

Combe Reading Room – Chairman’s Report 2020

You will not be surprised to hear that the Reading Room, in common with most other public spaces, had a rather quiet year in 2020 and consequently this report is rather shorter than usual.

We were only able to have a coffee morning for the first two months, but thereafter Covid-19 restrictions dictated that our activities were significantly curtailed for the remainder of the year. We did manage to run two pop-up stalls one in October and one in December. These were brilliantly supported by the village and gave us most welcome boosts to our funds. As in previous years the 100 Club produced a steady net income of almost £1000. This was much enhanced by prize winners’ generosity in donating back their winnings. All in all our income, excluding grants, was reduced by almost £10,000.

With the lack of activity our expenditure was very much reduced. We did, however, still have to fund certain fixed costs, for example council tax and fire protection. The net result was that we incurred a small loss of circa £800.

Two things have combined to reduce the impact on our ongoing financial position. Our previous prudent financial management has ensured that we have reserves in place to cover most unforeseen circumstances. The other is the receipt of a Covid-19 inspired government business support grant of £10,000. We have thus been able to set up a sinking fund in preparation for the repair to our 130 year old roof, which we are advised will require attention in the next year or so.

I am, as always, indebted to my fellow trustees for their support and commitment to our remit of looking after and enhancing our magnificent village amenity. In the back ground, but fundamental to the effective running of the Reading Room, is our wonderful caretaker Sue Golder without whom our jobs would be so much harder.

5th May 2021