

Church Minshull Village Hall
Muslin Row, Church Minshull,
CW5 6EW

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

“Wow! I never thought it would be like this from the outside” or “it’s like the Tardis – completely different from what I we expected”. These are just some of the comments that have been made by new users and hirers of Church Minshull Village Hall and they encapsulate, to some degree, an intangible measure of both the success of the hall itself and its position as a community facility for the people who live in Church Minshull and those in the wider catchment area. Not bad really for a wooden, surplus Canadian army World War Two Nissen hut that not even the most optimistic of people at the time could have envisaged it being in almost continual use nearly eighty years later!

The most obvious measure of the Hall’s success is still how frequently it is used by the widest spectrum of the residents of the village of Church Minshull and the surrounding area and against this metric the Trustees are pleased to report that the twelve month period to January 31st 2020 again witnessed the hall being used extensively by a whole variety of user groups. Such groups range from Carry on Singing (still the largest attended regular booking), to Ballroom dancing and beginners and intermediate Bridge. In a typical month there was approximately thirteen hours per week of regular bookings with the hall being used at some point of the day or evening on each day of the week excluding weekends. In addition to the regular bookings there were twenty four ‘one off’ or private bookings ranging from children’s parties to local elections as well as a special “ABBA” tribute band concert. In total the hall was in use for over four hundred hours during the year with the overwhelming majority of these being from local residents.

During the internal refurbishments carried out the previous year it became clear that the floor of the hall was tilting slightly by a couple of degrees north to south (a fact that the indoor bowls teams never failed to use as a ‘home advantage’ when possible). Whilst this apparent floor tilt did not cause undue alarm with the Trustees, as part of its central remit to provide a safe community facility, an investigation was commissioned by the Trust by way of a special preliminary Chartered Structural Engineers Report. This

structural engineering report (carried out by Structural Surveys Ltd.) concluded that there had been some minor slipping in and around the supporting piers of the hall, and although there was no immediate danger, the situation was likely to deteriorate over the coming years, and eventually (certainly within ten years), the hall would require major structural works. In the light of this, the Trustees have begun to focus on the long term strategic development of the hall that could include trying to acquire the adjoining land owned by BT (possibly as a village hall car park) and demolishing the existing wooden building and replacing it with a larger, modern, purpose built, brick facility. Obviously, such aspirations are outside the existing financial capabilities of the Trust and to have any chance of achieving whatever future development strategy for the hall is adopted, the Trustees recognise that this would have to be largely a joint initiative with Church Minshull Parish Council and Cheshire East Authority. To this end, the Trustees will be actively engaged with the Parish Council over the coming months to discuss and crystalize the longer term future of the hall.

It may be an integral part of the community of Church Minshull, but the Hall does not run or look itself; it requires the commitment and effort of a team of unpaid Trustees and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the Trustees of the Church Minshull Village Hall Trust for all their hard work and input during the year.

David Barrett

Chair – Church Minshull Village Hall Trustees.

April 2020.