

East Hoathly Village Hall

Chairman's Report 2009/10

A copy of the hall's Profit and Loss Account for 2009/10 is shown on the reverse of this report. The figures contained therein are part of the independently examined accounts which have been approved and adopted by the Management Committee.

Those accounts show some considerable variations from the previous year. This is to the fact that, on the advice of our accountant, we have adopted a different procedure which will in the future give a more accurate position of our accounts. Unfortunately these changes together with the adoption of slightly different categorisations give a rather distorted view in some areas for this year only. For instance the Hire of Hall category shows a considerable drop but this is largely, but not entirely, due to the new practice of only showing fees and charges in the year to which they properly belong whereas before in some instances a whole year's booking by a customer was actually shown as earned in the previous year. It is similarly true of Heating Oil which is actually shown as considerably less than for the previous year - despite it having been a much longer colder winter and of course the continued increases in fuel prices. As from next year the anomalies should have worked themselves through and we will get a truer picture. The last increase in our rental charges did not really take effect until January this year due to the fact that, by far the largest proportion of our hirings were already pre-booked at the old rates. I am confident that, with the new charges now fully implemented and a continued healthy occupancy rate, we shall see a financial improvement for the 2010-11 year.

At the recent AGM I was re-elected as both chairman and treasurer, Lesley Lefort as our booking officer and Cliff Akehurst as the hall-keeper. Councillor Bryan Kidd and myself were re-appointed as trustees - all other posts remain unfilled. I am sorry to say that we are still down on numbers on the committee and would remind (and plead with) all of our using organisations to remember that they have a right to representation on the committee and I believe that they have a duty to take it up. There is no better way of those organisations making sure that their views, concerns and opinions are properly heard. The other point that I feel I must make is that, in the main, the existing members of the committee are certainly not getting any younger (I would hazard a guess that our average age is in the high seventies) and unless we get some additional members I can foresee that our ability to manage may well decline to the point where we will be unable to continue and the management of the hall would then have to become the responsibility of the parish council.

I must thank all the present members of the Management Committee for their dedication and willingness to put in about ten hours of their time at meetings during the year to help make sure that the hall continues to serve our community. I must also especially mention here the excellent work put in by our bookings officer Lesley Lefort and our caretaker Cliff Akehurst.

Malcolm Soane