

Chair's report 2020/21

This has been a year like no other and the fact that we are using Zoom for the first online AGM is testament. I would like to thank 'ACTion with communities in Cumbria for letting us use their Zoom account at no cost so that we could invite everyone.

This year has been mainly about two key areas: COVID19 and the setting up of the new Incorporated Charity to manage the Levens Village Hall. We have met 8 times to deliver this work, plus much running around to prepare the Hall and attend advisory meetings in between the meetings. I would normally note those who have put in exceptional effort but this time everyone has really pulled out all the stops so thank you.

I most also may a personal thank you for everyone on the committee coaching me into the role of Chair and although I know Alan thanked Stephen Read last year, I would like to also note his contributions over the years and the sadness we all feel about his present health. Further through the work of moving us towards being an Incorporated Charity, we used it as an opportunity to let Trustees who have contributed over the years but felt it was time to step down to do so and so thanks to Sarah Dickinson and Naomi Capstick-Newell for their work over the years. Thanks also to Peter Smith for running the Monthly Draw for many years, which has been such a useful source of income for us.

Impact of COVID19

Its been a tricky year with the Institute having to close then open under the various lockdowns restrictions. The committee opinion was that we should be open as much as possible and we worked hard to get the right processes, procedures and equipment in place to make this happen. Again ACT Cumbria – Lorraine Smyth has provided endless advice and we thank them and also Hugh Connor for attending most if not all the online sessions to provide us with up to date advice.

We continue to monitor the restrictions and will open when appropriate. As John Wood report shows he has taken time and effort to apply for all the appropriate grants made available so that we remain viable.

New Charity for Levens Institute – Levens Village Hall.

We have prepared a full explanation to our SGM resolution, however in this report I want to note that with the advice of ACTion Cumbria that it is in the best interest of the hall's operations that the Village Institute should operate under a new Charity that is incorporated. The committee has gone through the constitution to ensure that we keep in place all the safeguards to ensure that we operate in accordance with our community wishes and the hall itself remains for the community.

New Village Hall

We continue our journey towards getting our new village hall and Hugh, Frank and John are working closely with the New Village Hall committees. Further information is being provided following the more formal AGM session. If the community agrees to the resolution to transfer the Levens Institute land and building to the Levens Village Hall charity at the SGM then we as a committee will be happy to continue our work.