

Burtle Village Hall – Chair’s Report 2019

2019 was a successful year on many fronts. We were delighted to be able to keep the same **Management Committee** with just the change of Chair. This gave both continuity and progression in our roles and responsibilities. From the previous year, there had been an enthusiasm for tackling projects and a feeling of camaraderie and this continued in 2019 as the Committee moved things forward. A new Committee member – Ieuan Day - was elected at the AGM in 2019 and after a few months took over as Hall Manager. This released Steve Allen to concentrate on the post of Bookings Secretary – Steve had been covering these two roles the previous year. Lyn Goodliffe who had been Vice Chair the previous year, also covered the role of Secretary and she continued to do so when she took the position of Chair. The Management Committee hope to rectify this in April 2020 and add another member to the Committee.

Financial targets were met and we have a healthy £9,826 in the Burtle Village Hall Reserves. **Various projects were completed**, including improvements to the hall both inside and out. The Committee have made a concerted effort to **increase the marketing and publicity for the hall** through both written forms and social media such as; the Burtle Village Hall Newsletter, Posters, the Polden Post Magazine, the Burtle Village Website, digital newsletters, and Facebook. Thanks particularly to Helen Jones, Jayne Murray and Steve Allen – this has produced results. We also achieved both **Hallmark One and Hallmark Two in 2019** and were surprised and delighted to achieve the ‘**District Hall of the Year**’ for Sedgemoor for the same year.

Regarding **Finances**, one of the targets over the last two years has been to increase the **Rental Income** and this has been achieved. In 2017, the rental income was £2,848, in 2018 this increased to £4,699, and in 2019 this increased further to £6,148. There have been more groups regularly using the hall and also an increase in ‘one-off’ bookings. This rental income accounts for about half of the running costs of the hall. The remainder of the income comes from fund raising events including; the 100 Club, the Cafes, Bar receipts and specific themed events. **Thus the hall is financially in good shape.** We still have some spare capacity to take more bookings but it is unlikely that this will increase much further in 2020. A big thank you to Bharti Baron, our Treasurer, for her efficiency and integrity in keeping the books and accounts so well.

A number of **successful events** were held during the year, including a Burns night, Cider and Cider Brandy tasting, a Pork and Cider evening, pop music and general Quiz nights, a Summer Fete which was a combined event with the Harvest Home and the Friends of the Church, a Summer Barbeque, screening of the live World Cup Rugby Semi-final and Final and the Children’s Christmas Party in conjunction with the Burtle Babies Mother and

Toddler Group. This was in addition to the monthly Cafe Burtle, the monthly Community Coffee Shop – a new initiative – and the Breakfast Club. In the Autumn we had regular weekly bookings from a Children’s Dance group, a Pilates group, and a private dance practice session. The hall is the home of Burtle Babies Mother and Toddler group, and to the Burtle Silver Band. We also benefitted from several cycling groups using the hall as a base over the summer months. The one-off bookings have increased and included meetings for English Heritage and other regional organisations, wedding parties and funeral wakes. **The Management Committee fulfils its primary objective of the provision and maintenance of a village hall for the benefit of the community and to raise much needed funds for its maintenance and refurbishment.**

The Hall Manger, as well as dealing with day to day **maintenance** issues, has to ensure the hall complies with all relevant legislation and is up to date with all the necessary checks and assessments. A new comprehensive Maintenance File was put in place in 2018 which includes all aspects of maintenance, all logs, details of tradespeople used, all assessments and all documentation. Monthly checks are carried out, all appliances tested and serviced regularly by qualified personnel, and all equipment inspected and serviced under their respective contracts. Previously the hall had used an individual domestic cleaner once a week for two hours but for various reasons this was changed in October to using a **Cleaning Agency** twice a week for a total of three hours. This does mean that cleaning costs have increased but the feedback has been very positive and the cleaning standards have improved dramatically.

Throughout 2018 1nd 2019, the Management Committee has reviewed and updated every one of its existing **Policies and Procedures**. They include; Health and Safety, Terms and Conditions for Hire, Booking and Rates Form, Risk Assessment and Accident and Injury Form. New Policies and Procedures have also been put in place to make sure that the Burtle Village Hall is compliant with new legislation. These include; Data Protection (GDPR) and Privacy Notice, Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy, Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults, and a Complaints Form. All Policies and Procedures will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required by practice and/or change of legislation.

The Hall is in good shape physically. Over the last two years the Management Committee have been involved with redecorating the inside of the hall, building and improving areas for storage, reorganising all files and filing cabinets, sourcing new hangers and a bookcase for the foyer, rotating local photographs in the hall, and buying new equipment for the kitchen and bar in order to run more efficiently. The sorting of the loft is a work in progress! In October 2019 the front of the hall was given a **‘facelift’**. The original wooden front had weathered since the refurbishment in 2009 and was badly stained in some parts. The work was done with only the cost of the materials. Robin Howell gave us the technical knowledge of products to use so that the materials used were compatible with

the originals. Raffy Ponsillo provided the scaffolding from which to operate and Julian Porter lent us the use of his industrial power washer. Ieuan Day and Steve Allen were the worker bees and I made tea and encouraged from the safety of the ground! A huge thank you to Robin, Raffy, Julian, Ieuan and Steve for their time and input – the job could not have been done without you all. It was a long, wet and hard day but the difference is quite staggering and hopefully this will last another ten years! New security cameras with active CCTV were installed in November 2019 following security issues at several other village halls.

