

# Jubilee Hall Management Committee

## Annual report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2008

Presented at the Annual General Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2008,

*This report was approved at the Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2008 for presentation to the Annual General Meeting of the Jubilee Hall.*



The first full year of operation of the Jubilee Hall since its reopening on 13th January 2007 has been full of challenge for the Management Committee. The problems have been largely of a financial nature.

There existed a large shortfall in our projected income due to the loss of the Winsham Pre-school Group, who moved into the School building prior to the Hall's closure for repair and refurbishment. There also remained some £20,000 of debt relating to the refurbishment which needed to be cleared, approx £8,000 of which was not covered by grants

In response, the Management Committee took a vigorous approach to correcting the situation. As a result we are happy to report that the action taken is proving successful, and if maintained should lead us towards a more secure financial position.

Maintaining a village hall on a long term basis is a difficult task, and the committee is heavily dependent on the support of the community. To justify and encourage this support, the Committee has undertaken a vigorous and innovative approach towards providing services, entertainments and facilities. We have also sought to attract new higher value hirers from outside the parish.

## **The Broadband Facility**



It was reported in the Committee's report for last year that the Hall had been accepted as part of a pilot scheme to providing public access broadband in rural areas. This became available in March of 2007. It soon became apparent that one of the difficulties we faced in making the scheme work was providing essential supervision of the service over a reasonable period of each day, in order to make a facility of worthwhile use to the people of Winsham and its visitors. We started by recruiting a small group of volunteers to staff the Internet service located in the newly created 'New Committee Room'. This proved impossible to sustain over the longer term. The solution to the problem lay in the idea of creating an Internet Café.

The Management Committee also saw other advantages to running a Café .It could provide a meeting point in the village and be a useful source of income, by making more use of the Committee Room and Kitchen. This arrangement is now proving to be successful, with the Jubilee Hall Café making a considerable contribution towards repairing the cash-flow shortfall created by the departure of the Pre-School Group.

It is also proving to be popular with residents and visitors to the village alike, both for refreshment and the Internet. In doing this the Jubilee Hall and Winsham is becoming well known among progressive villages in the South West as a successful pioneer in the development in rural areas of public access broadband, as witnessed by a number of visitors from these villages seeking advice on how the Internet Café is operated.

The Hall's Broadband and catering resource, together with its other modern facilities and its greatly improved appearance and levels of comfort, have also suggested its suitability for use as training and meeting venue. This potential for attracting profitable use is also being vigorously pursued, and the Jubilee Hall is pursuing ideas which include the sponsoring of computer training courses. This has attracted substantial Learning & Skills Council grants and is expected to make a significant financial contribution to the Hall's running costs.

*( The picture was taken during a PC training course)*

## **Extending the use of the hall**



In addition the Jubilee Hall has sponsored and hosted numerous talks and events which not only produce revenue, but enrich the community life of the village and parish and are being well supported.. The introduction of Yoga Classes, Tai-Chi, and Salsa Workout, talks on a wide variety of topics, a Take Art production, Bridge Club, and the PC Users Self Help Group is resulting in a higher volume and diversity of use. Of course not all of our ideas

have worked. The New Year's Eve Party was not the success for which we had hoped, and involvement with Age Concern's 'Vital Living' generated a lot of work with little return, financially, or in village interest. Fortunately, failure did not bring with it any financial loss.

The decision to separate the hall and the meeting/committee rooms for individual use and hire has played an important part in making this possible.

It is also gratifying to see a substantial increase in the use by private bookings as a venue for parties - adult and children's - and dance practise.

The Parish Council uses the New Committee Room one morning most weeks as a Parish Office, when residents can call in to discuss any concerns with the Parish Clerk. Access to the Internet with immediate access to SSDC's web site is, we understand, particularly useful.

*(The picture is of the Winsham Horticultural Society's Big Barter Bonanza)*

### **The need to involve younger people in management**

Also in response to these problems, we are actively seeking, and being successful, in persuading younger people of the importance of their joining the Management Committee, either as Representative members, Village Members or, importantly, by co-option. In the last three months we have been joined by two new members aged under fifty, on a Committee whose average age before their joining was 67 years, and included just one 'under fifty' member.

The need to attract younger members to the committee is vital, people who will eventually be able to take on 'Officer' appointments, as the need arises. Managing a Village Hall, as already mentioned, is difficult and has now become similar to running a small company. To be successful, committee members, especially Officers, need a sound appreciation of the complexities and legalities involved. This takes time to learn. Younger people are also better able to inform the Committee of what is needed to meet the requirements of our youth and their own contemporaries.



One important initiative that has come from one of our youngest members is involvement with the youth of our village. It started with her donating her very limited spare time, on Saturday mornings, to provide a free Broadband facility for the youngsters. This is now developing towards giving them a voice in the policy and management of the hall.

*(The young people in the picture attend the Saturday Morning Youth Sessions)*

## **Responding to changing needs**

Times are changing. Patterns of social activity in the parish are different to how they were just a few years ago, and this is a pattern being reflected in small rural communities in many parts of the country. The younger generations spend their time differently and village organisations alone do not have the potential for providing sufficient revenue to pay for the upkeep of a village hall, and wrongly, in our view, there are no grants available to support running costs. As a result, Village Hall management need similar disciplines to those used in business: not to make money for shareholders, but to ensure that sufficient surplus revenues are generated to ensure the fabric and the facilities can at least be maintained, and where possible improved.

