**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Wednesday**

**5th. May 2021**

REPORT from TRUSTEES of the

GRESHAM VILLAGE HALL ASSOCIATION

For obvious reasons this has been a year like no other. Early last year, we were full of hope and vigour for 2020 with a significant number of social and fundraising events already in the calendar together with existing and anticipated bookings from our regular users (Parish Council, GLC, Upholstery, Bowls, Backgammon, band and badminton). In the event, the virus struck and none of the scheduled events took place and all regular hiring of the hall ceased in (or before) March 2020. Whilst the hall has been available for use (when the rules and regulations have allowed),the only remunerated use of the hall since then has been for a Parish Council meeting on 9th. September 2020 during that brief, if limited, period of relative freedom before the virus reasserted itself. For understandable reasons, most of our regular users have not, as yet, felt safe to resume their activities and/or have been precluded from doing so by regulation. The Parish Council had booked the hall for its meeting on 11th. November but unfortunately the second lockdown intervened and the booking was cancelled. The Hall will be open for business on 6th. May when it hosts the local elections. The Parochial Church Council meets on 10th. May in the Hall and a children’s party is scheduled for the end of June (rules permitting).

Despite little happening in the hall, the year has not been without incident. We have sadly seen the departure of five long-standing trustees all of whom have given mightily of their time, energy and expertise over many years. Janet & Jimmy Annison, Doreen and Tony Jacobs and John Rodway. The committee have thanked them wholeheartedly for their generosity of body and spirit over the lifetime of this building. Their skills will be greatly missed. We have, however, begun to fill the lacuna created, by appointing three new trustees to the committee. Ros Hele, Chris Hunter and Stephen Smith have kindly stepped in and we are delighted to welcome them on board.

In December 2019 we were awarded a grant of £5,000 by the North Norfolk Big Society Fund as a contribution towards the cost of replacing the windows and doors in the hall. With exquisite timing, the installation was undertaken in late February 2020 so completion was not affected by the initial lockdown and the hall now looks very smart and is again proof against the elements. We have also been the grateful recipients of a number of grants from NNDC as part of the national government’s scheme to compensate the leisure and hospitality sector for loss of income arising out of the lockdowns and other regulations. Thus we have been satisfactorily insulated from the adverse financial effects of the Covid-19 restrictions.

The committee took the decision in September to open the gates to the hall carpark and to invite parents and staff from the school to use it. I am told that this has been well received, particularly by the staff whose ability to park within the school has been curtailed by Covid-19 restrictions.

With regulations preventing the committee meeting indoors and inclement weather precluding evening meetings outdoors, we have not, as yet, formulated a clear plan for the rest of the year. Rules permitting, we are due to meet at the hall (inside or out) on 19th. May. I anticipate that we will then be able to invite our regular users back to the hall from 21st. June (at the latest) and plans can be made for further events although it is not clear at this stage what level of interest there will be for communal events, at least, in the short term. We’ll just have to see how things go.

Simon Cheves

30th. April 2021