The **expenditure** for the Burtle Village Hall in 2019 was just under £10,000. The biggest annual expenditure is Insurance which was just under £2,000. We did receive a discount through achieving Hallmark Standards and this should also apply in the future. Our hall is very energy efficient because of its construction with straw bales and sheep fleeces but this same construction does make our insurance cover high. The hall is energy efficient in terms of heating, ventilation and lighting and our electricity costs are very reasonable but it still costs around £1500 for the year. The regular maintenance, servicing, telephone /broadband, and cleaning of the hall – previously discussed - accounted for around £5,000 and this also includes the annual Premises Licence and the combined PRS and PPL music Licences. New expenditure in 2019 was in the region of £1500 and included; the replacement of the plastic pipes with copper at the beginning of the year due to rodents, improvements in storage, installation of security cameras with CCTV, and various smaller items already outlined. Sincere thanks to Ieuan Day our Hall Manager for the efficient running of the hall and keeping on top of the maintenance contracts. Thanks also to Ieuan Day and Steve Allen for undertaking a lot of the maintenance work and helping to keep costs as low as possible.

Hallmark is a nationally recognised Quality Standards scheme for village halls. It recognises good quality of management administration and practice, and ensures compliance with legislation relating to community buildings. Burtle Village Hall had previously achieved Hallmark One but unfortunately this had lapsed. The new Committee in 2018 made this a priority and worked hard to meet the assessment criteria and external validation. We applied for both **Hallmark One and Hallmark Two** in February 2019, with a subsequent visit and report in June 2019. We were rewarded for our hard work by achieving both Awards. Level One focuses on the management of the hall and all administration, including the Committee, the Charity and Trustees, Finances and Insurance, and the Hiring of the Hall. Level Two focuses on all aspects of Maintenance and Security, and Licences. Both Levels require working policies, systems and procedures to be in place. We passed with flying colours and no action points! Apart from proving the Burtle Village Hall is being run efficiently, legally, and is meeting high quality standards, achieving Hallmark does have other advantages. Already we have secured a discount on our Insurance cover and it does put us in a more favourable position when applying for both small and large grants, should the need arise. It also makes us more marketable. In

addition to the Hallmark Awards, Burtle Village Hall was surprised and delighted to be awarded the **'District Hall of the Year' for Sedgemoor in 2019** – a wonderful recognition for our small village.

Finally, I would like to **thank** the brilliant **Management Committee**. We all have different strengths but put together we have tried our best to manage Burtle Village Hall in a way to benefit the whole community. We are proud of our achievements over the last two years and hope that our hard work, time and efforts have been appreciated. I certainly have nothing but praise for all the team! It would be wrong to single out any one person, as everyone has pulled their weight throughout the year – but I am going to do just that! I want to single out Steve Allen who is standing down from the Committee at the AGM after many years, during which time he has held virtually every position and sometimes more than one! I fully understand why he feels he needs a break but it is with sincere regret that we lose him from this committee. He has contributed far more than people will know, has given generously of his time and expertise, and always has a solution to any problem – thank you Steve.

I would also like to **thank** Maureen Perdue and Jenny Duval for continuing to run such a successful **monthly Saturday Café Burtle**. This is not only an important source of income for the village hall but far more importantly it is a place to chat and share in a social atmosphere. For me personally it was a way to get to know people in the village and it is always enjoyable to attend. The **monthly Wednesday Community Coffee Shop** was a new venture started in February 2019 and I would like to **thank** Heather Lee and Elaine Giddens for this gentle and social gathering. Donations from this event are shared between local charities, the Village Hall, Friends of the Church, and the Harvest Home.

The Burtle Village Hall Management Committee would also like **to thanks all those who have helped in any way during the year**. In particular; Mark, Maureen, Nathan, Rita, and Dani who have worked behind the Bar. To Chris Mockridge who has helped us with research and equipment, to Ken Bell who has put out the bins, Jane Allen and others who have helped in the kitchen, Lorraine Simmonds and Anne Lush who ran the Children's Christmas Party, and to anyone else I have left out! We would also like to **thank** the Parish Council for their £100 grant and for their continued support, and to the Community Council for Somerset for their advice and support during the Hallmark process. Finally, we would like to **thank** the Burtle residents and friends who have supported our events and fund raising activities, without whom it would not be possible to survive or to have made the achievements we have.

Lyn Goodliffe

Chair Burtle Village Hall