**Chair’s Report for Cornish Hall End Village Hall AGM- October 2021**

Welcome and thank you all for attending this Annual General Meeting of the CHE Village Hall – it’s good to have everyone face-to-face once again, following all the restrictions in place last time – Zoom meetings are not always the best forum for discussions!

Unfortunately, because of the social distancing and other measures imposed due to the pandemic, the Hall was only able to fully re-open its doors in mid-July 2021, since closing in March 2020, and so once again it has not been a typical year.

However, as we shall hear later, use of the hall has successfully resumed, initially with elections being held in May, and then various hirings since July for classes, the Community Club, and parties. I believe that as people’s confidence in mixing and attending events improves, so the use of the hall will continue to increase.

We, as Trustees, should do all we can to encourage the Hall to be used and support any events that are held here; our remit is to operate for the benefit of the public and I believe, through everyone’s hard work, that we do that very successfully.

Back in July Alice Landsman kindly took on the role of Secretary from Jenna Sturt – thanks to Jenna for all her help and I am pleased that she continues as a Trustee.

In the past year, we have had 12 people, not all Trustees, who have volunteered to help run and look after the hall, particularly in getting it ready for its re-opening. Their help and involvement is very much appreciated. I hope that the Parish Council, and in particular our ward councillors will continue with their support for the hall, offering their help as appropriate.

Thanks to various grants from Braintree District Council, the hall is in a sound financial position. However, it remains the case that the Trustees do all they can to ensure that the Hall does not run at a deficit and pays its way, only using its reserves for day-to-day expenses, where necessary.

Whilst the Parish Council usually gives its support to the Hall by financing the payment of our insurances, it was felt inappropriate that we should take advantage of their generosity this year, given the healthy position of our finances, but we thank them for their help in years past.

The closure of the hall so soon after its refurbishment, was a disappointment but, since this July, the new Community Club, held in the Hall for the Village, has successfully re-started, and has now organised events, outside of club nights, for the villagers to also participate in.

Our once regular monthly book swap/meets have also resumed, with the first this morning, and our popular Christmas Fayre is planned for the end of November. All users of the hall continue to give very positive feedback about the condition and facilities in the hall, which is very encouraging.

Since our last AGM, the Hall was used as a Polling station for the General Elections in May; several parties have taken place; equipment has been hired out as restrictions were lifted for private functions, including our mis-match tea services and glasses; we have installed a new (well used) seat in the car park for public use; the air conditioning has been serviced, a new screen wall and gate has been built on the road elevation; our roof has had some maintenance work; outside areas cleaned and cleared; and our new web site has been updated. Thanks to a national lottery grant we have also been able to purchase an indoor projector for our proposed film nights and for general presentations by hirers of the Hall; all we need now is a screen!

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I am sure that we shall be able continue with a full calendar of our community and other events in the coming year, as they certainly help bring our community together.

It has been a difficult year for the Hall, given covid-19, but now the hall is open once again, I would encourage everyone to make it be known that this great community space is available and to help and support the hall, so it continues to be well used.

*Peter Dacey*

*Chair, CHE Village Hall Management Trustees*

*07 October 2021*