**TRUSTEES OF EASTLING VILLAGE HALL**

**Note of the cancellation of the 2021 Annual General Meeting**

**Chair’s Report and Annual Accounts 2020**

**1 Cancellation of the 2021 Annual General Meeting**

With the continuing National Lockdown, the Trustees agreed that the upcoming AGM, scheduled for April 2021, would be cancelled and that the Chair’s Report/Annual Accounts would be posted on the Village Hall website at the appropriate time.

All residents of Eastling, as well as any other interested parties are, of course, welcome to contact Paul Ainsworth, the Chair of the Trustees, with any queries and/or requests for clarification.

**2 Chair’s Report**

I’d like to thank the Trustees, the Secretary and their partners and friends who have devoted a significant amount of their time to maintaining the hall and grounds during what has been a very difficult year to say the least. The membership of the Trustees has been stable over the past year, with the exception of Colin Bell being replaced by Glen Charter, as mentioned in last year’s report. Colin made a significant contribution to the Hall, not least in the building of the stage, and he will be missed. To show our appreciation and to honour his dedication, the Trustees have affixed a brass plaque to the stage naming it after Colin. The Trustees have mainly carried-out their responsibilities via email during the year, although two special meetings (held outdoors with suitable COVID-19 spacing) were held in July and August to discuss what needed to be done in order to reopen the Hall.

We started the year with the Hall closed on account of the first COVID-19 National Lockdown. After carrying out a full Risk Assessment (updated regularly, and available on the Village Hall website), and ensuring that the Government's "Re-Opening Checklist" had been satisfactorily completed, the Trustees were pleased to announce the partial re-opening of the Village Hall from Sunday 16th August. The Trustees also used this as an opportunity to ensure that various maintenance tasks were fully brought up-to-date, including the updating of the Health & Safety report and completion of actions identified, clearing-out various storerooms so that PPE equipment could be stored in a single place, disposal of unneeded items, etc.

Whilst the Trustees were keen to have the Hall available as a resource for the Village and surrounding areas as soon as possible, we felt that this was the earliest time when we could safely reopen. In addition, given the additional stipulations imposed upon us by Government guidance and regulations, we decided that the Hall would only initially be available for hire by professional organizations and groups affiliated to regional or national organizations who have separate insurance and can provide their own Risk Assessment for using the Hall.

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All hirers would, in addition, be required to sign a [Hirers’ Agreement](https://5d6d554e-4417-4711-9ff9-ceb2d4a3f611.filesusr.com/ugd/e73141_f4e7ab136ff54879ba8315dcc9909720.docx?dn=Eastling%20Village%20Hall%2C%20Hire%20Agreement%2020), wherein they accepted the normal [Conditions of Use](https://5d6d554e-4417-4711-9ff9-ceb2d4a3f611.filesusr.com/ugd/e73141_4cac9ff119d84388a5808716894345b4.doc?dn=Eastling%20Village%20Hall%2C%20Conditions%20of%20Use) along with the new [Special Conditions of Hire during COVID-19](https://5d6d554e-4417-4711-9ff9-ceb2d4a3f611.filesusr.com/ugd/e73141_3f5f03b264bf472cb17e61c4f0585a13.docx?dn=Eastling%20Village%20Hall%2C%20Special%20Condition) as well as the conditions outlined in the VH Risk Assessment. Whilst the Trustees intended to closely monitor the use of the Hall when it re-opened and, when appropriate and in line with Government guidance, look to allow more general use of the Hall, this never occurred due to the repeated cycle of relaxation followed by the reintroduction of tougher guidance.

Nevertheless, the Hall was in regular use during August, September and October for Pilates and BOUNCE classes, as well as by a one-off Youth Recital event, all of which were allowed under Government guidance. The exercise classes ceased in November with the introduction of the second National Lockdown and, unfortunately, did not resume afterwards which was probably a sensible decision given the imposition of Tier 4 restrictions later in December and the third National Lockdown in early January. Some use was made of the Hall during November and early December by a local Circus Troupe, Circo Rum Ba Ba, as a rehearsal space under the workplace regulations, but this also ceased in early December.

We finally took delivery of the delayed stage lighting scaffolding from the manufacturers, again made possible by a grant from the Parish Council, although this has not yet been used (unsurprisingly). We would like to thank the Parish Council for their continuing support for the Hall. In March 2020 a grant of £591 was received from Cllr Simmonds through Swale Members’ grant scheme towards replacement of the double doors/windows at the rear of the Hall but this project has been delayed due to COVID-19. We are grateful for Cllr Simmonds’ continued support for the Hall and are currently pursuing quotes in the hope of completing this work when the weather improves. The Treasurer’s Annual Account provides more details but we also received several grants from Swale Borough Council totalling £11,334 in 2020 for lockdown closure and the imposition pf national restrictions. We continue to apply for applicable COVID-19 grants, receiving a further £7,621 so far in 2021 which will be included in the 2021 Accounts. Trustees are in the process of drawing-up a projects list, with quotes, to make best use of the monies.

We have repaired the car park with a longer-lasting mixture of type-1 aggregate and gravel, and will monitor the condition over the next year, touch repairing where necessary. In the meantime we have investigated with a surfacing company the costs for a more comprehensive repair using type-1 aggregate and gravel. The company would dig-out holes and use a “thumper” to consolidate the aggregate and replace the central strip by a more modern surfacing compound. The Trustees will consider these options alongside the other ongoing projects.

The Calendar function, which was added to the website a few years ago, has continued to function well and we will be renewing the subscription. Viewing figures have held-up well, on a par with last year. Tim continues to maintain a Facebook page for the Village Hall, on which he posts any upcoming news/events. Hire charges will continue at the current level for the time being but will be kept under review. Current hire charges are:-

Villagers £8.50 per hour

Outsiders £10.00 per hour

All day parties: £100+ (by negotiation)

Weddings: £350

**3 Annual Accounts 2020**

The annual accounts for 2020 are attached.

**4 Trustees**

Current and new Trustees are as follows:-

Parish Council - Mr Paul Ainsworth

Short Mat Bowls Club - Mr Roy Piles

Parochial Church Council - Mr Norman Fowler

Gardening Club - Mr Paul Ainsworth

Village representative - Mr Glen Charter

Village representative - Mr Tim Philpott

Co-opted Trustee - Mrs Helen Higgs

Hon Treasurer - Mr Simon Brookland-Beck

Bookings Clerk - Mrs Hayley Brookland-Beck

Hon Secretary - Mrs Sue Parry

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signed by the Chair of the Trustees dated