NEWLAND VILLAGE ROOM

REPORT TO AGM 11 JULY 2024

Newland Village Room has continued to be a hub for the community as well as a valuable asset for hire, activities and Parish Council Meetings.

The New Year started with a seated dinner party in the Village Room for 35 people, providing a 4 course meal catered by members of the Committee, with gluten free and veggie options.

On Sunday 7th May, the village celebrated the King’s Coronation with a tea party in the Village Room. We were lucky with the weather and were able to sit in the sunshine around the pond.

The Annual Barbecue was held on 2nd September at Fieldfares by kind permission of Karen and Dean James, with over 70 people attending and live music from Russ and Nev. Again, we were lucky with the weather, which had been unsettled up to then.

On Saturday 25th November, the Village Room held a Mowgli inspired curry evening for over 30 people, which was very well received and is threatening to become an annual event.

Besides these larger events, the pop-up bar was opened on a number of occasions throughout the year. Also, the Village Room hosted wreath making courses in March and December, private bookings, Parish Council Meetings, tango practice, band practices and 3 weekend long professional courses.

In August 2023, major works took place at the Village Room comprising the installation of a water treatment plant for disposal of waste water in order to comply with recent environmental legislation. This work had been budgeted for and was paid for by Covid 19 grants received in 2020 and 2021, and ring-fenced for the purpose. As the cost was just under £10,000, this was a major expenditure for our little Village Room. This meant that other maintenance projects such as repainting of external woodwork and renovation of internal panelling had to be put on hold.

The title to Newland Village Room has, since registration at the Land Registry, been held by three bare trustees, being members of the Village. After taking advice, it was decided to vest the freehold in the Official Custodian, who now holds the property in trust and at the behest of the Charity Trustees. This avoids problems of bare trustees moving away or becoming incapable for one reason or another.

On the financial front, our annual expenses greatly exceeded our income due to the installation of the water treatment plant. The 100 Club once again provided a valuable contribution to this income - £1,747 after paying out prizes. Prize money paid out to lucky winners totalled £1,777.

The Village Room Trustees continue to monitor the condition of the building and grounds, and aim to repair and improve the fabric. The external woodwork is in the process of being repaired and re-painted, and some repointing done. However, it has recently been discovered that the rear roof over the end of the extension is coming to the end of its life and will need to be replaced. This is exactly why, as trustees, we endeavour to keep a prudent margin in the bank and the costs are likely to run into the thousands.

There has been a discernible change in the pattern of bookings for the Village Room, despite the website performing reasonably. Other village halls have noticed this also. Therefore, the support that we receive from the Parish Council, and above all, from you through your attendance of events and taking part in the 100 Club is vital to the Village Room, so thank you all.

For one reason and another, we have not had the opportunity to hold as many events as would normally be the case up to now. However, we are opening up the Pop Up bar on Friday 2nd August, a Village Picnic is taking place at Rookery Farm (Brookside Camp Site) on Saturday 7th September, and a village walk and lunch is scheduled for Saturday 5th October. Also, the curry team is keen to hold a repeat event in the Autumn so watch this space.

I would like to thank my marvellous committee, all of whom contribute something unique. We will miss Jules Pritchard, who has had a number of stints on the committee over the years, and who is stepping down for a well-earned rest, although she has promised to help with the catering when she can. I would also like to thank those who make themselves available when we need some extra man/woman power.

Thank you so much for your support and your attendance.

KLD 11.07.24