

## **Chairman's Report Village Hall AGM 2019**

This past year has been an interesting and, in some ways experimental, year for the hall committee. With the retirement of Sue Sulkin in December after close on 30 years as the integral "one-stop" booking clerk, secretary and treasurer all rolled into one, reorganizing and redistributing these various tasks has proved a challenge.

Ian Scott and Katharine Hayens have risen superbly to the challenge of dealing with a hall booking system which is also published on the village website. Likewise, Vinny Mckenna has risen to the complicated role of Treasurer, despite it being made frustratingly difficult and long winded by the requirements to change signatories and names with the Bank, the Inland Revenue and VAT office. Sue's other hidden roles of organizing the cleaner and gardener and ordering the oil have had their own challenges, although the only major hiccup has been running out of oil one cold week in April. The gardener and cleaner have adapted and the hall now has a contract with Watson Petroleum whereby the tank is topped up quarterly.

The legacy of Sue Sulkin's years in her Booking Clerk role is that the hall has continued to be well used, not just by the "bread and butter" income of our regular village and outside clients, but also as the venue for a great number of splendid village events, for Artsreach performances, by the church during their winter/spring renovations, and by the Piddle Valley Players for their magnificent performance of "Oklahoma".

The upside of this is that our income has remained steady. The downside is that it has turned out to be an unusually expensive year in terms of repairs and replacements. At the January meeting the committee agreed that the hall cooker had reached the end of its useful life and we had just sufficient funds at ca £1000 to replace it. The main regular users, the Luncheon Club undertook research to find a practical and user-friendly replacement and as chair, I extend my appreciation to Susan Mooring for organizing the purchase and installation of the new cooker, which seems to be working well.

An early February storm came as an expensive and unbudgeted blow. In one weekend the lap fencing between the tarmac and the rear garden was destroyed, leaving the oil tank exposed to view. In the same storm the ceiling in the loo showed up a serious water leak which required replacement of the worn out lead between the coping stones and the main roof. Replacement of both were matters of urgency and estimates of over £1000 put the cooker purchase in jeopardy. With great kindness the United Charities of Buckland Newton came to our rescue and funded the principal cost of the cooker, leaving us with enough funds to do the storm repairs. The roof repairs and repainting was done by Pete Nickisson and the fencing, including a new gate was carried out by Tony Perrett Fencing,

Despite these expenses, and thanks freely given in-house maintenance from committee members along with the generous donation by both the United Charities and the Fete Committee who funded the purchase of some much wanted green chairs with arms, the village hall continues to pay its way. The August Clean Up day was well attended and brought the internal cleaning and decoration up to good order with the Luncheon Club

tackling the kitchen a few days later. Artsreach have brought a string of very enjoyable evenings and really valuable additional remuneration to the hall thanks to Ian Scott, Katharine Haynes and Fran Parker.

Outstanding for this coming year is to find a solution to the oil boiler programmer. This is relatively urgent in order to save unnecessary oil consumption.