

Combe Reading Room – Chairman’s Report 2021

The Covid pandemic still cast its long shadow over our activities in 2021.

As can be imagined our fundraising was severely curtailed, although not as badly as 2020. Nonetheless we did manage to have a plant sale in May and to resume our monthly coffee mornings from July. We were most fortunate that the weather was kind to us and we were able to convene in the Reading Room garden, which went a long way to mitigating the possible transmission of the virus. We were also able to put on our summer Sunday teas, albeit in a somewhat truncated form. One of the few good things to emerge from the pandemic was the increased use of online banking facilities. This was particularly true of our traditional 100 Club. We received a record number of subscriptions, 127 in all, giving an even bigger than usual boost to our funds. This was much improved by many members kindly agreeing to reinvest their prizes.

We were fortunate not to have incurred much major expenditure beyond that on routine maintenance. We did, however, improve the lighting in the long room lavatories by installing movement activated sensors. This having the added benefit of ensuring lights never being left on inadvertently. We were also able to address a damp problem in the corner of the main room.

Our Treasurer’s prudent handling of all things financial ensures that, despite so many bumps in the road, our finances remain in very good order. We look forward to calmer times ahead, which we hope will strengthen our position even further and allow us to add to our roof repair fund, currently standing at £6500.

In essence our main incomes and expenditures were as follows:

Incomes

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Coffee Mornings | £1250 |
| 100 Club | £1500 |
| Premises Hire | £2050 |

Expenditures

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Insurance | £950 |
| Council Tax | £1600 |
| Utilities | £750 |
| Maintenance | £1950 |

The Upshot of the above is a small annual surplus of £400 compared to a £900 loss, excluding grants, in 2020.

The Reading Room functions so well because of the unstinting input of your trustees who have, as always, underpinned the successful operation of this central village amenity. Their tireless support, combined with that of our ever obliging resident caretaker Sue Golder, is what allows this lovely building and its surrounds to prosper. As will often be the case there have been comings and goings within our group of trustees. We have sadly said goodbye to two of our long serving members in Tony Hyder and Rachel Whitehead. We are, however, delighted to welcome Jo Mckechnie onto our board. *11th May 2022*