

## **Chairman's Report – Cold Higham Parish Hall - May 2024**

### **General**

As I near the end of my fifth year as Cold Higham Parish Hall Chairman, I am pleased to see that the hall continues to be enjoyed by our Parish residents, and friends. It thrives as a community facility, as the Hall Committee continue to tirelessly organise and host events.

We have managed to raise several hundred pounds over the past year thanks to the sterling efforts of the Parish Hall committee, and wider parish, as well as financial support from both Sainsburys and Cold Higham Parish Council, who assisted with the King's Coronation Events in May 2023.

The past year has seen some more fantastic events hosted at Cold Higham Parish Hall. Tea and Cakes on the lawn continued in Summer 2023, as well as regular quiz evenings and "Mulled Wine and Carols" in early December 2023. Looking forward, we will be hosting a variety of events to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day in June 2023, again with support from Cold Higham Parish Council.

We continue to be thankful for the support of our local community. Whether it is joining us for soup and bacon rolls in the Autumn/Winter months, or booking the hall for their private events; we appreciate the commitment our local Parish have to their hall.

### **Bookings**

Regular bookings are improving following a decline over the past few years. New bookings include a Monday night yoga class and Greens Norton Cubs.

The Parish Council continue to use the hall regularly for their meetings, and Bridge Club and Wine Club also continue to support the hall.

Over the past year we have also seen regular bookings from Friendly Support Services, who have hired the hall for training courses, and we hope their support continues.

In January 2024, we increased the booking cost of the hall to £8 per hour (non-residents) and £7 per hour (residents). This increase was discussed at length and is required to assist with the increased running costs for the hall (electricity etc).

Unfortunately, the costs of running the hall, owing to increased electricity expenditure, are significantly outweighing the income received from bookings. The hall remains reliant on fundraising from events to meet the basic running costs of the premises and these are currently insufficient to cover meet expenditure.

### **Events 2023/24**

The Parish Hall Committee have hosted a number of events over the past year, to include Tea and Cakes afternoons during the Summer months of 2023, and two quizzes (October 2023 and March 2024) which were both very well attended and enjoyed by all. In November, the Parish Hall Committee provided attendees of the Remembrance Sunday ceremony in the churchyard at St Luke's, with homemade soup following the service. December saw our "Carols and Mulled Wine" event, with carols led by The Highamettes and mulled wine and mince pies served to attendees.

Our 2023 events raised a total of £2,455.93, to include some financial assistance from Cold Higham Parish Council, who supported the Parish Coronation events in May 2023. With the exception of Remembrance Sunday refreshments; all funds have been raised in aid of the Parish Hall. A huge thanks to all those who continue to support the hall. We would like to give a special mention also to Sainsbury's, whose Community Fund has assisted enormously with our fundraising at several of our events over the past few years.

### **Future Events**

Cold Higham Parish Hall Committee, together with Cold Higham Parish Council, will be opening the hall on the evening of Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024, with a short ceremony and display to recognise the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day. The hall will be open for members of the local community to pay their respects and view the commemorative display, for several hours on both Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> June and Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June. The following weekend will see a Fathers' Day and D-Day Anniversary Fete at the Hall, on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

The Committee will be hosting a further quiz on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024, and intend to continue with Tea and Cakes in the garden on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. Our third, and final, quiz of the year is planned for October 2024, and we hope also to host the Mulled Wine and Carols event in December.

We are always keen for new event ideas and would welcome any suggestions from the local community.

## **Hall Improvements**

Over the past few years, as part of discussions relating to hall improvements, several community members had raised the possibility of having a defibrillator installed at the hall, for use by the whole community, if ever required. After several years of seeking funding for this facility, Cold Higham Parish Council generously provided the funds necessary to purchase and install a community defibrillator, which was commissioned by the Parish Hall Committee in Summer 2023. The defibrillator is located on the outside of the hall, adjacent to the front door (right hand side of entrance) and is regularly checked by the Hall Committee.

The Parish Hall committee continue to maintain the hall, both the building and the garden, with the lion's share of this work taken on by Karl Lange and Steve Rowe. In 2023, a group of Committee members and their families, spent a couple of weekends renovating the toilets at the hall, which had a much-needed make over. This year, we have plans to decorate the kitchen and inner porch, as well as completing general repairs to the flooring in the small hall.

## **Committee – Future Changes**

Over the past months, both Steve Rowe and Nita Pearson have confirmed that they may soon be stepping down from their current roles as caretaker and committee member, respectively. We are therefore actively seeking new committee members. If anyone is interested in joining the committee, please contact our Chairman, Chloe Nickless, at [chloenickless@hotmail.com](mailto:chloenickless@hotmail.com).

I would like to extend a huge, heartfelt, thank you to all committee members, who all commit so much to keeping the hall going and making sure it continues to be an excellent facility for the local community.