

MEMORIAL TRUST UPDATE

At the time of writing, due to the current COVID 19 lockdown, the Memorial Centre, the Children's Play Area and the Skatepark are all closed. The Memorial Ground itself is open for villagers to use for relaxation and exercise provided the social distancing regulations and guidance published by the Government are observed. The Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) has recently been reopened for Tennis only, subject to users observing the social distancing regulations and guidance.

The Trustees have agreed that the Annual General Meeting scheduled for June 6th will be postponed. We hope to reschedule this for later in the year, possibly in the autumn, in the hope that the current social distancing measures have been relaxed by then.

If this is not the case the Trustees will consider alternatives such as cancelling the AGM for 2020 or holding a video enabled meeting (Zoom, Skype etc.). Regular Trust meetings have been suspended, Trustees are communicating via email, we will consider resuming management meetings as and when required and allowed.

In the meantime the following represents the Chairman's interim report for the Trust year 2019-2020.

Trustees have taken a number of actions to reduce outgoings and prepare the centre for reopening in due course. These include shutting down of heating, water heating and lighting, switching off appliances not required such as the refrigerator and the dishwasher. We have reduced caretaking. Trustees give thanks to Ian O'Neill. We have also suspended cleaning. We have carried on with some essential maintenance such as care of the grounds, many thanks to the Parish Council for continuing to support grass mowing through the summer and to Ben and Richie for continuing to make the grounds look so attractive. We are taking the opportunity to continue the re-decoration of the Centre, with work on the changing rooms and the lower section of the Main Hall. You may be aware that we have had a water leak to one of the high level Velux windows. The repair work, due in April, has been suspended due to lockdown. We hope that this can also be completed over the summer.

During the past year to 30th April 2020, we completed the redecoration of the Cowesfield Room, entrance foyer and main toilets, and carried out major work on lighting in the Main Hall - the new lower level lights and repairs/replacements of the main lights. The Trustees are grateful to the Parish Council for a grant of £2,000 towards the decoration which continues this year.

Investment in the Multi-Use Games Area continued with ongoing maintenance including weed and moss control, quarterly brushing of the playing surface and purchase of new 5-a-side goals. Following historical issues with security of the MUGA gates and Trustees' desire to allow access to the MUGA for spontaneous use, the Trust elected to keep the gates unlocked for open access.

THE WHITEPARISH MEMORIAL CHARITABLE TRUST
Registered Charity Number 282528

The 100+ Club membership increased to its highest level for several years, following the successful leaflet drop throughout the village. All new members pay by standing order. The Club contributed over £2,700 to the Trust, including profits from the Christmas party.

Another very successful Winter Ball was held which raised over £3,000 and the Trustees decided to bring back a pantomime to the village by hiring a local theatre group and were very pleased that this well attended event produced a profit of over £600.

The Watermill Theatre touring group production this year was less popular due to the challenging nature of the play's theme and some timing clashes with sporting events. The Theatre have been advised that in future we have to be very confident that the play will sell before taking it on. The 2020 production is certainly much more marketable and had been booked for 12th July. Due to the COVID 19 crisis this has been provisionally re-scheduled for 30th October.

Trustees give thanks to Maggie Davis for her outstanding organisation of the Winter Ball and Pantomime and to John Herrett for his management of the summer play.

Our annual accounts have been completed and are with the auditor at present. As you might expect, we have been affected by the lockdown with last two months of the year being severely impacted by the closure of the Centre in March. Overall we have lost at least £3,750 from cancellations and lost bookings up to the end of April.

Despite this our accounts will show a small surplus. However, each month through the summer that we are closed, will impact the running of the Trust.

For next year, 2020-2021, the Trust has been in discussion with Whiteparish Surgery regarding a major resurfacing of the car park. Estimates have been obtained which suggest that the total cost of the works will be in the region of £26,000 to £30,000, the Trust will be responsible for the larger part of this cost. This project is currently suspended due to the COVID 19 impact on the surgery and prospective contractors.

We have also discussed other projects such as surface repairs to the children's play area and an adult fitness trail. It is unlikely that all of these planned projects will be financially viable in the short term due to the loss of income through the summer months of lockdown.

On a more positive note, our Treasurer, Richard Burr, has been very proactive during the lockdown, pursuing our insurance company and seeking grants in order to ease the financial stress of an unknown period of zero income. He has managed to obtain a substantial grant from Wiltshire County Councils COVID 19 emergency funds. This will cushion the impact of lockdown on our finances. The Trustees will be able to take decisions after lockdown as to which of our planned projects we might be able to progress and will discuss at the AGM once public meetings are allowed and we have an insight into how the situation post lockdown impacts hire levels.

Finally, we thank villagers for their past and continued support of the Trust, especially in these challenging times, and for the diligence shown in complying with the lockdown rules.