

Buckden Institute AGM 2022 – Chair's report

- 2021-2022 has been another difficult year for the Institute – as for so much else.
- In terms of the objectives of the charity, two of the three objectives have been met:
 - **Provision and operation of a village hall** – the hall is in good physical shape with the woodworm related work to the floor now complete
 - **Fund raising for operation of the village hall** – although income has been limited the hall funds are adequate. Due to our reserves and some support funding from Craven DC in 2020, we have sufficient funds to continue to operate the hall for the foreseeable future, even with limited fund-raising opportunities. The Treasurer will provide more details of this in his report.
- The third objective:
 - **Organising recreation and leisure activities for the benefit of parishioners**, has been continued to be impacted by Covid.
 - The restrictions resulting from various Covid 19 lockdowns and subsequent public health England guidance guidelines have severely limited the activities taking place in the hall. The committee has regularly reviewed and updated the Risk Assessment as the guidance has evolved and activities are progressively building up again. With appropriate ventilation the hall can now accommodate up to 36 people whilst maintaining air quality below the PHE recommended threshold.
 - Activities now once again taking place in in the hall include:
 - Parish Council and Institute meetings
 - Art Group
 - Whist
 - Coffee Mornings
 - Buckden Singers rehearsals
 - Skittles
 - Craft workshops
 - Bus training
 - Elections
 - The quiz continues to be held in the Buck but is organised by the Institute.
 - ...in other words, many of the regular activities which were suspended or went online before the pandemic. Numbers attending though are generally down – and the current safe capacity of 36 people at any one time is not the limiting factor for this.
 - However, some activities are unlikely to return in the near future. For example, the Buckden Singers Christmas concert, with ~100 people would certainly not be feasible under current guidelines. It is too early to tell whether the external meetings will return. We suspect that some of these will stay online post-covid.
 - For the last two years, neither Gala nor the Duck Race were able to take place. This year we are planning to hold both. Planning for the gala is well advanced. The Gala itself will follow the usual format. The Fell Race is a championship event and therefore a much

larger affair than usual – 531 entries as at 1st May. As yet we have been unable to establish whether there is to be a sheep show, but it is looking increasingly unlikely. We are still short of volunteers to help on the day, so anyone who can spare an hour would be very welcome. The Duck Race will take place on Sunday 24th July. On 5th June the Institute is organising a street party as part of the national Big Jubilee Lunch celebrations. All parish residents are welcome to come to this Jacob's Join event.

- The challenge for the coming year is to build up the use of the hall still further, clearly while adhering to public health guidance. Before Covid, we had plans to expand the use of the hall once the refurbishment was complete. The challenge now is to get back to pre-Covid levels of utilisation and then to look for further opportunities.

Peter Vetch
May 2022