The cost of running a village hall is also increasing. Insurance, utilities, cost of heating. Even simple maintenance tasks cost more than in the past. Some of the tasks that were undertaken voluntarily cannot be done in the way that they were, either due to the greater technical sophistication of the equipment or due to Health & Safety legislation.

In closing this part of the report, we must express satisfaction at the unexpected award to the Jubilee Hall of the Gwilliam Memorial Cup, for our achievement in respect of the Hall refurbishment. This was followed a few months later by Hall Mark III, the highest of the three levels of Hall management competence. Both awards were made by the Community Council for Somerset. This we believe should, to some degree, reassure the residents of the Parish of Winsham that the Jubilee Hall Management Committee is managing the Jubilee Hall to the highest standards.

## **Hall Booking Report**

The most meaningful way of looking at the level of bookings is to compare them with the bookings for the most recent full year, before the renovation of the hall caused its closure for six months from July 2006 to January 2007. This means comparison with the year April 2005 to March 2006.

During this year Winsham Pre-school Group occupied a total of 516 hrs (36%) of the 1,564 hours of total use. This was an ongoing booking that had been in place for some years, and the departure of the group was bound to have a significant financial impact when the Hall re-opened.

There were clear benefits to the Pre-school Group in making the move, and although the loss of income for the Hall was traumatic, it has become clear that in other respects there have been clear advantages for village and Jubilee Hall alike in their change of venue. The Pre-School bookings dominated the weekday morning sessions, to the disadvantage of other groups, and their storage requirements filled all the spare capacity. Their decision to leave meant that the Management Committee could rethink their overall approach as to how the

Hall could be used to the maximum benefit. This led to the decision to divide the hall into three letting areas-the main hall, the Committee Room & Kitchen and the New Meeting Room (the old kitchen and store room).This has greatly increased the hall's meeting capacity and revenue potential and has proved to be a very sound decision.

In the twelve months upon which we are reporting 1030 hours of bookings have taken place, which is an increase of 9.3% from the 942 hrs of 'non Pre-School bookings' in 2005/6. The figure of 1,030hrs does not take into account the 'booking 'of the Committee Room and Kitchen as a café or the New meeting Room for use as the Broadband facility. If this was taken into account a further approx 1,750 hours could be added to the hall use figures!

Organisations using the Jubilee Hall during 2007/2008 include:-

**Winsham Ki Aikido Adult & Junior Group – Winsham Art Club- Winsham Parish Council-**

**Winsham Horticultural Society- Winsham Mother's Union- Winsham Ballroom Dancing Group-Winsham Shop-Winsham WI-St.Stephen's PPC-Winsham Bridge Group-Tai Chi(sponsored by Adult Learning & Leisure-Salsa Workout (Sponsored by Crewkerne Aqua Centre)-Winsham PC Users Self Help Group(Sponsored by JHMC)- Yoga Classes(Sponsored by JHMC).**

Other events taking place in the Jubilee Hall:-

*Pre-School Bingo-Open Gardens Weekend-Maundy Thursday Supper-Take Art Production-Broadplaces Project Training day. There were numerous other bookings for Fund-raising, Coffee Mornings, Lunches, Cream Teas, etc*



## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The attached balance sheet shows a positive balance of £3,499.78.

Analysis of the figures shows that £20,491 was used to clear outstanding costs in respect of Hall refurbishment. This was met in part from the balance of a grant from Defra of £3,860 and the sale of some long held securities totalling £4,401. The balance has been met from a combination of donations, fund raising, sponsoring of Hall events, training courses and revenue from Hall Hire and the Jubilee Hall Café.

The key to our being able to meet our financial obligations without any significant increase in Hire Charges to village-based organisations has been our ability to identify areas of activity

which can generate more income than can be achieved from sub-letting the hall in the traditional manner. The Jubilee Hall Café and the associated public access broadband are examples of this.

If we are able to maintain the flow of initiatives, and enable the Internet Café and the related computer training courses to develop, we are confident that we will be able, in the coming year, to restore the Hall's reserves. Meanwhile, as a precautionary measure, it is the Management Committee's intention to borrow £3,000 at 3% pa over a three year period, from the Community Council for Somerset, to meet any unexpected setbacks. This will be repaid at £1,000 pa plus interest.

**Members of the Jubilee Hall Management Committee: -**

John Sullivan (Chairman)-Elected  
Sarah Love (Vice Chairman)-Co-opted  
Phil Kershaw (Treasurer)-Elected  
Sarah Gleadell (Secretary)-Elected  
Jacqui George (Winsham Art Club)  
Sandy Wells (Booking Secretary) Winsham  
Dance Group  
Roger Barrett (Parochial Church Council)

Kate Langridge (Co-opted)  
Marjorie Fowler (WI & Royal British Legion)  
John Loaring (Winsham Band)  
Norman Good (Davies Close Community)  
Paula Bramley Ball (Co-opted)  
Janet Smart (Winsham Horticultural Society)  
Maxine Douglass (Winsham Parish Council)