

St Mary Bourne Village Centre

(Registered Charity No. 301936)

Chairman's Report for the Annual General Meeting to be held on 29th March 2022

The Village Centre is a registered charity that was established by a trust deed in 1952 with the object of providing and maintaining a village hall for the use and enjoyment of people living in the parish of St Mary Bourne and surrounding area. We want to provide local people with facilities that they want to use so we value feedback from our users and new ideas for how the facilities could be enjoyed. Our AGM is an opportunity to let people know how we are doing and what we are planning to do.

The AGM is also an opportunity, for me personally and on behalf of the local community, to publicly thank the people involved in the running of the Village Centre and those who run activities in it on our behalf. These people are the mainstay of the Village Centre, and their efforts are very much appreciated.

The Village Centre is run by a management committee of seven volunteers, four of which are the charity's trustees (myself, Mel Cavell-Wells, Mike Case and Oli Madge). The other committee members are Michael Widén (who manages our invoicing), Angela Cook (who manages our bookings and enquiries) and Ray Randall (our caretaker). Mel is our treasurer and manages our finances, Mike is our secretary and Oli is our health and safety officer. Thank you all for all that you do.

The trustees are elected for a period of 5 years and are ultimately responsible for the running of the charity, however most decisions are made by the management committee. All trustees have first been members of the committee to find out what we do before taking on the extra responsibilities of a trustee. The management committee meets quarterly, and the trustees have a couple of additional meetings, so there is not a large time commitment and joining the committee is a good opportunity to give something back to your community. The current members have been on the committee for many years and some of us feel it is time to hand on responsibility for this community asset! We really do need the next generation to step up and get involved now so that we have new candidates to become trustees before any of us is next up for re-election in 2025.

A big thank you to Lorna Hancock for running the Community Library which is open in the Club Room each Saturday morning. This continues to be a valued community service, particularly during another year when many people have wanted to stay local.

We managed to get the Film running again for an Autumn season from September to November and it was great to see so many people back in the Village Centre. Michael, Angie and Jo Oram have been a great help with keeping these screenings of current and popular films going and we couldn't do it without them. If there is anyone out there who would be interested in taking on running the film evenings and would like to find out what it entails, we would love to hear from you.

We were fortunate to have a large crowd enjoy the Watermill Theatre's outdoor touring production of The Hound of the Baskervilles on the Recreation Ground in August and we are pleased to announce that we will be repeating this on June 28th with their production of Camp Albion. Full details will be in Hill & Valley. Thanks to Michael for managing the box office and front of house for these productions and to the Parish Council for allowing the use of the Recreation Ground and the Pavilion.

We also managed to squeeze in a Bumblefly touring pantomime production of Jack and the Beanstalk before Christmas, which felt like another welcome return to a more normal year. We hope to continue the pantomime tradition this year (oh yes we do!).

You may have noticed that we have installed a smart new noticeboard on the side of the Club Room. This is a community board for everyone to use and replaces the noticeboard that collapsed into the Bourne last year.

We now have WiFi in the building so have finally entered the modern age! This is enabling us to install more modern heating controls this year as well as meet our users' expectations that this facility should be

available. We have had a number of issues with the heating system this winter, particularly in the main hall, but are taking steps to improve the system

2021 was another tricky year with changing government guidance to follow and certain user groups delaying their return to the Village Centre for very understandable reasons. We are grateful to all of our regular hirers and appreciate their continued support. The Parish Council's year-round hiring for their parish office was again a welcome lifeline as there are unavoidable costs that we have to pay whether or not we have income from users. A new parish council will be elected in May this year and we look forward to hearing what the new council's intentions are with regard to their permanent office space in the Club Room. We were also fortunate to receive a further grant of £8,000 from Basingstoke and Deane to see us through a period of reduced income.

We budget to make a small surplus each year as we are a charity and not running a profit-making business. Any surplus we make is invested in maintaining and improving the facilities. Our budget for 2021 was adjusted for the changes and uncertainties brought about by the pandemic but, largely thanks to the additional grant from Basingstoke and Deane and the delays getting planned maintenance, repair and improvement work done, we ended the year with a surplus against budget of £9,160.

We continue to hold a prudent level of capital as we know that there are projects that we will need this for in the relatively short term. We have identified that a large part of that capital will be needed to fund planned/expected expenditure on the fabric of the building and replacement equipment in the next few years and so it is to be regarded as expected expenditure and not free reserves. Replacing the main hall lighting system is going to be one such major expense and we have been able to make some headway with this recently. We are also hoping to overhaul the exterior of the Club Room and external woodwork generally, improve the area around the oil tank, replace the main hall curtains, replace the round window in the main hall and buy more chairs. These items will involve considerable expenditure and we are lucky to have the funds to finance them.

2nd to 5th June 2022 sees an historic royal first with HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and plans for village events to celebrate the occasion are gathering pace and some of those events will be held in and around the Village Centre. More details will be made available soon.

We currently have a new regular user in the Club Room and the Committee Room on each weekday. Ninny's House at Home nursery is using the Village Centre as a temporary home whilst waiting for their new permanent premises to become available and it is lovely to see so many youngsters in the centre again. We will also be providing a temporary home for the Village Shop in the Club Room whilst their building is extended and upgraded to accommodate a café and more selling space, which will include an eco-shop. The convenience of an improved shop with catering facilities is definitely going to be an asset for users of the Village Centre. It is great to be able to support these local amenities which serve our community, and we hope that you bear with us if this impacts on availability of our facilities for others (although the main hall is not affected by this).

This is our community facility and could be the perfect venue if you are planning a party or other celebration, a meeting, a theatrical event, a sporting or recreational activity, an exhibition or any other event that the Village Centre could accommodate. Our website (www.stmarybourne.co.uk) shows the facilities we have on offer and what they cost to hire, lists clubs currently using the Centre and has all necessary contact details. We often have a piece in Hill and Valley and also publicise events on the Bourne Valley signposts on Facebook.

We welcome feedback or other comments or suggestions about the Village Centre so if you have any please let me or another member of the management committee know.

Karen Crofts
Chairman