

Orwell Village Hall Management Committee



As I write this, we have just entered a fresh period of Government-imposed lockdown which means that with a heavy heart we have had to close the village hall just as we were emerging, blinking, into the sunlight following the spring lockdown.

By the time you read this we will have learned whether 2nd December marked the end of this second lockdown or whether it has been extended in some form. In the hope that we will have returned to some sort of normality, we look forward to working with colleagues to ensure the first event scheduled for the reopening, the Pannier Market due to take place over the weekend of 5th – 6th December, is the success it deserves to be.

We were delighted to welcome Dave Titchmarsh to our OVHMC meeting on 14 October and to be able to make a presentation marking his retirement following forty-five years' service on the Committee, twenty of them as Chairman. We consider it unlikely this record will ever be broken! We were also able to update the Committee on repairs and maintenance undertaken and planned. Quotes for repairs to the ramp from the side emergency exit and for the redecoration of the lobby and toilets now having been received, we aim to have these works undertaken during the second period of lockdown. We were also pleased to thank members of the Bowls Club who kindly painted the storage boxes at the front of the stage to help them blend in with the new décor.

Importantly, we were able to confirm that the hall's reserves remain in good shape, although the sooner we can start to accept bookings again the better – for financial and a great many other reasons.

On a sadder note, the Committee observed a minutes' silence in memory of Keith Bullen and Paul Draper, both active participants in village hall life for a great many years.

We appreciate that after the current lockdown has ended users may have concerns about using the hall; however considerable measures have been implemented to render it Covid-19 secure. Risk assessments have been undertaken and these are available on the website at www.orwellvillagehall.com. They are supplemented by risk assessments completed by each hirer, focusing on their individual activities. A 'track and trace' system is in operation, augmented by a QR Code linked to the recently launched NHS Covid-19 app. Cleaning and hand sanitizing materials are freely available and in respect of the latter we thank the organisers of the Pannier Market for their kind donation of a freestanding, battery powered hand sanitizer dispenser.

Should anyone be considering using the hall post-lockdown the village hall website is the obvious first port of call for information and advice. The officers of the Committee will be pleased to address any remaining queries and to work with all hirers to help ensure their event operates successfully. Our email addresses can be found on the 'Committee' page of the website.

It's clear life won't return to anything like normal for a while yet, but we hope that within the rules in place at any given time we will be able to start using the hall again before too long. Its central role in the life of the village is clear and it is sorely missed by both regular and occasional users.

As this is the final Bulletin of the year, I'd like to close by wishing our Trustees, the wider Committee, all users and indeed the entire village a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

Andrew Pulham
Secretary, OVHMC
www.orwellvillagehall.com