Waterford Recreation Committee

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 9 September 2021

1. **Welcome**

Barbara Perry welcomed everyone to the AGM in person, following last years virtual meeting. It was lovely to see people in reality.

**Attending:**

Barbara Perry, Chair

Jo Willis, Treasurer (and acting secretary)

Dawn Crowdy, June Hounslow, Peter Crossley, Rod Willis, John Oakins - Committee members

Sue Bonfield, Robert Bewick, Giuliana Bewick, Tess Gatens, Kathy Roe, Alan Roe, Ray Cole, Joan Cheeseman, Steve Baldwin, Greta Jordan, Greta Saunders - village members

**Apologies:**

Sarah Baldwin, Trevor Chamberlain, Shirely Howells, Lacey Owen, Jean Wildi

1. **Minutes of AGM 2020**

These were agreed as a true record of the meeting:

Proposed: Rod Willis

Seconded: Ray Cole

All agreed

1. **Chair Report on 2020 Activities**

Given lockdown restrictions, activities in the hall were curtailed and so this report will be one of my shortest, to date! However, necessity being the mother of invention and all that, we carried on our meetings via zoom and came up with a few other fund raising options:

So, here we go:

### **Car Quest:**

Having done all the leg work the previous year, we loaded our car-clue hunting quiz onto our website. For a small fee of £5 participants get the questions and answers sent to their phones. There’s no timings nor prizes but it’s proved popular, especially on rainy days in the school holidays! It’s still there if any of you would like to while away a few hours, driving round the local countryside, learning quite interesting “fun” facts along the way

### **Virtual Balloon Challenge:**

Who knew that choosing a shape and colour of a picture of a balloon, then following it in a virtual race could be so engaging and exciting. I think we timed our Virtual Balloon Challenge to perfection: everyone was so bored by then, that it seemed like a fun day out!

It’s made us reflect on the effort versus reward equation: whilst June did act as techie, setting it up and monitoring it on the day, the rest of the committee sat on their hands and yet we returned a profit equable to our Xmas or Easter fetes, around £650. We also reached a far flung audience, with families spread out across the country, jockeying for pole position.

Whilst we would never want to replace our physical fetes and events, it does raise the question of diversification., and this is one event I’m sure we’ll be repeating

### **That is the extent of our fund-raising but we were not completely idle during 2020:**

* As soon as lockdown eased, we had the hall re-decorated in the hope that once we were allowed to open it to hire once more, it would be refreshed and ready to go. And indeed it was as we opened to a flurry of hiring activity in July. Thank You to Lacey, our booking officer, for continuing to work so hard behind the scenes. The hall hire forms the Lion's share of our revenue stream and its continued success lies in the service delivered by our wonderful booking officer. Her patience with the punters and friendly efficiency cannot be undervalued, so thankyou Lacey.
* We completely re-designed the web site and booking system, to reduce costs and provide a more streamlined service. Well I say we...It warrants repeating that we couldn’t afford the creative talents of June Hounslow, if we had to pay her, But apparently carrot cake is practically currency! As a village, we take the talents of our clever residents for granted and none more so than June. If you haven't checked out the new look website, then please do so. If you check out as many village hall websites as I do, then you’ll soon see how lucky we are!
* June & Peter were also responsible for instigating and planting the wild flower meadow, along the fence line, as part of the Chris Packham Blue Heart campaign to increase wild areas. It’s early days but I hope you all enjoyed the spring and summer display this year, and I can’t wait to see it literally blossom and grow.
* Waterford in Bloom: the competition did not run during 2020 but I’m sure you’ve all noticed the magnificent display outside, representing this year's Winning entry! Yep, for the 2nd time, Waterford has bagged the 1st prize!, Hearty and heartfelt congratulations to the victorious dream team of Brian and Linda Wilkerson, Tess Gatens and Jane Guinn. They had a posse of helpers who followed a strict watering roster and so many thanks to them all, too. I think we should throw the gauntlet down to neighbouring village halls and how about entering Hertfordshire's prettiest village? Perhaps one to discuss later….
* One other project that’s still in development is getting the hall hooked up to the internet. My initial enquiries have unearthed more questions than answers and I’m currently in communication with the County Council regarding the Government white paper on Rural Affairs, so watch this space. I confess to being a tad overwhelmed by the process and would be delighted to hand it over to anyone better qualified, so if you feel you'd like to run with this specific project then please, please do let me know.
* On a more prosaic but equally vital level our treasurer Jo, has spent far too long form filling, regarding our charitable status. It’s a job that must be done to comply with regulations, but we were all looking at our fingernails when volunteers were sought. Jo you're a trooper and I'm so grateful that the tricky legalese is in your capable hands.
* The biggest project of all remains the New Hall development: the team have not stopped, and addressed every challenge that’s been thrown at them. One of the Development Committee will give us an update shortly, but the village cannot know nor thank you enough for the hours of work and expertise that you've all given, again free of charge.

