

Report for: **Worth Matravers Parish Council.**

Relating to: **HARMANS CROSS VILLAGE HALL**

Activities for the period April 2013 to March 2014.

The Village Hall continues to be very well used for a surprising variety of events, clubs and entertainment. The main hall has an occupancy level of 80%. As well as the clubs and groups a number of activities provide entertainment for the local community. Music Nights have now become established with 4 live concerts last year with high quality groups providing a selection of diverse music. Movie Nights held on the second Tuesday evening of the month have averaged an attendance of over 50 per month. The Village Club provides a mix of afternoon speakers with coach outings, literary lunch and other social events such as cream teas and skittle evenings.

Coffee Mornings were re-launched as "Stalls at the Hall" to attract more footfall, there is now a better variety of stalls. These social events are very popular with local residents.

The Residents Club now meets twice a month.

The hall and its events and facilities are continually promoted and advertised. The VH Newsletter is produced and delivered to every address in Harmans Cross 4 times a year. The VH Web site is kept well maintained and receives around 1000 hits a month. The VH is now expanding to use the growing media of social network sites, Facebook and Twitter.

A maximum of 10 wedding receptions are held a year. These provide a substantial part of the annual income but place a heavy load on Village hall facilities and the committee members who oversee the bookings.

In May a very successful Art Exhibition was held by our local Art Group. The Annual Field Day held on August Bank Holiday Monday was blessed with perfect weather and attracted a record attendance of some 2,500 visitors and produced a profit of over £7.9k. Income for the last financial year was £47k with a net surplus of some £7k.

The Jubilee Bench in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee has been installed at the rear of the hall so that users can sit looking down the field and enjoy the afternoon and evening sun.

The project to build our new storage barn has been ongoing for much of this period. Despite considerable efforts by members of the Committee in completing and submitting applications for grant funding none were successful. This makes one realise how fortunate we were to embark on the project to build the new village hall when we did when funding was a little easier to obtain. In a competitive tendering process among local builders the contract was awarded to Matt Hillan, Buildings. The build was delayed at the foundation stage when the Building Inspector after a site visit required additional depth to the foundations and a change to the floor construction. The build continued once the specifications and additional costs had been agreed. The project was completed in early 2014 after further delays caused by the extreme weather conditions. The end result although costing more than expected at £46k will provide the community and hall management with a superb storage facility for decades to come.

The Village Hall is now registered with Dorset County Council and Purbeck District Council as an Emergency Centre.

Where necessary service and maintenance contracts have been taken out on the installed equipment. These cost over £1.6k per annum and are a considerable load on the volunteer maintenance team. Despite the recommended servicing during the year there have been further breakdowns and costs with the Ground Source Heating system and Rainwater Harvesting system. Within a 12 month period the electronic control unit on the Ground Source Heating system has failed twice. Suspicion has fallen on the mains electric supply which does suffer many short interruptions and provision of an uninterrupted power supply is being investigated.

Building repairs during the year have included the front gable being re clad in minimal maintenance material and a number of slipped and cracked roof slates replaced.

The AGM was held in November 2013 and it is pleasing to report that we now have 13 volunteer Trustees which include 3 ladies and so the Committee has a more balanced make up. Hugh Salter stepped down as Chairman and was thanked for all the hard work and enthusiasm which he gave to the Committee, and for the work he did whilst on the Committee. The new Committee provide enthusiasm and despite slightly lower bookings we look forward to the year ahead certain in the knowledge that the Hall provides an excellent focus for the Village and remains popular with all who use it.

In conclusion the Committee would like to thank the Parish Council for their contributions and support throughout the year.

Keith Fisher
Chairman