

Eynsham Village Hall Annual Report 2021/22

This has been another difficult year for the Village Hall largely due to the fact that Covid restrictions played a huge part in limiting our use up until August/September 2021 when the restrictions began to ease. Our financial year runs from 1st August to 31st July, so at the end of July 2020 (only 4 months into the pandemic) our income dropped by more than £8,000. Then for the next 12 months up to the end of July 2021 our income dropped again by a further £25,000!

However, we were lucky enough to get two Government grants via WODC totalling £19,909 which has managed to help us survive but our large overheads, even when the Hall has been closed, has meant our reserves have dropped extremely low.

In March 2021 our caretaker, Dave Syphas, left us for a higher paid job as we could not keep him suitably employed and we appointed Chris Partlett as his replacement in May 2021. We have been very pleased with Chris' work but in March 2022 he handed in his notice as he has realised he needed a more full-time job. We are currently in the process of selecting another replacement.

The Village Hall is owned by Eynsham Parish Council (EPC), and the Council also owns the Bartholomew Room in the The Square which has always accommodated them for meetings etc for many years. Due to the extensive refurbishment works that were planned for the Bartholomew Room in 2020 and the EPC's increased need for larger premises for meetings and a permanent office, negotiations went ahead between EPC and the Village Hall Management Committee. Following discussions with some of the regular users of the Village Hall who would have to change the days they used the Hall it was agreed that EPC could have full use of the Main Hall for regular meetings on a Tuesday evening and sole use of the Committee Room as a permanent office. This appears to be working well although there have been some teething problems with a new broadband installation which are being resolved.

In August/September last year we started seeing a return of a lot of our regular users following the reduction in Covid restrictions although we continued to follow the advice of Community First Oxfordshire who have been sending out advice to village halls throughout the pandemic. Our one-off bookings are also increasing and we are hoping this will continue as we desperately need to keep a strong income stream to catch up on our rather huge losses.

Roy Wilkinson

Chair of Eynsham Village Hall Management Committee

20.04.22