



DUFTON VILLAGE HALL

October 2020

NEWSLETTER

The Village Hall and Covid

Well, although the Covid crisis has prevented the Village Hall serving the community in the usual ways things have been happening and the Committee continues to try to improve the facilities available. What follows is a diary of what has been done. If after reading this Newsletter you have questions or comments please email duftonvillagehall@gmail.com

Just before she died in March Brenda gave some books to the Hall for sale at events or to make use of in other ways. We decided to use these to start a loan system located in the shelter. This was a trial to gauge whether there was any interest and over the past 6 months the use has increased and shows little sign of diminishing. We have kept the box tidy and ask that if it is full that no more books be added. It is difficult to cater for magazines, so we have been leaving them for a short period before moving them out as we don't want to block the whole seat. In the main the shelter has worked well, on odd occasions we suspect that walkers wanting to put on or take off boots have broken the ties to put the box on the floor, and then left it there. Since the school bus started up again there have been reports of students picking books out of the box to read while waiting which is great. We will keep the box going for as long as the stock is changing but may have to move it out if the weather shows signs of damaging the books.

In May, as soon as the lockdown was eased, we got the exterior of the Hall painted so that it looks much neater and cleaner.

In June we followed the guidelines to prepare the hall to be covid compliant and have continued to update these as things have changed. We are restricting access to just the main hall and disabled toilet. The maximum number in the hall is 25, but this must be in groups of 6 which do not interact. Users are encouraged to log in using the Test and Trace App on their phones or they can sign in.

In August Dufton Show Committee used the Hall for their virtual show which went well and allowed the community to come together to talk about the photographed entries and meet neighbours.

Some small groups are beginning to use the main hall and we are always happy to discuss how to make use of it, always bearing in mind the covid requirements. From September Jo has been using the Hall for her yoga class but there are no more spaces on this, and Mother and Toddler resumed in late September all suitably distanced and limited in number with booking required.

We regretfully declined an opportunity to host a Highlights event in the spring. The decision was partly financial but mainly because an audience of 25 does not generate much in the way of atmosphere. We will hopefully be able to put on events with decent general lighting and stage spots so that future Highlights and other events will be staged better.

Also, with regret the decision has been taken to postpone the immensely popular High Cup Nick Race usually held in February. The Fell Running Association has put out covid compliant guidance to those wanting to organise events, but this involves a severe reduction in numbers. One thing the runners like about the Dufton event which makes it stand out from others is that it is also a social occasion and the soup and cake reputation is passed from one runner to another and encourages entry.

There is already a steady flow of visitors to the village and we did not want to cause a further influx to risk bringing illness into the village. Morgan agrees and will be talking to farmers whose land the race crosses about whether it is possible to arrange a date in October or November.

All through lockdown the committee, worked to prepare bids to carry out the refurbishment of the ceiling and lighting in the main hall. These were submitted in September, but we must wait until after Christmas for the results. If successful we want to complete the work before Easter.

The Hall is part of the Internet Fibre bid in the village so hopefully by this time next year the connection will be even better, and we are thinking of exploring the possibilities of virtual concerts and streamed events. All dependent on costs and licence requirements.

The committee are really grateful to those who are supporting the Hall by taking part in the Lottery, an especial thank you to Anna and Carole for continuing to organise it.

The Hall receives a payment from Eden District for the material recycled in the bins in the car park. Use of these has grown substantially during lockdown, for which we are very grateful. There have been times recently when the bins have been full, and Pat has contacted Eden District Council to see if they can arrange more pick ups but this is not possible. Please, please, please can we remember to flatten boxes and cans.

Occasionally we have had to contact Eden when non-recycling items have been dumped near the bins. This is fly tipping and is illegal. From what has been dumped we suspect the culprits to be visitors but if you do see anything please let one of the Committee know or email. If you can't get to the carpark or have lost or need another recycling bag or box to carry your cans and bottles to the bins or for kerb side collection they can be requested by phoning the EDC help line on 01768 817817.

Committee members: David Carter (Chair), Simon Higginbottom (Treasurer), Jo Brown, Wendy Swinbank, Pat Williams, William Tatters, Penny Bullock, Martin and Sue Brown

