

## **Blockley Little Village Hall**

The Elisha Smith Institute – registered charity number 1042374  
Bell Bank, Blockley GL56 9BB

### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

#### *Trustees:*

Caroline Bond  
James Henderson  
Sue Wareham (appointed August 2021)  
Oliver Lincoln (Secretary)  
Derek Luff  
Susan Salmon (Chairman)  
Brenda Samuels  
John Seddon  
Shirley Seddon  
William Wilkinson  
Brenda Williams  
Robert Willott

#### *Activities and achievements in the year*

During the last 12 months business has been slow at the Little Village Hall with small group use, such as private dance sessions and The Art Group, continuing to be our main source of income. As a result, our Hall has continued to trade at a loss and we have been grateful that we retained Covid-19 support funding to enable us to offset lost income and expenses due to limited hall usage. As COVID restrictions were relaxed there were more positive signs that hirers, such as the Ladies Choir and Cakes & Company, will start to come back to use the Hall regularly in 2022.

However, the legacy of COVID is likely to remain with us for some time and our limitations of space mean that we are unlikely to be able to compete with the larger Blockley Community spaces for exercise classes or the larger local society business. As a consequence, we have taken the view that we need to build on our unique position as a quiet and intimate location to attract a mix of business and private clients. With this in mind, the exterior of the building and the interior of the Main Hall have been redecorated to smarten up our premises in order to appeal to new users. We have also made a major investment in new, more comfortable seating. We are grateful to Ollie Lincoln for pursuing a 12-month free business broadband deal with Gigaclear. This was installed in September 2021 and gives us a unique selling point for business use. A new picture hanging system and new spotlights have been installed to enable us to promote the Hall as a small exhibition space.

The above Hall improvements were funded through Covid Restart Grant funding and aimed at making our facility more attractive for a number of potential users:

- business use for offsite staff training, meetings and workshops etc.
- community use for small dinner parties, family gatherings such as christenings, funerals etc.
- private exhibitions/ new product launches

However, we have yet to convert this investment into significant business income. This needs to be a priority for the next 12 months.

Dovebrook Foods held a charity event which raised over £2000 to support people in crisis in Ukraine and Yemen. Many of the attendees had never been to the Little Village Hall before and this was an opportunity to showcase the Hall as a venue for private dining. Such events are also used to promote the Hall in The Voice which is circulated within the local community.

#### *Finances*

The charity slowly started to recover from the coronavirus pandemic during the year as restrictions were lifted and life resumed a semblance of normality. Income in the financial year was approximately 50% of pre-pandemic levels and is now almost back to where it was before the epidemic. We were fortunate to have received £28,365 from Cotswold District Council of the government's COVID-19 support grants during this and the previous financial year and we have continued to make use of these funds to offset any trading losses arising from our reduced income but also to invest in improvements and maintenance works, such as a completely new set of chairs for the hall. Therefore, in the income and expenditure statement we have recognised £6,053 of these grants as income (2020/21 £3,723), with the remaining £18,139 of the grants recognised as a liability within creditors.

The charity is in a sound financial position and we look to the future with optimism.

As a small charity, our accounts are not subject to audit.

#### *Personnel and changes in Trustees*

Our Trustees have continued to support and maintain Blockley Little Village Hall as a heritage asset within the village and we thank them all.

We are most grateful to Diane McCaul, our Custodian, for her care and attention in managing bookings, looking after our premises and reporting any issues which require attention.

During the year Sue Wareham joined us as a Trustee representing the Ladies Choir.