

The Heritage Chapel and Halls



Park Road,
Rushden,
Northants,
NN10 0RW

Charity No. 1174622

Annual Report 2021/2022

Annual Report

read by Chair Gill Crow

Chair Opening Words

The year from 1st October 2021 to 30th September 2022 was still affected by the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Final restrictions on numbers set by the government gathering in indoor venues was lifted in July 2021 and we found that it took some time for the community to be comfortable to meet with confidence at The Heritage Chapel and Halls for church and group settings. All Covid restrictions still in place at The Heritage were finally revoked in February 2022.

Review of 2022

By far the biggest issue that faced us during the year was the boiler ceasing to function during winter 2021/2022. Whilst at first 'condemned' by our contractor a second opinion gave some hope that there may be a solution to get it going again at least for a time. The Trustees have been reviewing options and solutions for replacement boiler and heating systems, assess payment options as well as applying for grant funding. The ball park figure to replace the boiler will be in the region of £30 to 40k. We are grateful to God that indeed the heating was brought back into service, although with the chapel being gravity fed, this area remains cold at times. Supplementary free standing heating units were used as a back up and to supplement local heat needs.

In better news our Trustees Les Hunt and Sarah Blachford secured the offer of kitchen units and worktops from Howden's Joinery. Plans were put into place to raise money and apply for grants to have the kitchen fitted. Additional workstreams involved liaison with the Conservation Officer at the Council in order to be clear on what we could and could not do in the kitchen area.

During the period 1st October 2021 to 30th September 2022 the Trustees have had 9 in person Trustee meetings, a big increase on voluntary time for meetings during the year when compared to the fact that we had only been able to have 3 in person meetings during 2020/21. All other decisions, issues and activity have been handled via email communication. The Trustees have shown tremendous effort and commitment during this year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Sadly after many years The Rushden Amateur Theatrical Society (RATS) disbanded but gifted to The Heritage Chapel and Halls the stage lighting and curtains.

Here is a summary list of the principal areas that have been managed by the Trustee Board during the year:

Restoration of all arrangements at the Chapel and Halls post Covid restrictions

Monitoring of and compliance with all government direction and legislation that affect the Chapel and Halls

Liaison with Hirers

Financial matters

Set up and operation of a generic email address for the charity

Heating issues

Kitchen planning

Cleaning and gardening contract management

Maintenance of premises

Prioritising spend on structural and maintenance issues i.e. water ingress

Jayne Evans was co-opted onto the Trustee Board in November 2021 pending standing for election by the membership at the AGM in August 2022. Karon Watson retired as a Trustee from December 2021.

During the period of this Report the following Trustees made up the Board.

Gill Crow, Diana Black, Cheryl Tompkins, Janine Musson, Sarah Blachford and Les Hunt. Jayne Evans (co-opt) from November 2021, Karon Watson until December 2021,

Wendy Dangerfield deserves special mention again in this report for her sterling work in producing the weekly booklet. Also to Grev Watson who updates our website when required.

Karon Watson prepared the Minister diary and Services Calendar for 2022 prior to retirement and Jayne Evans and Cheryl Tompkins have now taken on this important role with the Worship Committee. We are grateful for all our volunteers who give of their time and effort freely, including regular tasks such as gardening, litter picking, flower rota, reading and greeting and playing the organ and many more.

Janine Musson as Treasurer has continued to faithfully produce finance reports for Trustees and the congregation. Our final generous loan was returned with thanks to the donor during this year., therefore we are now standing on our own reserves.

Conclusion

We are aware that there is still a lot of work to do, but I hope that you will have gained an insight into the amount of work that has been ongoing this year, often behind the scenes. There are many issues that face us moving forward, especially relating to the boiler, kitchen refurbishment, funding, building up our hirer base as well as ensuring that we can pay our bills – you will see how much is needed to run the site and we still need to develop the life of the chapel and halls in so many ways.

We need and value your support, we cannot do it without you. It has been interesting to see the hopes and dreams for refurbishment surrounding the former Ritz Cinema, which

currently stands empty. The gap between desires and reality is being clear to many enthusiasts. It really brings it home to us that not only have we achieved so much at The Heritage but that we are still here despite the challenges. Our prayer is that with God's help these buildings will remain in trust for the future; that townsfolk will be served with affordable rooms to hire for community activities and clubs and that God will continue to be worshipped here, with individuals finding faith and growing closer to Him and in fellowship with one another.