

The village hall has endured the circumstances of the pandemic like so many other facilities which has had a profound effect on the activities in the hall with the resulting catastrophic loss in revenues.

The lockdown came immediately after we had just had some major works to insulate the hall vaulted ceiling, for better insulation, and decorated the hall and lobby. Unfortunately this has meant that almost no users have yet seen the hall since its refurbishment.

The binds and curtains were removed for the work to be completed and have not been re-instated in line with guidelines during covid. They will be reinstalled as soon as this complies with the covid advice.

From the outset of the Covid outbreak the VH has sought to comply with government guidelines and advice. As a result of this all the regular (and irregular) bookings ceased almost with immediate effect.

The pre school was already in difficulty and the lockdown led to them closing permanently which as the major user of the hall was to cause a major reduction in our normal income levels.

The recent May local elections were held in the hall which followed the appropriate regime.

When the lockdown rules eased slightly in 2020 we were able to resume the yoga classes for a few weeks following a strict regime, however when lockdown was increased again these ceased.

Finally the cessation of all activities has had a very detrimental effect on our revenues, falling to zero for a prolonged period. However the VH treasurer has been able to secure the various government grants which have been most helpful in supporting our financial position. This coupled with a reduction in our operating costs has meant the VH finances are in a stronger position than we might have expected given the impact of the Covid restrictions.

Currently as we move towards an easing of lockdown measures we are looking to reinstate the weekly yoga classes and are also looking to recommence the weekly coffee mornings. We are yet to know whether Bridge will be in a position / are willing to return.

Clearly the loss of the pre school as our most regular users will have a sizeable effect on our revenues going forward, the committee is looking at ways in which we can promote interest in the hall and secure alternative new regular bookings.

The early works at Rose Cottage have commenced with the site being cleared and the old VH fencing and shrubbery has been removed, a new boundary fence to the East and South will be installed by the builder in due course. We are awaiting the PC view on the proposal (notified to the PC clerk) regarding the old small outbuilding to the rear of the VH.

Whilst the hall has been empty and unused for a prolonged period the property has remained in relatively good repair. We have had some damage to a window in the front door which has been smashed by a stone, a replacement has been ordered. Some of the wood panelling under the outer porch has fallen down and we are currently looking for a contractor to repair. All seem very busy and it may take a while to secure one to do the work.

During the lockdown many children have painted stones which are on the front wall of the VH, we are looking at ways these may be permanently mounted and displayed at the hall. Any ideas for this or support from the PC would be welcome.

The VH secretary has written to local village groups proposing that we consider how we, as a village, might mark/celebrate the end of Covid and we would be pleased to see the VH used as a central point for such an event. Views from the PC would be appreciated.

On behalf of the East Haddon Village Hall committee