

## Chairman's Report for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022– 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The last year has seen a further recovery from lockdown, with a healthy number of regular bookings, and one-off bookings reaching 86% of their target. One-off bookings for 2023-24 have already reached 54.5% of their target.

Financially the substantial rise in energy prices has been a significant challenge; in the period prices for electricity consumption rose by 114% for day use and 245% for night use. The trustees elected not to raise hire charges in response, so that the use of the hall remained a viable option for our users, who also had to contend with a significant rise in the general cost of living.

Pat O'Shea continues as our very efficient secretary and Rob Gerig is kindly still covering the roles of treasurer and regular bookings. Tracey Slaughter is continuing to manage the one-off bookings with support from Helen Twine and volunteer hosts Freya Carter, Liz Horwood, Natalie James and Steph and Graham Willett.

The main issue for the trustees this year has been the Chanctonbury Room floor which was deteriorating to the point that the hall was unusable. Quotes were obtained to lift the vinyl and old flooring and replace it with a new floor. Removing the old floor ourselves would save a considerable amount of money and an appeal for help was answered by around 30 volunteers from the village and wider community. We now have a new floor which we hope will last for many years to come and trustees are very grateful to everyone who gave their time, energy and expertise to help.

The new roofing contractor has carried out some work on the gables on the Chanctonbury Room roof with the effect of substantially reducing the leakage of water through the roof and will carry out annual maintenance checks.

Other work completed during the year includes replacing the heater in the Dore Room with infrared heaters, changing all the lighting to LEDs and changing the taps in the Chanctonbury Room toilets to automatic shut-off taps. Some progress has been made on changing the the lighting in the Chanctonbury Room to LEDs.

Future projects include improvements to insulation in the Dore Room, completing the change to LED lighting in the Chanctonbury Room ,adding PIR controls to all lighting and the replacement of the green doors in the Chanctonbury Room lobby. Applications for grants to help fund these projects are being made to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) through the Parish Council and the Sussex Community Funding.

During the year work was begun on looking into the possible installation of solar panels and the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points. Unfortunately, due to the unexpectedly high cost of replacing the Chanctonbury Room floor these projects have had to be put on hold until funds have recovered.

In June the Hall hosted a celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in collaboration with the residents of Chanctonbury Close, which was enjoyed by all who attended. The 100 Club continues to provide additional funds for the hall and this year we were able to hold the annual Christmas Party for the first time since 2019.

In November trustees agreed to set up Winter Warmer sessions in the Dore Room to help residents affected by rising heating costs. The aim was to provide somewhere warm to go with homemade soup and friendly conversation and support. Five sessions were held during November and December, but due to the lack of interest it was agreed to suspend them after Christmas. This initiative may be looked at again in the autumn ready for the coming winter.

Finally my thanks to everyone who helps to keep our lovely hall running – the trustees, our volunteers, our book keeper, Sue Goss, our two employees Suzanne Muddle and Bryon Winslade, Irene Thomson who keeps the garden looking beautiful and welcoming and, of course, the users of the hall who make it all worthwhile.