

Sutton Village Hall Annual General Meeting 9-11-2023

Chairperson's Report

Good evening everybody and welcome to Sutton Village Hall Annual General Meeting. Thank you so much for coming. We have no apologies.

The first thing we have to do is agree the minutes of last year's AGM. Are there any questions, do we all agree? (Agreed).

Now, just to outline the proceedings of the evening, I'll start with the chairperson's report to briefly let you know what we've been up to all year. Then John will talk about the hall lettings, followed by Stefan who will fill us in on the financial situation. Sharn will then lead the elections of committee members for next year. Then I'll wind up and we can get on with the main business of the evening – a glass or two of wine.

Throughout the year we have continued to have our bi-monthly coffee mornings. These have been well attended and the home-made cakes have maintained their high standard – many thanks to all cake bakers. Jay has now made two new superb signs for the coffee mornings to be placed at either end of the village, and Sharn and Malc have designed an eye-catching banner for display on the gate.

On alternative months we have our village walks. Everyone is welcome but, although these have been popular with committee members and their partners, only a few others have joined us. An interesting trend is that coffee stops and even lunch seem to be creeping into more and more of the walks.

Last December, we had our second annual advent window display, starting with one window decorated and lit up on the first of the month right up to 24 a light on Christmas Eve. Many thanks to all the villagers who contributed to making the village look so festive.

We finished off the year with our New Year's Eve get together in the village hall, where we had an abundance of food and wine and some lively Scottish dancing.

In March we had a One-Man Theatre production "Into the Breach", set in a Devon village hall at the end of the second world war and involving a local amateur dramatic society putting on a production of Shakespeare's "Henry V". Mark Carey both wrote and single-handedly acted all the parts, flawlessly changing from one character to another. This was an entertaining evening, enjoyed by all the audience.

May was a busy month. We held a coronation celebration on 8th May, with fizz and canapes, and "Drunk and Disorderly" providing the musical entertainment. The pizza oven was also lit for the first time in the year so that attendees could cook their pizzas for lunch. This was very well attended and enjoyed, despite the pizza oven being a bit slow to fire up. Our thanks to the Parish Council who donated £100 to help fund the event.

Then on 21st May, we had our annual duck race, the same weekend as Jo Hollington's plant sale. The weather was glorious and both plant sale and duck race were well attended. The demand for duck tickets was overwhelming, and we struggled to keep up, selling a record 1250 tickets. We may need more next year. Thanks to all the committee for all their work, especially John for being chief organiser, Jenny chasing the ducks down the stream in her waders, Sharn for selling so many tickets, Jenny and Ellie for counting

ducks, John, Jay and Pat for clearing the riverbank, damming the stream and catching the ducks, and Stefan for counting the money.

In June, we had Joe Broughton and the Birmingham Conservatoire Folk Ensemble back again. This is always a very popular and well-attended event and, once again, the 44 young musicians gave an excellent and lively performance. Thanks to Sharn, the main organiser of the event, to Julia and Corrine, and to all the committee for helping out, providing food for the musicians, running the bar, setting up, clearing up and so forth.

At our August coffee morning we presented the cups and rosettes to the winners of our annual competitions: Poetry, Art and Photography. This year, the theme was "Nature", and Tracey Wye, our local ward councillor, presented the trophies. All the entries were displayed in the hall. A big thankyou to all entrants.

At the end of August, we held a pizza and petanque event, free and open to all. Our thanks to Charlie for organising the petanque. Although enjoyed by all those who came along, we had a disappointing turn out perhaps because of the poor weather.

At the end of September, we held a jazz concert, with Pete Horsfall and the Big Four performing. Thanks to Jenny who organised this. It was very well received by those who attended, but unfortunately, we did not cover our costs.

Later this month, we will be hosting a whisky tasting evening. This is a new venture and organised by John.

So, we have been busy holding events for the village, some free, some fund-raising, some more successful than others. In our review of these events, we suspect that we may need to promote them more widely and develop better advertising skills.

All through the year, committee members, most notably John, Jason, Sharn and Pat, have been busy with maintenance and repair work, keeping health and safety in mind, and the purchase of new items. For example, painting the ceiling and beams, painting the ladies' loo, creosoting the outside of the hall, painting the gate and adapting it to reduce the likelihood of trapped fingers (our thanks to Gerry who welded a new handle on the gate), repointing the barbecue, replacing the hinge of the pizza oven, replacing the shed roof, patching wood panelling, sealing a mouldy window, changing castors on the chair rack, repairing the memorial clock, replacing light bulbs, repairing leaking pipes and lagging pipes in kitchen, fixing the draught excluder, cleaning windows, curtains and tapestry, checking the first aid box, hedge cutting, weeding, sowing grass seed, and not forgetting, counting the ducks!

For some jobs, we have had to employ outside agencies, eg linking the kitchen at the hall to mains drainage, trimming the leylandii hedge, and having the piano tuned. And our thanks of course to our cleaner, Sharon, who comes once a week.

Purchases we have made include a hedge trimmer, a composter, an incinerator bin, an indoor broom, and a banner for coffee mornings. Chris has also kindly donated a composter to us. We are currently working on the purchase of a storage container, a water heater and a dishwasher.

Stefan has been looking into the possibility of having electric charging points. At the moment, our interest has been registered.

As our lease for the land expires in 2027, we have been involved with solicitors to find the best way forward to deal with land registry.

So you can see, there is a lot of work involved, and I can't thank the committee enough for all the time they have given to making the village hall a success. I must also thank their partners who get roped into help with innumerable tasks, of special mention is Lorna who runs the website and does an excellent job.

But now I am going to hand you over to:

- John McKenzie - lettings
- Lorna McKenzie - website
- Stefan Senger - finance
- Sharn Elton - elections

I'd just like to wind up by thanking the committee once again for all their hard work, innovative ideas, friendship and good humour throughout the year. You have been amazing!