

## **HPFRGC Events and Community Engagement Report to AGM 13th December 2021**

Covid and lockdown have had a devastating effect on most of the normal events we run at the Barn. It is also important to recognise that, alongside having to deal as individuals with the personal and family challenges associated with the pandemic, there has been significant ill health and clinical vulnerabilities amongst both the trustees and the Barn volunteers. However we have not been idle and can report the following achievements

### **Christmas Draw 2020**

The draw raised over £1500 in much needed funds for the charity. Congratulations to all for their hard work selling tickets on our behalf

### **Community Cinema**

The cinema has not run this year due to covid security concerns. However, we do hope to see its welcome return as soon as the situation improves.

### **Orchard of Hope**

Hours of work, community engagement and involvement, as well as the generosity of parishioners, has resulted in the creation of a community fruit orchard of almost 100 trees being established at the Barn. Over several days, people chose to come along and plant their own tree or to have our team of volunteers plant them for them. Many trees were planted in memory of loved ones and the community orchard will serve as a tribute to, and reminder of, the resilience shown by our village during the pandemic

### **Community Garden**

The trustees have supported and nurtured the development of our team of wonderful community gardeners. We have provided the land and given financial support and backing to get this exciting and inclusive project off the ground.

### **Strawberry Fair**

This show did not take place this year as covid restrictions in place at the time meant it was not possible to be held.

### **Community Engagement Days**

Repairs and maintenance at the Barn have continued thanks to the hard work and efforts of our trusty volunteers on several projects helping to keep the premises up to scratch. The new acoustic panels have made a huge difference to the sound quality and improved the overall experience for people with hearing impairment. We would like to thank the Phoenix Trust for their financial support making this possible. We would also like to thank the children of Hickling School for their hard work during their visits to weed the garden. Those tiny hands have made a huge difference and we appreciate their help very much.

### **Village Show**

This year we were able to hold the village show again. In order to keep everyone safe we kept to the covid secure 100 person limit for a walk through event, with everyone carefully counted in and out of the Barn. It was a remarkable show with lots of fabulous handicrafts created during lockdown. Outside we had teas, community stalls, ice creams and a live band all of which added up to a jolly atmosphere enjoyed by all.

## **Village Fireworks**

The village fireworks took place this year. A large team of volunteers worked hard to ensure a safe and spectacular evening. Subsequently we have received a number of comments from concerned parishioners about the large volume of cars and people coming from outside the village. This seems to have been caused by the event being shared on social media - something that we have always avoided as best we can in the past. Concerns were in particular about parked cars blocking the roads meaning that pedestrians felt at risk and that the emergency services could have been impeded if called.

Unfortunately a review meeting about this event has not yet taken place due to recent unexpected administrative demands on the trustees' time.

## **Concert Band Night**

A return to live music at the Barn was achieved by an event run in conjunction with the Norfolk Broads Concert Band. A highly successful evening ensued with a reduced audience capacity and regular ventilation ensuring that everyone who attended was safe.

## **Hickling Children's Christmas Toy Swap**

Unfortunately this event did not take place due to recent unexpected administrative demands on the trustees' time.

## **CPR and Defibrillator Training**

Our defibrillator has been maintained by volunteers and has seen several uses since its installation. Recently more than 20 people attended a CPR and defibrillator training course, meaning that our community is better equipped to deal with these sudden life threatening situations.

## **Community Groups and Activities**

Perhaps the most work and effort that has taken place over this past year has gone into supporting fitness activities and small community groups to return to the Barn in a covid secure fashion. Each and every user has been required to adopt a detailed covid secure risk assessment and has been inducted into the safe use of the premises. This has been time consuming and laborious work, but it has meant that many of our regular users like gym, Badminton, short mat bowls, bridge, Pilates, zumba and U3A monthly meetings as well as groups including croquet, country dancing, British history, photography, wildlife creative crafting and literature, have all been able to resume meeting safely. This is all thanks to the hard work and commitment of all involved in operating in a covid secure way, and we are very grateful to our volunteers for their hard work and efforts.

## **Community Volunteers**

Without our stalwart team of volunteers we could not have achieved these remarkable things in such difficult times. We know that they are modest and do not wish to be named, but it is really important for the village to know that the bookings system, the health and safety checks, the playground, the gym and so many other things would not be there if it were not for this staunch and loyal gang. The trustees would like to thank each and every volunteer for this loyalty, commitment and hard work during such difficult times.

## **And what next?**

2022 Queens jubilee, quiz nights, band nights, Strawberry Fair, village show and lots, lots more!

We are already planning ahead for a range of events for 2022. We sincerely hope that Covid restrictions reduce and that we can begin to return to some kind of normality in the coming year.

### **10 yr Anniversary Community Consultation**

It seems incredible that it is ten years since building work on the Barn commenced. To mark this milestone a full village consultation is planned for the new year, using our tried and tested community survey methods via Survey Monkey and house drop leaflets. We will be asking the village how they would like to see their village hall grow and develop over the next ten years, while building on our current success and achievements.