So that’s it! 2020 came and went in a blink of an eye. Let's hope we continue to be healthy and well, and be able to share each other's company in the coming months.

1. **Financial Report**

Jo Willis talked through the accounts, which had been circulated. Overall, the accounts showed a loss of £2,902.27 as the hall has been closed to lettings for practically the whole year. Losses were mitigated by the awarding of a £10,000 grant from East Herts District Council given to cover COVID losses. Income was less than this because of an historic debt which was written off during the year.

Although a loss was shown, over £4600 was spent on preparations for the new hall - pre-planning, plans, ecology survey and suchlike, which are separate to normal running costs.

The Financial Report was Proposed by Ray Cole, Seconded by Greta Saunders and passed by all present.

Lacey Owen was formally thanked for her sterling work as booking officer for the hall.

Auditor was happy with accounts, and is prepared to carry on next year. Nick Sharman was proposed by Steve Baldwin, seconded by Joan Cheesman.

Jo Willis also asked that the current Land Fund total held which currently stands at £2130.83 can be used towards the costs of the new village hall development. This was proposed by Sue Bonfield, and seconded by John Oakins, and passed by all present.

Ray Cole asked about the names that are currently held on the land purchase deeds. Rod WIllis responded that the new CIS charity being set up should have the assets changed over from the old charity, and once that was done the current names would be expunged!

1. **Election of Officers**

Very sadly, we have had to accept the resignation of Sarah Baldwin as secretary. It is with a heavy and reluctant heart that I’ve had to accept the resignation of our fabulous secretary Sarah Baldwin. The blow is softened a very little knowing that our loss is the Church’s gain as she takes on a far meatier role in the PCC. At least the village as whole will still benefit from her commitment and skills. But on a personal note, I shall sorely miss her steady, guiding hand, her constant cheerfulness and generous heart, not to mention her excellent minutes!

A gift was given to Sarah (via Steve) in acknowledgement of all her hard work for WRC.

Shirely Howells has agreed to take on the role. Hooray!

Election of all officers:

Proposed: Greta Saunders

Seconded: Joan Cheeseman

1. **Hall Development**

Following the flyer sent out in the spring to all in the village, it was agreed that we would pursue the idea of building a new hall on the land next door to the current hall. Plans are now being drawn up and will be submitted for planning consent at the end of this month. A reply should be received within 8 to 12 weeks from EHDC planners. Local councillors are very supportive. Once planning has been agreed (if), then grants can be applied for to cover the estimated build cost of £350,000.

Greta Saunders proposed a vote of thanks to the planning committee for their hard work so far.

1. **Any other business**

a) Bore Hole - Affinity Water have offered a 5 year lease paying £500 per annum to have a bore hole to monitor the water aquifer levels on WRC land. It will be about 1m high and 1m .All agreed this was a good idea.

b) Steve Baldwin offered a formal vote of thanks to the committee for its work, but also a huge vote of thanks to all the villagers who came to clear up the hall after the incident with some rogue hirers. A brilliant job. As a follow up to that incident, WRC are looking at whether a height restriction bar can be installed at the car park entrance.

c) Sue Bonfield asked if we take deposits on hirings still? As we now are doing credit cards and online bookings, this is not necessary and no cash hirings will be accepted, unless a resident villager.

No other business was discussed, and the meeting closed at 8.45 and nibbles/wine was consumed.