

REPORT OF THE CHAIR TO AGM 2ND MARCH 2020

The last year has been eventful and productive in our drive to deliver on the vision set out by the village over the course of the last 5 years. The purpose of this report is to update members and to express our collective thanks to the large group of people supporting the project in so many ways.

I would like to begin by expressing our thanks to the Board of Trustees who put so much time and effort into this community effort and to the group of people lending their considerable skill and expertise that occupy no formal position but do so as their contribution to community life.

This voluntary enterprise has seen the installation of the wonderful wall of opening glass doors in the main hall, the installation of a new floor in the front community hall, the electrical, plumbing additions, and roof repairs that make the building more secure and more habitable for community use. It may be a while yet before the building is fully prepped for the kind of use that we have long envisaged. We will get there but it is my hope that we will make every effort to do so as soon as possible. First priority is to complete the work on the community room, with new lighting and a sound system, finish the work on the ceiling, install a new floor and finally redecorate. We have both the finance and the plans in place for this and our hope is to complete the work this summer. Two other projects are planned. We want to install a new, bigger commercial style kitchen, capable of catering for any event that the building might accommodate in the future, and upgrade the washroom facilities, so that we have sufficient toilets accessible even if there is more than one event taking place.”

There is plenty of evidence to show that despite the difficulties, we continue to build on our list of community activities with successful events. IAM Fitness provides an excellent service to many people throughout the week, once again the Lover Fayre promoted a record breaking event in the summer, the garage sale continues to enjoy significant support by sellers and buyers, we promoted another successful 5k Run or Walk your Heart Out event and once again the Lover Valentine Post had a successful year with the addition of the Darling Café which was a big hit. The building itself has limitations but there is no doubt that the people of this community have, through its activities and events, showcased a community commitment and spirit that is envied by many visitors and makes this a vibrant and wonderful place to live.

However, all this cannot be achieved by a small number of people on the Board, it is truly a big team effort and this brings me to my most important role as Chair to thank all those that have helped. The list of individuals would be long and so I will group them.

The Board’s thanks go to:

- The Lover Green Sub Committee for their dedication to their events and keeping the Green safe and maintained
- Building helpers that have improved, cleaned and programmed the OS throughout the year.
- The Cupids and Post Office staff on the Valentine Post
- The florist who helped us.
- The PR and merchandising team that secure the vital publicity and exciting stock.
- Royal Mail for stepping in at the last moment to sponsor the Valentine Post
- The Technical and Finance team that bring considerable expertise to bear.
- The organisers, managers and helpers in the Darling Café and the large team of bakers that kept up with demand throughout the week.
- The sign makers

- The Architect who provides help and advice whenever we need it.

We have achieved a lot in a short period but there is a long way to go. To get there will take energy, commitment, understanding and teamwork. We will make mistakes but must not be deterred or distracted from our worthy goals. We have done very well to harness the potential of the place in which we live to bring money from outside to build our future, rather than risking the inevitable funding fatigue that communities almost invariably face when they can only raise funds amongst their own. However, in doing so we have created worthy community activities in their own right. A sense of fun, and community cohesion results from such activities and is there for all to see.

In order to go from strength to strength we need helpers and new blood. We are never lacking in people to help when we need it and sitting on Committees is not something we do out of sheer love of the role. It is something we do because it is an essential part of the whole, some would say a necessary evil. This year we are losing Dave Bennett from the Board and we thank him for the contribution he has made. This is a good time to put out the call for another three people who believe they have the energy and skills to offer to this community by joining the Board of Trustees.

Nick Gibbs

Chair

Lover Community Trust March 2020