

Jubilee Hall Trust AGM 21 January 2020

Chairman's Report

When Michael Bartlett stepped down as Chairman on 23 January 2019, it was agreed that the role of chairman would rotate among the remaining Trustees. During the year, the strength of the Management Committee and the clarity of the individual roles, all developed under Michael's leadership, has enabled us all to work together without an identified chairman. But as luck would have it, I fell into a trap at the last Management Committee meeting on 9 October and found myself as Acting Chairman for the latter part of the year.

In this capacity, I am honoured to present a brief report.

This has been a very good year for Jubilee Hall. Together with Glebe Meadow, it is at the heart of village life and provides opportunities for people to meet, socialise and even learn. But a good year sets the bar at a high level, which can be tough to follow.

Firstly, some good news about the Trustees, in that following a change of personal circumstances, Michael has offered to re-join the band of Trustees. I consulted all the Trustees on 7 January and am pleased to report that I received a unanimous positive response and so can now formally welcome Michael back as a Trustee and member of the Management Committee.

Since the last AGM the Management Committee has proved itself an excellent team, each member having a clearly defined role. Members have worked well together, and communication has been such that we have not needed to meet formally more than 2x during the year.

There have been some superb events throughout the year, many inspired by Debbie and carried out with great village support – from the St Patrick's Day celebration to the amazing Hunters' Dinner at the end of November.

Pub Nights have been well supported, and also talks, a great book sale, Macmillan tea party, photo competition etc, and the Hall proved a good venue for a novel sale of fascinating antiques and interior furnishings – a first to my knowledge.

The noticeboard, which Michael had organised, has enhanced our image and improved publicity, and Dee has been an excellent Publicity Manager as well as Secretary. We seem to be managing well without a separate events manager.

Michael has taken responsibility for the website which is increasingly useful and accessible, with immediate information on Jubilee Hall bookings and events through the calendar as well as across the range of village activities including the Parish Council. This is remarkable for a small village. We just need someone about ¼ my age with a grasp of social media to help fill some gaps in our publicity.

The size, location and ambience of Jubilee Hall is special and perfect for small art or yoga groups. Our hirers have stayed loyal although we would like to see the Hall even better used

Hall bookings have been managed with great efficiency – thanks to Robert and Joy, who have looked after our hirers so well, and even opened the Hall on 12 December two hours before dawn – as a polling station.

Health and Safety is overseen by Steve and the risk assessment file maintained up to date. All our portable electrical equipment was PAT tested in November. New smoke and heat alarms are shortly to be fitted

Our thanks are also due to Colin for quietly and effectively tackling maintenance issues, and in particular his work on the roof of the extension to deal with dampness on the wall of the ladies toilet, and in improving the kitchen drain gully. You may also have noticed that the failed double glazing unit has been replaced by Richard Hitchman.

Disability compliance is important to us and the Management Committee has agreed to make access to the Hall much more wheelchair friendly. To this end, a grant application has been submitted to South Norfolk Council's Community Action Fund with a decision in February.

What we do is all underpinned by the need for healthy finances. The modernising of the accounts and use of online banking has streamlined day to day financial management, kept costs under control, and improved transparency. This also applies to the 100Club. Huge thanks to Geoff as Treasurer for taking all this on, as well as to John who was previously managing the 100Club very effectively. I should add that being in Cape Town is no deterrent to Geoff paying Jubilee Hall bills punctually, backed by either Patrick or myself as part of the dual signatory process with Barclays. A clear advantage of on-line banking.

At this point, I should like to express our thanks to the Parish Council for their annual contribution of £400 towards our running costs, which is really helpful in enabling us to manage Jubilee Hall for the benefit of the village.

The illuminated Christmas tree proved a great success with many positive comments received, even though when it appeared as an island in a moat over Christmas it was the cause of some concern. We thank Derek Griffin for the tree and Stuart for both his lumberjack efforts and for erecting the tree and its lights. And our thanks are also due to Clayton Hudson for his District Council member's grant which covered the cost of the external power sockets and tree lights, (previously offered to us by the Parish Council). The foundations for the Christmas tree are permanently installed so making it easy to repeat every Christmas.

Our marquee was used at the 'Music in Country Churches' event at Pulham St Mary, which was a great success and will have helped improve the finances

of St Margaret's Church. Again, Colin's help is critical not only in caring for Hall maintenance, but also as our marquee manager, whether the marquees are used for a Glebe Meadow event or in support of other village activities.

The spectacular **flooding** down Railway Hill from before Christmas was due to a combination of heavy rainfall and blocked drains. Norfolk County Highways responded quickly and the lake lasted a couple of weeks. But this highlighted Jubilee Hall's vulnerability at the bottom of the hill. What had already become apparent was damage to the external walling due to constant wetness over the last 5 years since our major restoration project. County Highways have now agreed to re-profile the road to remove the puddles which splash onto the end wall of Jubilee Hall when vehicles pass. And we will need to repair the wall once the main cause of erosion of the brickwork has been remedied.

We also need to repair and repoint the car park wall which has been damaged by ivy over several decades and which is at risk of becoming unstable.

Responsibility for maintaining the fabric of Jubilee Hall and the car park is a priority for the Management Committee, and a good reason for needing a healthy financial reserve.

Glebe Meadow has proved as popular as ever this year, with a footfall of what must be around 5,000 walkers, not including their dogs, and not including meadow events. The meadow is maintained by volunteers both in the weekly mowing team and with occasional group gatherings, with professional help for hay cutting, baling and mole control. The bees, helped by 3 new swarms collected in 2019, have provided some wonderful honey. Four colonies were fed for winter and have received their winter medication. With luck, we will have 4 healthy colonies to start next year. Anyone who would like to get involved in bee-keeping in Glebe Meadow would be very welcome to contact me. The honey is delicious and most sales are to returning customers, with all proceeds going to Jubilee Hall.

We have responsibility for maintaining the trees in Glebe Meadow and by the Beck in a safe manner. Ash die-back is slowly taking its toll, and some alder are also dying. We will need to engage tree surgeons at some point in the next couple of years. While I continue to keep an eye on the trees when I can, I would welcome feedback from all meadow users about any trees thought to be of concern.

I think we can reflect on a successful year for Jubilee Hall and Glebe Meadow. My thanks to all of you on the Management Committee who have helped make this happen.

Peter Grimble
Acting Chairman
Starston Jubilee Hall Trust