

TRUSTEES

James Lilwall **Chairman**

John Menzies **Vice-Chairman**, Marietta Menzies **Secretary**, Jason Waller **Treasurer**, *vacant Caretaker*, John Mallen **Booking Clerk**, David Cockburn **Web Site**, Carolyn Good, Rob Edwards & Rita Edwards, Julia Waller

Chairman's Report June 2017

Whenever I sit down to prepare an annual report I always find the best place to start is what was in the report the previous year. This always brings home to me what has been achieved and how far we have travelled before I put pen to paper. When I reflect on last year's report there were some key areas and topics that stood out as being our priorities. Agreeing the final build costs, completing the necessary snags to the new building, getting our finances in to a healthy and sustainable position, learning how the hall adapts and flexes to the different needs and requirements as new events took place, enhancing the facilities and infrastructure, increasing the bookings and local events, marketing the hall and its wonderful facilities, improving the drive and car park, volunteer sustainability and getting more local help in the running of the hall and finally managing succession amongst the key and critical roles so we have the right skills to help us build a successful future.

Many of these keys themes are still very much our focus today but I'm pleased to say many have been successfully delivered through hard work and perseverance.

This leads me on to once again thank my fellow trustees for the enormous amount of work and commitment they have put in over the last year. Many hours of hard work has goes in to making the hall the success it is today. It's very easy to take a lot of this commitment and hard work for granted. The whole community benefits from this fantastic facility and its very encouraging seeing more and more engaging with the many events and organisations using the facilities. We were sad to say goodbye to William and Karin during the year as they headed off to settle in Barbados. Both were a great support and pivotal to the success of the project. William played a vital role being our finance and legal lead during those critical months working with the lottery and others. They left with our heartfelt thanks and appreciation. It was wonderful to welcome both Jason and Julia to the trustees and thank you Jason for being persuaded to take on the critical role of treasure. Not an easy task with all the complexities of the build costs still to be agreed and sorted. The trustees have continued to meet monthly during the year and an amazing amount has been achieved, which I'll reference later.

At this point I must put on record our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to John and Marietta, who as you know will leave us shortly to start their new adventure in Australia. Over the last 14 years John and Marietta have played a vital and pivotal role in achieving our dream. I don't say this lightly but all of this really couldn't have been done without them! Marietta's complete focus, dedication and determination to see this through helped us build the social 'evidence' needed to win through with the lottery and other grant providers. The lead contact with the lottery and all

that entailed assured us of success. John's support, knowledge, expertise and professionalism enabled us to plan, build and execute this wonderful facility we see today. We are all immensely sad to see you leave us, but you go with our thanks and everlasting appreciation, you really do leave behind a legacy for Bawdeswell for many many years to come and you can be rightfully proud of the part you have both played in delivering this wonderful dream. We all look forward to gathering in this place on Saturday evening to say a proper Bawdeswell 'goodbye', 'good luck' and 'thank you' from us all.

As I was saying earlier, much has been achieved during the year. The building accounts were finalised and paid, thank you John for your dogged termination to get this settled. The parish council delivered the drive and car park refurbishment, which we rightly financially supported. This has greatly enhanced the whole area and improved the user's access beyond recognition. Further new chairs and cradles have been bought, a new water boiler in memory of Chris Hood has been installed in the reception, the new 'beech hut' has been commissioned, greatly improving and enhancing our external storage capability. We thank both Tony Hood and Josie for their support. We held our first marketing open day to publicize the hall and its facilities, while every month spending time reviewing our lottery obligations, outcomes and required policies. The operations sub group continued to look after the running maintenance, enhancements and the halls fixtures and fittings. A new sub group was formed; BEG (Bawdeswell Event Group) which takes accountability for events and regular social fixtures such as the HUB café, monthly soup & role lunches, themed suppers and lots more besides. So our agendas are pretty full and busy.

The facilities continue to stimulate new ideas, opportunities, bookings and I'm pleased to say a good general growth in numbers attending the many events and functions. New classes, fitness, social and fundraising events have been established by various groups and individuals. Casual one off bookings continued to grow during the year.

Financially the hall is turning in a good steady trading surplus, but we need to continue to focus on key growth areas to fully realise the financial stability of the facilities that will enable us to continue to invest.

As I've said before running the hall is a like running a small business and our approach needs to continue to be balanced but sustainable to provide continuity in the coming years. We have capacity, plenty of it, so we have to keep marketing and promoting the hall to local and outside user groups to fully optimise the capacity and revenue possibilities.

I keep mentioning sustainability; we must now as trustees focus on the long term and continue to try to get more people involved. Serving as a trustee is rewarding and not onerous; we must manage succession amongst the key and critical roles so we have the right skills that will secure the future.

I'll finish by saying thank you and I look forward to the year ahead.

James Lilwall
Chairman – Trustees