



Hub Chairs Report 2020

The Hub is run by unpaid volunteer Trustees, some of whom have been part of the project from the 2011 start – initially, twenty of us meeting weekly in the Rose and Crown Pub as we negotiated our way with Bucks County over a year and a half, restoring the building during the next year - so have given nine years to it so far! It started as a Charitable Trust and morphed into a Registered Charity over the years. We have always promised to be, and still are, a Community engaged, transparent Project for your wellbeing.



Carol Tarrant 2011 writing Social Need Case from home for proposed Community Hub

As recently advertised, this year's AGM has been cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions, so continuing your 'full access' to the project is my fervent intention! I have planned this report in a manner that reveals all that is part and parcel of the Hub project for your Wellbeing, and invites all you might wish to contribute, yourselves!

1 Where are we now? – Our intention in our Post Lockdown planning was always the reopening of the Hub in a manner that keeps everyone as safe as possible whilst the virus continues. The five remaining Trustees met at social distance over the last five or six months, to complete our own new Covid-19 aware risk assessments and a new Covid-19 aware Booking Form. We purchased and created the props that make that work - PPE, sanitisers, furniture adjustments, tags, and reminder notices for walls. Our strategy has been led by the experts in ACRE (the parent group of Community Buildings), sanitising-away any possible germ-spread and using always social distancing, accommodating continued socialising support by hiring out our Hub Hall again for a variety of activities, starting with the least risky and moving through the medium risks and when confident, eventually allowing the most challenging when everything that mitigates that level of risk is in place (Bridge Club/Parties, etc.). Keeping the bookings at present to 'one-booking-per-day,' re-engaging our own cleaner for sanitisation throughout every evening, and requiring all hirers to fully engage with their own risk management and agreeing to follow our rules, as in fully ventilating the hall, cleansing their hands and the furniture they touch before and after use, and socially distancing at all points in their presence around the Hub.

2 What were we doing during Covid-19 Lockdown? Firstly came our supportive engagement with tenant Café needs at start of Lockdown - we felt that we needed to take care of our tenant. We applied for the Landlord Government Grant and got it, thereby saving the Hub Wellbeing project for all users, and relieving the tenant Café of the worry of rent whilst they bravely re-purposed the Café in various ways for this community.



Supportive engagement to those more isolated villagers – as in we were conscious that some Hub users relied heavily on the continued presence of our Hub and the Café, and those hub users would need to be supported during lockdown where possible.

For this we needed to reach out to villagers so we decided to broaden out the scope to ‘net’ the entire village safely. The point behind our volunteer texting group of 26 Ivinghoe Volunteers called **‘WhatsAppening in Ivinghoe?’** was its present state as a Community support-aid, organised by a couple of the Hub Trustees calling on fellow Ivinghoe Village residents to lead a move to re-organise Grocery-deliveries, pharmacy medicine collection and deliveries and supportive phone calls, to all who needed them in each street, road and lanes immediate close location. This is still in place in case of second wave of virus assails us all!!

3 What our Hub was doing behind the scenes over first six years –



After the initial twenty strong ‘Save Old School’ group had spent a year in 2012 with around a dozen of us meeting in the Rose and Crown every Monday night, writing social need reports for Bucks county Council to consider our tenancy request within a very dilapidated school building, we finally received a 25 year Lease at (literally!) a peppercorn rent with responsibilities

for all refurbishment and structural maintenance, and the building was clawed back from the hands of the proposed developers! We had filled in many a grant form for seeking funds to cover the forthcoming refurbishment - with the Lease now granted we gained just over £100, 000 to refurbish immediately. Initially, Ivinghoe village was overwhelmingly behind the project for saving the beloved building for Community Wellbeing - with flat access and an open welcome to the wider community! Willing village families originally promised close support to run the building between us, and a posy of villagers helped paint the final lower level 2metres of wall surface throughout the building as we waved goodbye to the builders!! The track record is good, with mounting regular bookings of our Hub Hall to this community and shared engagement in some extra community centred events which jolly up the four seasons over all those years, but alas with dwindling practical helpful support back-stage for the actual running of the building, over the last several years.

