

## Teffont Village Hall Report 2023

2023, like all years, was a busy one for Teffont Village Hall. The purpose of the Village Hall, as we all know, is to provide an amenity for the villagers of Teffont - a place for people to meet, a space for them to use – and as always, that is what the Hall has done. We have hosted four films, from boys' own adventure to gentle romance, three talks – The Right Sky at Night, given by dark sky adviser Steve Tonkin FRAS; a presentation of the Teffont Archaeology findings by Dr David Roberts, and Peter Shallcross's talk on farming with nature during a time of change – and a wonderful theatrical production, Glory of the Garden, by local theatre group PlayGC. We have had several Pig & Whistle pop-up pub events, including a Prosecco, Pimms and Peroni evening and a cocktail night, where Heidi Scott wowed us all with her cocktail-making skills. There were several of us who wove our way home after that. The pop-up pub after the lighting up of the Village Christmas Tree in December was a suitably full and festive culmination of the Pig's activities in 2023.

The queen of the spreadsheet, Emma Brown, produced a questionnaire that went around the entire village, asking what people wanted from their Village Hall. The results will be shown to villagers at the Teffont Annual Community Gathering on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

There were 15 private bookings of the Village Hall in 2023, plus the regular events held by the Parish Council, the Garden Club and Dorset Italian.

The fabric of the Village Hall and its environs suffered somewhat in 2023. The Hall sprung a leak in January, which led to the postponement of the first film of the season, Mrs Harris Goes To Paris, and a Parish Council meeting, and the cancellation of the Village Café. The fault was rectified, thank goodness, so that the events were able to take place, albeit a little later than expected. The wall surrounding the Village Hall garden needs attention and had to be cleared of foliage beforehand; the committee attacked the weeds with gusto, fortified by free coffee and cake from the café.

The committee lineup has changed slightly. Pauline Maidment and Rosemary Pegrum – more of whom later – have left the committee, though Rosemary continues to run the village café. Emma Rutherford and Natalya Stankovitch have now joined us; Natalya ran a very successful children's Christmas card making workshop at the end of the year.

Pauline left the committee as she had to leave her house in Teffont, where she'd lived for many decades, and move away from the village. The Village Hall hosted a leaving party for her in April; it seemed like most of the village showed up. Her role as caretaker of the Hall has been taken on by Emily Duncan of Chilmark.

The other important person feted in the Hall was the King; there was a live screening of the Coronation. People brought cakes and the Committee provided complementary glasses of fizz; it started the Coronation weekend with a bang.

Talking of cakes, Rosemary writes: *The café continues to thrive and is busier than it has ever been. That said, there are inexplicable weeks when very few people show up. Whether a publicity flyer has been done does not seem relevant. The regular meeting place that will always happen (except August and Christmas!) is the strength of the café. New people can meet residents and those who live alone can be assured of some company and chat. Sausage rolls, cheese twists, cakes and hot and cold drinks are served. There is a wonderful team of volunteers who keep things going, it would not exist without them. We always need more, as that means a longer time between shifts. At present, each pair of volunteers can expect to work one morning every four months. The café also provides employment to two local young people who work alternate weeks. As the cafe co-ordinator, I am very grateful to everyone that helps with serving, making cakes and buying supplies and dealing with the takings.*

And speaking of complementary glasses, the Village Hall Committee provided free mulled wine and mince pies after the Carol Service in Evias Church. As we all keep stressing, the Village Hall and its committee exist to serve the community of Teffont, not to make a profit. We do, however, need to make sure that we can cover our costs, and in the future more fundraising events will be scheduled. These events will remain true to the spirit of Teffont Village Hall and its committee, and be fun.