

THE WHITEPARISH MEMORIAL TRUST
Registered Charity Number 282528

Chairman's report AGM 18th September 2021

It has been over two years since the last Annual General Meeting of the Memorial Trust. I am delighted that we are finally able to meet and that the Memorial Centre and Grounds are now open once again. I hope that the many village clubs and societies which use the Centre and the sports facilities will begin to resume their activities once more.

As you would expect, Trust has been massively impacted since March 2020 by the lockdowns and social distancing regulations imposed due to the Covid-19 virus. The Centre was able to open for limited periods during the year and with social distancing rules and a much-reduced capacity applying, many of our regular hirers chose not to book at all. Sporting hires outside were similarly impacted although to a lesser degree.

I will leave it to our Treasurer to provide details of the financial impact to the Trust.

I would like to preface my remarks on the last two years by thanking all of the Trustees for their efforts over the period of the pandemic. In particular our Treasurer Richard Burr. You will get a good idea of the success of his work in chasing support grants and obtaining compensation from our insurers in the Treasurer's report. His efforts ensured that the Trust has not been impacted too severely financially during the pandemic.

Making the centre Covid secure also took a lot of effort from Trustees and in particular from Ian O'Neil, our managing caretaker.

Despite the situation we found ourselves in over the last two years, we have managed to complete a number of improvement projects and some critical maintenance works.

- The Centre was redecorated.
- New ambient lighting was installed.
- After some discussion, the original contractors who built the centre have repaired leaking Velux windows in the Main Hall.
- New safety surfaces were added to the play area swings and essential repairs carried out to the multi-play unit.
- The Car Park was resurfaced recently in cooperation with the Surgery.
- Essential tree maintenance carried out.
- The Trust and the Parish Council contributed to the provision of a new practice pitch surface for the Cricket Club. This should be installed in the autumn.

We have also had to deal with some maintenance issues as a result of the long period during which the centre was not in use, with heating set to a minimum. This caused the flooring in the Main Hall to cup. This is an issue noted in many community buildings with wooden sprung floors. The floor is due for resealing in October and it is hoped that the issue will resolve itself. If not, we will need to have the issue dealt with at some considerable cost.

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Due to Covid restrictions we had to take the red fabric coloured chairs out of use as they cannot be wiped down. Whilst in storage in the changing rooms, they developed white damp mould and had to be cleaned.

During the closure in late spring 2021 we noted a very large crack to the plaster low down in one of the corners in the main hall. After inspection it is believed this was caused by an impact. We do not know how this occurred as the hall was generally closed. Shane Skeates inspected the cracking and made good. Trustees are very grateful to Shane for donating his time, expertise and all the materials to fix this issue.

There remain further key maintenance issues which will need to be addressed in the near future.

- Fencing around the pond and the car park area needs replacing.
- The Hexagonal Climbing Frame in the children's play area is broken. It is beyond repair and has been wrapped in safety tape and signs indicating that it is closed. We await further quotes, but the initial costs indicated are in the region of £9,000.
- Other items in the play area need to be painted and cleaned.
- The metal pillars and frame of the entrance portico need to be repainted.
- The cladding on the main building needs treating.

This will mean that the Trustees will need to prioritise our funds and energies on the most urgent issues over the course of the autumn.

The grounds, football and cricket pitch MUGA and Children's Play Area have been very well used over the course of the pandemic. Many thanks to our ground maintenance team, Richie Hamblin and Ben Armstrong of H A Ground Care for their sterling efforts.

We also thank the Parish Council for all their valued support over the last two years as well as the generous financial assistance with decorating costs, playground surface costs and the car park resurfacing.

Finally, I thank all my fellow Trustees for all the work they put in and the excellent advice they give the chairman.