Typical Hiring Activities – have included a taught Music group, W.I. Craft-Group meetings, Elections, Presentations like Highways and Airport, Village and Parish Council meetings, weekly Simply Walks, Kick Boxing, Pilates, Bridge Club, Canasta, Simply Singing, Crochet Group, Guides, Wakes and many, many parties.

Shared Trustee + Café Hub Activities – this is what we in the Hub and Café Team ‘Put-on’ together for the community, as averse to hub hirers and the Cafes own business... Our own pancake races on the Lawn; Spring Market with Egg Hunt; Varied Summer Event + Cafe Birthday; Flower and Veg Horticultural combined villages Show , shared with Town Hall, with our Hub desired live music and dancing entertainment extras; Midwinter Market inside and out for Christmas present buying and sparkle....which are all generous positive events to mark the Seasons with a ‘Wellbeing’ culture for this village.

Broken tarmac and weeds surrounded the building, cracked walls and dark damp dilapidation inside the building was our start point!



Our original refurbishment of the building included: Insulation and reinstatement of ceilings throughout; Reconditioning of all the Gas Heaters with some new replacement, Re-wiring of the whole building and an upgrading of its Electricity capacity; Restoring of the old School Classroom Screen and flipping it around; Remaking from scratch the old Kitchen into a modern basic new provision suitable for enabling Café use; Replacing old strip chained lighting for new modern hung lamps and wall lights.; pale Apple White emulsion on all walls, and Willow pale green on all gloss areas to wipe clean. We purchased 64 upholstered dark willow stackable chairs and 13 rectangular tables and a table nest to keep them in. We reconditioned the sink, added two new lavatories, reconditioned the older disabled loo for whole families, were donated a piano which we reconditioned with Paul's excellent tuning skills, and accepted the gift of a fridge for the Hall use also. We have added loudspeakers and a PA system, a whole wall projection screen for cinema and keep up our flowers and plants inside and out, even though they 're-wilded' the entire space itself beautifully during Lockdown, and although we now do not grow salad for the Café - chives still pop up where they will!



'After' we opened Reunions, parties and work details in the early days.

The Hub tenant CuriosiTEA Rooms rent to us pays for the utilities of the Hub Building, and Hiring Fees paid to us from the Community for hiring space in the Hub pays for the obligation of refurbishment inside and out of our Hub ourselves and renewal of furnishings and provision of new equipment. Things we spend our accrued monies from our hiring out of the Hub Hall is saved up and banked and can be tracked clearly in our Treasurer's Report and in detail in our quarterly minutes.

Typically we spend money on replacing essential everyday equipment that allows the Hub and Café to run as a top priority, our Utility Bills of Water, Gas, Telecom and Electricity is usually covered by our tenant café's monthly rent, with dustbin collection and window cleaning fees, plumber's work, and we have been striving to cover all the carpentry requirements accruing. Our own tenancy with Bucks Council requires us to cover the upkeep of refreshed inside decoration of all rooms and be responsible for the outside, roof, plumbing, outside walls, drainage and paved areas.

We did receive a grant from the Aylesbury Vale's New Homes Bonus for the **renewing and resurrecting of the old Floorboards**, and the final goodbye to my own fake floorboard painting on top of cheaper flat boarding in our early days, and this has left a bright shiny light-reflecting flooring spectacle for us all to admire and carefully protect! The grant extended to the same resurrection for the Café flooring also. We recently spent savings on a new fridge freezer and new ventilation extract for our tenant Café's kitchen, plus some PPE and lamination for Covid-19 notices.



