

The new committee first met in October 2022 and from the start has worked really well as a team to get things done. The initial priority was to finish off the refurbishment of the interior of the Village Hall, which was completed early in 2023. Following this the focus has been on developing the outside area to the rear of the hall. The groundwork clearance was finished early in the summer and the routes of drains confirmed. We have been helped by a brilliant group of volunteers who are a great asset and Badingham Community Council is supporting the work financially. The Village Hall and BCC now share the storage room to the rear of the building and access is available, even if the hall is in use, through a new outside door.

The committee collected quotes and suggestions for the hard landscaping work at the rear of the hall which we hope will be finished during August. After this we will work with gardening groups from the village to help us develop the area to become a community garden space which can be used for functions and social activities. We hope that planting in the autumn will enable the garden to feel established by the spring of 2024. We recently worked with Enterprise Badingham to submit a bid for the "Field to Fork" project from East Suffolk Council and this was successful. It brought us £2,000 to establish a village herb garden. This project is as much about cooking and using local produce as growing so it will help us make good use of the new kitchens and link to the community gardens in the churchyard.

After a period of monitoring the heating system and trying to reduce our unusually high gas costs we have just discovered that the heating system is faulty in several respects and our engineers recommend replacing the boiler. This is a cost that we had not anticipated but we have discovered that the boiler was installed in 2008 so is well past the average life of a combi boiler (8-10 years). We urgently need to explore ways of funding this so it can be back in full use for the autumn.

With all the improvements to the hall and its surroundings we hope that bookings will increase over the next year. The hall continues to be used for most village events but is also available for private functions and is being used by educational groups. However, we do need to increase our income if we are to meet escalating costs. The committee has been advertising the hall in neighboring villages and will continue to promote its use for daytime and evening classes as well as for functions. We will continue to improve our marketing but there is a lot of competition from neighboring community halls and classes in Badingham have not been well attended by local residents so have moved to Framlingham.

Several functions have been organised to raise funds and a coffee morning in July raised £285. The autumn will include a talk with wine and finger buffet together with the auction of a donated painting, a music night, a folk ceilidh and the winter market (in partnership with the Community Café).

We have a strong committee where everyone works hard to get things done and we could do with a couple of new members for the next year. We also need to continue add to our team of volunteers and extend it to cover all aspects of expertise needed to maintain a valuable resource. We rely on having a public space like the Village Hall so all groups in Badingham will need to pull together to support, develop and use it to make sure it can survive into the future.