

Hellifield Institute

Report of the Chair of Trustees at the 2021 Annual Meeting

Throughout 2020, the Institute continued to fulfil its role as Hellifield's Village Hall even if, owing to the Coronavirus pandemic, operations were suspended for the greater part of the year (and remain so at the time of writing).

At the close of the 2020 Annual Meeting, the Trustees comprised Andrew Crabtree, Karen Dunwoodie, Richard Brown, Ann Taylor, David Clements, Heather Leak and Kenneth Leak, and all of them continued in their roles throughout the year. Jennifer Darling joined us as a non-Trustee Committee member as has, more recently, Katherine Kellett. The maximum number of Trustees holding office at any one time remains set at eight, as per our Constitution. During 2020, the Trustees/Committee met formally on six occasions (two of which were "virtual" meetings using "Zoom" technology), and continued to liaise regularly on an informal basis. Virtual meetings are continuing into 2021 until Government regulations are relaxed and we are able to meet again safely.

Andrew Crabtree was re-elected Chair of Trustees at the 2020 Annual Meeting and, as he retires as a Trustee on 30 June 2021, a new Chair is to be elected at this 2021 meeting.

When able to, the Committee continued to operate various fund-raising activities in order to support the charging structure for room hire. The Committee believes that hire charges should be set at a level that encourages the use of the building by villagers, and so seeks to augment charges by alternative sources of income. It is more than seven years since hire charges were last raised, and during the intervening period costs have risen - so the Trustees have succeeded in their goal so far. The 200 Club draw continues to make a significant contribution to our fund-raising. Once Village Halls are allowed to resume activities, the Trustees intend to re-establish the running of one coffee morning per month as a fund-raiser for the Institute itself.

There were no major projects embarked upon in 2020, although purchases of crockery and table tennis equipment were made out of grants received from Craven District Council and North Yorkshire County Council. There is, currently, only one project under consideration for 2021, and that is the replacement of doors and windows in the entrance foyer. However, we do also expect to have to meet an insurance excess of £1,000 arising from building remediation work to correct subsidence.

Perversely, the Institute's finances have improved during "Lockdown" as Government Grants easily outstripped continuing expenditure, and also thanks to the very generous donation by a villager of the proceeds of the sale of their speakers and electronic equipment. The Committee has already had informal discussions as to how this surplus of funds can best be used to once again ensure that Hellifield Village Hall is the hub of the Community.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees and committee members (and also our informal helpers) for their continued perseverance in holding steady the Institute/Village Hall's offering, in maintaining and protecting the building's facilities, in ensuring that the Charity's business is conducted in a timely and professional manner, and in ensuring that its financial footing remains sound. It is a very hands-on role and, even during Lockdown, there have continued to be demands on our committee members' private time. Needless to say, all have responded willingly.