookings

- Our repeat hirers, such as Slimming World, Bar-Clay Music Makers, Young

Families, Sunshine Service, Gipping School of Dance, Table Tennis Club, Craft Addicts, Women's Institute, Moo Music and, of course, Parish Councils, form the backbone of our income stream and we thank them for their ongoing custom. Private hires during the year have been dominated by birthday parties (a growth industry). In fact there were 22 birthday parties, ranging from 2yr old to 80yr old. (Some with bouncy castles, but not for the 80yr old!) There was a wedding reception, sound bath sessions, dance practice for a single couple, a Suffolk County Council Community Engagement Event, a health and safety training session in the committee room, a clairvoyant evening, a charity tea party, loud speakers tests, a baby shower ..... all human life is here. And long may it continue.

## **Committee News**

In the Autumn of 2018 we were saddened by the sudden and unexpected death of Janet Clarke, who was our treasurer for two years. Janet was well loved by many people in the wider community and we were privileged to share in her enthusiasm and dedication as part of our team.

Our new Treasurer, Ruth Arthur, is experienced in accounting systems and with help from John Tuppen we are now able to pay via online banking as well as receive payments that way. The days of the cheque are numbered!

## **A Final Thought**

The most telling of comments heard recently from a parent at a children's party held in the hall; 'I never knew it [the hall] was here.' How amazing is that? Clearly the hall has been 'here' for more than 100 years. Is it invisible? Does it not have 'Village Hall' written on the outside? I think this means that the hall is such a familiar part of the High Street that it can go unnoticed by passersby. It is the meat in the sandwich between the hairdressers and the bakers. It just is. In many ways this is a good thing. It is a 'comfortable' place, at home in the village centre. And when villagers actually go inside for the first time they realise what a great place it is, especially for a children's party. I'm sure word of mouth spreads the good news that Claydon and Barham Village Hall is just the right place to don their party hats and celebrate their youngsters coming of age. And long may it be so. That's why the management committee take such pride in looking after this venerable and venerated community hub.

Geoff Rogers

Chairman, Village Hall Management Committee, 14 April 2019

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