



EFFINGHAM VILLAGE RECREATION TRUST

EVRT AGM for Financial Year 2019/20 [online by Zoom 16 March 2021]

Chairman's Statement

Due to the impact and requirements of the Covid-19 pandemic, this year's AGM has been delayed significantly and needs to be held remotely online.

I begin my report on the activities of the Charity for the financial year ending 31st March 2020. Events during 2019 and early 2020 seem a distant memory because so much has happened since April last year and there has been a longer than usual gap between the end of the financial year and holding the AGM. I will use this opportunity to also comment on subsequent developments during 2020 and the future plans of the Trustees, so that residents of Effingham are aware of recent actions which have been taken.

As set out in the published Accounts on the Charity Commission website for the year ended 31st March 2020, the Trust's finances show a surplus of £101k. However, this headline figure conceals the fact that the majority of that sum was "restricted income" – meaning it can only be used on significant defined projects such as building new facilities. Out of that surplus, only £6,378 was available as unrestricted income to be used as appropriate. It is the objective of the Trustees to ensure that expenditure is closely matched to income so that residents receive the maximum benefit of the facilities. This small surplus is only achieved by the Trustees carefully monitoring and minimising expenditure on all occasions.

During the 2019/20 period, the new 3G all-weather sports surface was completed and has proved to be a great success. This first-class facility, which adds considerable value to the Charity, was funded entirely from donations and grants. The primary contributors were: Bookham Colts; London Marathon Charitable Trust; Sport England; Guildford Borough Council; and the Co-operative Group Limited. The Trustees look forward to play being resumed in the near future as lockdown eases.

In addition, there were three smaller projects which were completed during the period: the installation of new pitch flood-lights; the placing of high-quality secured benches within the parkland and the construction of a wheelchair-friendly, walkway around part of the building's perimeter. The latter two were funded through a successful bid and application to the competitive Concurrent Grant Aid fund which is a grant funded jointly by Guildford Borough Council and Effingham Parish Council.

A four-year KGV Funding Agreement was negotiated and entered into with Effingham Parish Council, effective from April 2019 and the Trustees are very grateful for this ongoing financial support from the Council. The Funding Agreement consists of two components: the "Facilities Funding" Agreement ensures that Effingham residents can use the many facilities of KGV without



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any specific charge at point of use. However, the Agreement also ensures that the costs of the management and upkeep of the woodland, playgrounds and car park are indirectly paid for by residents through the Precept.

The second funding component is a Management Support Grant which runs for 4 years from 2019-23. An external review of EVRT's operations in 2019 identified that EVRT was significantly under resourced for the size and complexity of operations required to run the Charity. With the objective to develop the professional expertise for more effective daily management of the site, the Trustees sought financial assistance to upgrade the office facilities and to fund extra personnel. Thanks to this Management Support Grant it was possible to recruit Chris Bell who joined as Clerk to the Trustees and has provided great support and expertise since his arrival. Phillipa Chisnell was taken on to provide administrative support and Steve Smith to provide technical and practical cover. Phillipa and Steve joined just as the financial year ended but have both made great contributions to the KGV since arriving.

The Trust bade farewell to its Chairman, Chris Iles, who stepped down in May 2019 and we thank him for his commitment and wise counsel during his time as a Trustee. We welcomed two new Trustees – Michael Agius and Phil Blows who brought considerable experience, energy and passion to the role.

I would like to thank all the Trustees, Chris Bell as Clerk and Bob Austin as KGV Manager for their hard work, unstinting time and commitment to EVRT during this period.

2020 has brought new challenges – Covid-19 and government regulations forced the closure of the Hall and all activities having to stop, with the exception of the pre-school which has remained open in accordance with government guidelines and with support and input from the Trustees. Sporting activities were also sadly cancelled and all visitors to KGV are asked to comply with suitable social distancing and other infection control measures.

