

BAACA Chairman's message for year ending 31st March 2024.

Welcome to the Bellingdon & Asheridge Community Association AGM – I hope you have enjoyed using these fantastic community facilities once again during the year.

As you may know, the annual village fête is one of our major fundraising events and enables us to maintain the hall and recreation ground for community use. In 2023 the fete raised £ 4701, which was a great achievement in the extreme heat- thank you to all who supported the fete, but particularly to the organising committee. We have just held our 2024 fete which looks to have been more successful than last year.

People often ask where the money we raise goes. In short, we use this money to maintain, improve and update the hall facilities and grounds.

We would welcome members of the community joining the committee to make the decisions regarding the use of the funds in the charity.

As you will, an area around the playing field and in front of the hall has been set aside for nature. As part of a re-wilding project, new flowers have been planted, water butts installed and a couple of bug hotels to improve the diversity of wildlife. Our thanks to Antonia Savvides who has championed and overseen this project, even getting the local cubs involved.

Next year we will still need to focus on the exterior checking the roof, repairing the entrance to the car park along with hopefully extending tarmac to the whole area, marking it out to ensure maximum capacity as the hall gets busier.

Again, this year we also held our Christmas party for the children and the Seniors Christmas Lunch both of which were well attended. We have also held pub nights and afternoon teas along with a special Coronation lunch. Added to this we held a very successful 75th Anniversary tea to mark 75 years of the hall. This was extremely well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all. My thanks to Helen Harding, Helen Valvona and Kirsty Fiddes who successfully organised and ran this event. Hopefully these events demonstrate that we aim to cater for all so there should be something for the whole community to enjoy.

In the playground we have added another picnic bench and spent money on general maintenance and repair. This is ongoing to ensure we meet the safety requirements. Next year we are hoping to add some additional playground equipment to make it more inclusive for all, subject to obtaining some additional funding. We have also had another bench sited on the playing field for all to enjoy.

I would like to thank our previous Newsletter Editor (Helen Valvona) for all her hard work of the past few years writing and producing it. Fortunately, Jo Askew has kindly taken on the role so might have noticed a different look and feel in the last edition.

Thanks also to our Bookings Secretary Jo Richardson, who does a fantastic job of making sure the hall is booked out to a huge array of groups, families and festivals. Bookings remain healthy and our facilities are still recognised as one of the best locally.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity also to thank all the committee members (Helen Harding, Gary Woodley, Hugh Griffiths and Kirsty Fiddes) and Don Baker as Honorary Treasurer, who throughout the year have donated their time and energy, to work with me in order to maintain and manage these facilities and achieve all the above.

As you can see, we are a small team but without the support and teamwork none of this would have been achievable. I look forward to continuing to work with you and any new members during the forthcoming year.