

Great Easton Village Hall Chairman's Report - March 2023

This year we have seen a number of changes at the village hall, with the grants obtained during the Covid19 pandemic allowing us to make some significant improvements. June saw the repair of the crumbling stonework on the front wall along with repairs to next doors wall, whilst in July the swings were removed from the garden and the grass expanded to cover the whole garden. These were followed in December by the refurbishment of the ladies & gents toilets (now both unisex) and the replacement of the lights in the bar area and carpet tiles in the lobby area. Lastly, in February we updated the heating controls.

Our bookings have been steady this year, with a return of a number of private bookings along with our regular groups and in June, to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, a Big Lunch was held in the hall with over 100 people gathered together with bring and share food.

The Hall Committee has been very supportive of the Walk on the Wild Side environmental initiative which culminated with a very popular Village Garden Fete at the end of June. WOTWS kindly donated to us three planters, two oak tubs and two shrubs which have greatly enhanced our garden area. We have also gained 10 roadside advertising boards made for the event but now stored at the hall ready for future use.

We have agreed to increase our rental prices from April 2023, primarily due to the increase in energy costs. Our last increase was in 2015, so the increase was due.

We have had some issues with confusion with our energy supplier (SSE), our contract and VAT rates due to our charitable status. These have now been resolved and we have received a refund for the overcharged VAT. As energy costs continue to be exceptionally high, we need to continue to focus on energy saving measures.

Thanks to the regular Garden Task Force who kept the garden in good order throughout the year, either individually or as a team when permitted.

As always, I would like to thank the committee for their ongoing help and support through this year.

Finally, I would like to thank the Crafternoon group who kindly donated the hanging baskets and also the following for their kind donations:

- Margaret Stamp from the sale of the Great Easton Calendars
- Ellie Pocock