An incursion by Travellers in September forced the Charity to pay significant legal costs to evict the trespassers and their vehicles. There was subsequent considerable disruption and inconvenience due to the Trustees deciding to close the car park. This was done to prevent further possible incursion and to provide greater security for visitors to the KGV. Following a concerted fundraising effort, new and additional security measures are now in place. The Trustees are extremely grateful to those residents who contributed to the cost of this and to Louise Wishart of Loolabells for organising the collection bucket. The Trustees also thank EPC, Julie Iles on behalf of SCC and EFFRA for their significant donations and the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner for its earlier grant to improve access security.



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The showers in the changing rooms have long been due for replacement. Over recent years, various attempts had been made to keep the existing boilers operational, but they finally stopped working in early 2020. Due to the ongoing uncertainty about the use of the playing fields, the Trustees deferred the high cost of replacement for as long as possible, but work was eventually carried out in October 2020 to completely replace the boilers and pumps. The Trustees are pleased that the new showers were used at least once before rugby was again stopped due to government restrictions and will be ready for the benefit of all users post-lockdown.

The KGV Hall continues to require regular maintenance and repair due to its age and construction. The possible Berkeley Homes enabling development allows for £2.6m to be spent on refurbishment or reconstruction of the Hall. As a result of the ongoing uncertainty of this development, the Trustees are being cautious about incurring significant expense on major maintenance items such as the Hall roof which is in a poor state of repair. Unfortunately, a consequence of this strategy is that there is the risk of water damage from time to time.

EVRT has recently re-launched its website. A change for forced upon the Trustees because Surrey County Council was no longer willing to host the domain and I wish to express my gratitude to Sue Morris who worked tirelessly with support from others including Chris Hogger, to recreate a much better and more informative site. The Trustees hope that this will attract more interest from residents of Effingham.

The Trustees decided to continue with regular maintenance of the KGV grounds so that they could be enjoyed by people using the area for recreation and exercise during the lockdown when the government is asking all people to stay local. Positive comments on the state of the grounds have been made by numerous residents and the Trustees are grateful to the maintenance company for presenting the area in such good condition.

As a result of the Traveller incursion and the antisocial behaviour of a small number of residents, the Trustees have needed to call on the support of the local police on numerous occasions during the last 12 months. The Trustees are extremely thankful for the prompt and professional approach of our neighbourhood police force who have provided such good support and advice to EVRT. It is hoped that all residents will show strong community spirit when using the KGV facilities and greater respect of the Charity and those who run it.

In 2020 Phil Blows stepped down as a Trustee due to other commitments. The Board also lost Tim Clarke as Trustee and Treasurer. Tim gave enormous time to the Charity and provided great financial expertise as well as commercial support to the management of the facilities. Tim's decision was due to unacceptable behaviour towards him and his family from a few local residents. Everyone at EVRT is extremely grateful for all his support during his time as a Trustee.



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Mid-2020, our KGV Manager, Bob Austin, decided to retire after more than 6 years with the Charity. As a result of Bob's departure, the role of Phillipa Chisnell was expanded to include many of the management tasks previously undertaken by Bob and Phillipa is now on site for more hours during the week. Managing KGV requires much patience, quick-thinking and good communication with the community; Phillipa and Steve have both brought considerable expertise and good humour to their roles for which the Trustees are very grateful.

In the middle of 2020, Rob Hope joined as a Trustee. Rob works in the charity sector and has been instrumental in helping shape our vision for the future running of KGV. Our objective is to become as self-sufficient as possible, which will require generating new sources of income and making sure we derive maximum revenue from the use of existing facilities while ensuring the Trust's charitable objectives are always at the heart of what it does.

Trustees are all volunteers and give up their time because of their wish to support the local community. At times this is a thankless task, but it is made easier by the spirit of friendship and good humour shared by the Trustees. I am extremely grateful to my colleagues for being so generous with their time and commitment.

Howard Manton, Hon. Chairman