

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall
Registered Charity Number 283279

Trustee's Annual Report for the period 24 October 2019 to 23 October 2020

Aim and Purposes

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall was conveyed by a deed dated 10 December 1952 by Devon County Council held upon trust for the purposes of physical and mental training and recreational and social moral and intellectual development through the medium of reading and recreation rooms library lectures classes recreations and entertainments for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish of Sampford Courtenay and its immediate vicinity without distinction of sex or political religious or other opinions.

Objectives and Activities

The Management Committee is charged with the maintenance and control of the Trust premises by means of fund-raising activities and income from the letting of the hall. Typical events throughout the year usually include monthly whist drives, Christmas and Easter Bingo, concerts, dog show and car boot, the annual flower and produce show, quiz evenings, skittles matches, a big breakfast and a wine tasting evening. The hall is regularly let to the parish council for meetings, at which members of the parish can attend, and to private individuals for wedding receptions, christenings, funeral teas and parties.

These events, however, have been curtailed this year by the Covid - 19 pandemic.

The refurbishment of the kitchen and committee room is now complete. The slates on the roof, however, have become nail sick and the replacement of the slates on the roof has now become a priority. A number of the grants that we were hoping to apply for have closed because of the pandemic and fundraising has become difficult because of the inability to hold events. The Roof-Us appeal has been launched and donations have come in.

Achievements and Performance

The work on the extension, which included an improved kitchen, enlarged committee room, store room, disabled toilet and new entrance lobby has now been completed.

Repairs to some slipped slates have been carried out. The repairs to the slates revealed that the nails are nail sick and the roof is a priority for replacement. The Roof Sub Committee have held regular meetings through the year and their efforts have been greatly appreciated by the Village Hall Committee.

Financial Review

The accounts have been audited. We began the year with £7194.90.

The income from hiring significantly decreased from £2574.31 down to £1145.50. There was a steady stream of income coming in from hirings up until March 23rd when the first lockdown began. With the hall closed this income ceased until September 1st when the yoga classes began. Private hire accounted for 25% of this income and the remaining 75% came from regular hirings. This was helped by the December election.

We made a good profit at the Christmas Bingo (£433.80), but we were unable to hold the Easter Bingo because of the escalation of the Covid -19 pandemic. We were only able to hold four whist drives this year (Martin Morrissey holds the cash from the November whist).

The events we were able to hold before the pandemic did raise good sums of money. The quiz and pudding evening held in November raised £566 and the Big Breakfast, which was the last event to be held before lockdown began, brought in a much welcome £390.43. Thanks must be expressed to Nicky for her hard work in organising this event.

We could be losing the cleaner whose services we have used for a couple of years. She is doing some hours before she moves away from the area. We hope to be able to employ the services of someone in Sampford Courtenay.

We held a talk about Mongolia given by Pam Kemp, which proved popular. It is hoped to be able to ask her to come to the hall again once the restrictions surrounding Covid - 19 ease.

West Devon Borough Council did decide to give us discretionary relief again this year so we did not have to pay a rates bill.

We paid out £511 for electric and receipts from the electric meters covered just over half of this amount (£269). Expenditure on water was less this year because of the lack of activity at the hall. The amount spent on electric did increase partly because we had the deep freeze working.

We received a loan from Mr. Squire in 2015 and we have been paying this off in instalments. We paid off £2700 of this loan and Mr Squire's family informed us they were happy to write off the remaining £300. We are very grateful to Mr Squire for this loan as the work on the extension did stretch finances and we wish to express our thanks to his family for their generosity in writing off the remainder of the repayments. We are to use this money and the amount received from the funeral donations to spend on something at the hall in his memory.

A further £435.31 was spent to repair some more slates on the roof. A repair was also carried out last year and the roof is a priority for repair. This is going to cost in the region of £150,000. A number of the grants we were hoping to target have been closed because of the pandemic. It is, however, hoped that once they reopen we are in a position to submit applications. I must express thanks to Mike and the Roof Sub-Committee who have put in a huge amount of effort drawing up business plans and launching Roof-Us our fundraising appeal. At year end £1080 had been received.

We did benefit from a £10000 grant from the Government which was made available to businesses (including village halls) affected by the pandemic.

The challenge we now face is holding events in a different way. Nicky came up with the wonderful idea of delivering cream teas during the lockdown and this raised a fantastic £780.77 (a big thank you to her and her delivery team!).

We paid £300 as a deposit for the Grand Summer Ball last year and this money has not been lost. Oaktree Occasions are holding it as a deposit for when we do hold it. Originally it had been hoped it would be next year, but we will have to wait and see.

We have managed to hold our monthly meetings remotely (i.e. at home) using Zoom.

We now have hot water in the ladies and gents toilets. Our thanks to Anthony for arranging this just before the March lockdown.

We were advised to open another bank account. Unfortunately Lloyd's Bank were not opening new business bank accounts because of Covid. It is now hoped to open an account with NatWest.

The committee asked a local accountant to look at the pros and cons of registering for VAT to enable us to reclaim the VAT on the roof repair. The report made it quite clear that we would be unable to reclaim all of the VAT because of the differing VAT rates. The committee has taken the decision not to register for VAT at this time.

We have made a surplus of £10330.15 this year and end the year with £17525.05 in the bank account. This is due to the Government Grant of £10000 we received. Our income without this grant would have been significantly reduced and our challenge next year will be to find ways of raising funds whilst adhering to Government guidance/restrictions that may be in place.

Plans for the future

The trustees intend to continue to provide the usual activities for the benefit of the community. The repair to the roof is a priority and the trustees will endeavour to get an application for a grant submitted to English Heritage or other grant providers whilst continuing to raise funds through events.

Structure, governance and management

The structure, governance and management of the hall is detailed in the Constitution adopted at the AGM in December 2016.

The committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month.

Reference and administrative details

The current contact is Mrs Nicky Courage, Middletown Farmhouse, Sampford Courtenay, Okehampton EX20 2SZ.

Email: nickyvhmc@gmail.com

The charity's bank account is held at Lloyds Bank, Okehampton.