4 What was the motivation when we started the project?

Firstly, followed our engagement and checking via flyers and questionnaires with the community the percentage of NEED (fuel poverty and Isolation in particular) for this building within our community. This was followed by the related writing of our initial Social Need document. Assisted by Ivinghoe villager Andrew Lord's superior knowledge of Engineering, and his personal verdict on a strong building with many years ahead of it, we forged ahead. Then, came the full-on totally independent SOS (Save Old School) Saving of this solid but very challenged beloved old school building for purely wider community needs and gaining a long Lease; Organising grant funding to restore it; Supervising its restoration stages; Completing its redecoration between us; Keeping the community engaged with its opening and running. ***(This is where we have eventually slipped up! More on this later!)***

Finally – in 2013 - Gifting the village with a new community space at its centre, reconditioned, upgraded and repainted complete with Hiring Hall, Partitioned Rooms, I.T. Room for learning and meetings, that has level access for all from very young to very old, centred on 'inclusive wellbeing' for all, with a twenty five year Lease, and an integral Café tenant to refresh us all, CuriosiTea Rooms. After the initial generous wall painting, volunteer back-up evaporated away, and personal use of the Hub spaces was the only outer community engagement. 20 volunteers became 12 trustees then 8 now five, with three of those presently self-isolating!

5 So what needs to change to move forward?

'Keeping the community engaged with its opening and running.' ***This is where we have slipped up!*** ***We have, as ageing trustees, loyally fought to plug the gap ourselves when the community forgot its promises to help run this project by sharing it's daily tasks together as a community to keep the running of it sustainable, and as the original villagers grew older, the younger generation who could have replaced this volunteering, instead just focused on their own use of the Hub and café through hiring and refreshment' alone, ignoring the unseen, unsung hard work behind the scenes like the proverbial ducks feet unseen under the water....peddling like mad!!!***
So, the 'Trusty-Crusty's are asking for Hub Help!

The 25 year lease continues with 18 years left to use, but subject always to keeping to the Bucks Council agreed tenancy remit of 'Community use for Public Wellbeing' and thereby keeping the building in community use for all! However many businesses might wish to join the High Street as

private Businesses in a big building, this is not the future solution, it will for the next 18 years at least be here for what this Community wishes to come inside and use it for.

This project deserves to exist sustainably and go ahead to get its full Lease use, so please consider how you could help support the 'vital-volunteer-ingredient' and have a chat with us the five trusty-crusty remaining Trustees about joining in. Revitalised community engagement with a readiness to join volunteers for 'Jolly Jobs to upkeep the building and manage community events of all kinds eventually is vital for sustaining its unique presence. As in putting their own volunteer efforts into together painting the inside walls of the Hub by patch-painting the most scuffed areas a couple of times and year with hot drinks provided, or helping with weeding and leaf sweeping up together ending in a BBQ, or individually to engage with a few of the every-day caretaker tasks shared out between a dozen or so villagers and ticked off a list of at present 73 year old 'Hub Secretary/Treasurer' as 'Bobs Jobs'!! Some motivated and active Trustees hopefully would develop out of a few of the volunteers as a mutually agreeable move. (Trustee roles involve 4 main meetings a year and background engagement all year.)



Bob, my partner and I are in our early seventies, and would very much like to free up our time to free up our time to continue our retirement adventures mostly abroad – thus, we have set a deadline of spring 2002 as our departure. We would enjoy producing a description of all the tasks which need doing around the Hub, a calendar as to when they are due to be carried out, and a map to show where the meter or activity needs to be undertaken.

Better still join us soon please, and we can enjoy your company to show you the simple ropes and easily get you trained up together! What we want to see and hear is the Hub ringing with voices of members of this Community having a good time sharing all the assets of this building whilst also doing some of the background 'running tasks' - shared out together, again! If you feel you could contribute to this voluntary Community Project, do get in touch with us – either leave a message with your preferred contact on the Hub's telephone at 01296-661666, send an email to ivinghoeoldschoolcommunityhub@btconnect.com – or simply email Carol, Chair of Trustees, or meet her for a chat over a cup of coffee, and I will welcome you with open, 'socially distanced', arms!! Thank You.

**Carol Tarrant
Chair of Trustees
29th September 2020
caroltarrant@gmail.com**