

PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026 REPORT

Bookings for the village hall have remained high and groups using the facility have been varied. Almost all weekdays are being used including pilates, art classes, photography, basket weaving and dance choreographer. We have lost the patchwork quilting and laughter therapy sessions. The number of children's parties have reduced. The hall is also used for local and national elections and hosting Parish Council meetings.

The church is a key building within our community, and we were happy to allow the hall to be used for services whilst renovation work was being completed. Our coffee mornings, held on the first Wednesday of month continues to be popular and there is an incredible buzz when those attending. The table tennis evening on the third Wednesday of each month has continued and although the number remain low, we are hoping to encourage more people to attend this 'for fun' event. The Parish Council provided funding for 12 new table tennis bats and in October 72 lightweight chairs with a stacking trolley, funded by the Parish Council, arrived. Feedback on the chairs has been positive.

The hall hosted a Xmas bring and share and Debbie Hayward's children performed their nativity play. Our annual Burn's night was a great success and thanks to all those that helped with the food and with the raffle we were able to donate £900 to the Woodbridge branch of Riding for the Disabled.

Michael Watts included a legacy in his will of £250,000 on the understanding we would build a new hall. It became quickly apparent the amount would not be enough to build a new hall, but more importantly the community wanted to keep the unique building as it was. Following lengthy discussions with the relevant lawyers, the residual beneficiaries and the Charity Commission, all parties agreed we could have £50,000 to complete some updating of the hall. Our thanks go to Adam Signy for providing his expertise in drafting the correspondence to the solicitors acting on behalf of Mike Watts. We are looking to replace the fire doors, build a new kitchen and soundproof the hall in addition to other work. We are in healthy financial situation to the tune of £68,000 (£18,000 from rentals and fund raising and £50,000 from the Mike Watts' legacy

The village hall is a terrific community asset, and we would welcome any suggestions for future events. It is for us all to use and enjoy. Our next event will be a St George's Day celebration will be a family occasion on Sunday 26 April at 16.00. Any profits will go to our fantastic First Responders.

My thanks go to all the committee members, the Parish Council and the community for their continued support. A big thank you to Cath Caudwell who keeps the hall in such a great condition.

Jim Jarvie

Chairman Pettistree Village Hall