

Stansfield Village Hall Chairman's Report 2023-2024

As well as regular hall users, the Bridge Club, the Cricket Club, Knit and Natter and the Tai Chi class, the hall has been hired for parties for both children and adults. We have had a wedding reception and two large anniversary parties and a wake.

The Village Hall has been provided free of charge to The Rural Coffee Caravan on the third Thursday of the month, providing a popular daytime drop-in social event and advice service for locals.

Events

In May we ran the Stansfield Plant Sale which was held back at the Compasses car park once again, with thanks to Roy Elder for opening up the pub for us in advance of its official opening date.

Cinema nights were reintroduced at the Village Hall with the incredibly successful showing of 'Kindling' in August, which saw over seventy people in the hall to see the film, unfortunately the success of the event meant we had to turn away several people after we sold out of tickets on the door. With the support of Creative Arts East we have been running monthly screenings since then, with a return to more modest audience numbers. However we were encouraged by selling out 'Lunana- A Yak in the Classroom', our first foreign language film, and intend to include others in future programming.

In September we held a Bingo Night, with a grand raffle that included prizes for all ages. It was great to have the Village Hall filled with families enjoying themselves.

At the beginning of October Caroline Fardell once more put together a mind boggling mixed bag of questions for the teams that turned out for the highly competitive but fun 'Infamous Quiz'.

In November the Christmas Shopping Evening saw the hall filled with festive stalls and shoppers.

Events at the hall have included two live theatre performances, in November 'Club Origami' a show for children up to 6 years old, which had both children and parents thoroughly entranced and with whole families joining the performers on the floor for a movement and paper creation workshop after the show. The event closed with a family catwalk where participants showed off the paper outfits they had made. In April we had the immersive 'Murder in Stansfield', when Dreamstone Productions brought their murder mystery evening to town. With prizes for working out 'whodunit' and their motive, and also for the best dressed Bogart or Bacall, plus a delicious supper, a great time was had by all that attended.

The Village Hall committee has greatly appreciated developing a much closer working relationship with Stansfield Parish Council. We were very pleased to collaborate with them in February to organise a community engagement event along with Good Neighbour Scheme volunteers. 50-60 people attended the Village Coffee Morning and good conversations were had with locals about what goes on at the Village Hall and what is needed to keep it up and running. An audience poll was organised at the event to select films for 'Cinema in Stansfield' from a list of suggestions made by our regular cinema audience. The films that came first and second have both already been screened with one more to follow later in the year. A further collaborative community event is being planned for the summer.

Anne Corlett organised a family picnic in April. The weather couldn't have been worse as it was wet and windy! But we moved the event indoors and with many table top and floor games, plenty of cakes and drinks everybody attending enjoyed the event and the opportunity to meet and mix with other families. Thanks are also due to Rachel Pollitt for her unfailing support – her badminton kit was a big hit. The Village Hall committee used this opportunity to provide a brand new giant Connect 4 game, which was also hugely popular. This item was purchased with some of the profit from last year's Easter Egg Hunt and Dog Walk which was organised by Lynsay Chambers.

Maintenance

Various works have been carried out in 2023/4. Appliances have been PAT tested. Switches for the emergency light system were replaced as well as several emergency lights. The Switch for the main hall sockets needed repairing and the floodlights over the front door have been replaced. New sockets were put in the main hall and a light moved in advance of the new Tech cupboard being built for the hearing loop equipment. A new coin meter for the heating was installed as the old one could no longer be set for current electric tariffs. Regular maintenance and running repairs and deep cleaning continue to be supported by community working parties held in the spring and autumn.

Project Work

Stansfield Sensory Garden:

Work on the Sensory Garden project has been ongoing, though on a much more piecemeal basis than originally envisaged due to a change of circumstances for the project manager. The original planting was badly hit by 2022's summer drought. In March 2023 a further £300 pounds worth of native plants, shrubs and trees were added. The current emphasis is on maintenance of the garden with further planting and additional features being added as opportunity arises.

Induction Loop:

Our main project this year was to organize the provision of an induction (hearing) loop system for the Village Hall. Costing £5,760 in total, the project included separate induction loop systems for the Main Hall and Green Room; a supporting sound system and a tech cupboard for housing equipment and providing a single point connection position for music devices. £600 was donated towards the project by Stansfield Parish Council and other generous contributions have been from locality budgets by: Cllr Sarah Pugh £850, Cllr Nick Clarke £150 and £500 by Cllr Bobby Bennet. A further £400 has also been received towards the project from a member of the community (who wishes to remain anonymous) bringing a total £2,500 towards the project cost.

The tech cupboard was built by 'Compasses Joinery' and the hearing loop equipment and supporting sound system provided and installed by 'Audio Electronic Design' (AED) who are based in Norfolk. AED also offer ongoing advice, servicing and emergency call-out for the system. The project was completed in November and has already proved successful in improving access for people with a hearing impairment at meetings and for cinema nights.

Special Thanks

Sincere thanks to my fellow Trustees for all their hard work and support throughout the year. We welcomed Andrew Pallett to the committee in October as Parish Council representative and very much appreciate his good natured willingness to help at events and take on administrative work. Sadly in October three members of the village hall committee stood down leaving us without a booking secretary, treasurer and children and families officer. We have struggled to fill these roles and were extremely pleased to welcome Ann Corlett back to the committee in January. Ann has not only agreed to take up the vital role of VH treasurer but is also doing sterling work to organise events and improve facilities for families. Most recently Kit Phillips joined the committee in March, replacing Sean Spearman as Cricket Club representative. However, our numbers remain low and we continue to seek further people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and help us keep the village hall open and vibrant for the local community.

As always we are grateful to 'The Stansfield Bloomers' for their ongoing work to keep their beautiful plantings around the Village Hall looking spectacular. Stansfield Cricket Club continues to do a great job of keeping the Village Hall playing field and grounds in good condition throughout the year despite last year's summer drought.

Lastly I'd like to express thanks to all Village Hall users and the local community for their on-going support. We can't do it without you!