



Barnham and Eastergate Community Trust

Annual General meeting 2023 Chairmans Report

Good evening all, once again the Trust has experienced a very busy year since our last AGM held on 17th May 2022. I am delighted to report that great progress has again been made by our staff and volunteers ably supported by our Trustees. Particular thanks go to Alison Crabb, Secretary & Financial Officer, our Facilities Managers, Nina McMaster at Eastergate and Ali Tarbard here at Barnham Hall ably assisted by our hub manager Bridgette Martin at Eastergate and Kathy Lanigan here.

On the financial front at year end 31st March 2023 our bank balance stood at £164,548, with receipts of £231k and payments of £246k in the year, overall down £14571 year on year, a very good result when one considers the significant infrastructure investments made in the 12 months. These included at Eastergate, new kitchen blinds and for the bar area a new sink and hot and cold facilities. Here at Barnham investment was made in a new dishwasher, glass washer, fridge for the bar, bar lighting, fire extinguisher replacements, stage lighting, new printer, kitchen fridge, playground repairs, a major hall redecoration and a significant solar panel installation, which alone cost £26,489.

During the year a huge number of social events have been held for the benefit of our community, at Eastergate, Craft Fairs, Community lunches, Film Nights, Coffee Mornings, Quiz Nights, Motown events, Northern Soul Nights, and Ukranian meet ups and in the hub, Pop up Shops, Drop in sessions, Book Signings, Dementia Cafes and Eastergate Player performances to name but a few. At Barnham we held Wedding Fairs, A Casino Night and Comedy Nights, Quiz Nights, a Family Halloween event, a Christmas Carol Evening, Bingo Night, May Fair, MAMF, numerous weddings as well as regular coffee mornings throughout the year and a Christmas lunch for the elderly ones. A very busy year for both halls indeed! I am pleased to report, great continued support from our regular hall users with over 40 clubs and societies using both facilities throughout the year.

During the past year we renewed our Wedding Licence for Barnham Community Hall as this is a very lucrative source of revenue given the increasing number of wedding ceremonies booked at this venue.

Looking forward to 2023/2024 we have over 40 large events in the calendar already scheduled for both facilities which bodes very well for the future.

Last October we decided to appoint Determined Solutions Ltd a local accounting business to implement a new accrual based accounting package for the Trust using Xero as the platform, with go live set for April this year which was achieved. Our thanks go to Viv Trump from Determined Solutions for her sterling work in conjunction with our very supportive staff on achieving this major goal. Xero will run in parallel with our existing accounting system for three months for good order to prove it's robustness before the decision is taken to move forward solely with Xero.

Looking forwards on the building front we have recently been successful with three planning applications for extensions notably a new porch and side store at Eastergate hall, and a new porch for Barnham hall. Works are scheduled to be undertaken between the 7th August and the 8th December latest .Four local building contractors are currently tendering for the entire works with one builder set to be appointed by the 7th July. Project costs are expected to be in excess of 240k funded in part by 60k from BECT reserves, grant funding, CIL monies donations and possibly a Public Works Loan. It should be noted that 7k has already been spent on bringing these three schemes to fruition.

Elsewhere other initiatives in the pipeline being worked on to improve the facilities we offer include a small community garden project here at Barnham for which we have allocated funds, possible front overflow carpark extension and lockable outside storage facilities for BEPC emergency team equipment and large Trust event equipment, all being taken forward in partnership with our Parish Council.

In the mid term we are still planning for Murrells Field redevelopments, a major rear hall extension here and a large extension to the rear of Eastergate hall. Additionally we still have aspirations of Eastergate Sports Pavilion coming under direct Trust control once the building has been successfully redeveloped under BECT supervision.

In summary as ever much is planned for the short and medium term with confidence that the Trust will continue to prosper.

Finally as Chairman I would like again to take this opportunity to thank all our staff and volunteers for their hard work and commitment to making the Trust such a successful Charitable Incorporated organisation. Thanks must also go to our Trustees for their much valued support throughout the year.

Terry Bedford

Chairman.