



ELM PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 2022 – JUNE 2023

Elm Park Community Association
Eyhurst Avenue
Elm Park
RM12 4RA

Executive Committee:

Chair –

Barry Mugglestone – Elected October 2021

Vice Chair –

Rebecca Mazrreku – Elected October 2021

Treasurer -

Andrew Whitton – Elected June 2022

Secretary -

Julie Wilkes – Resigned June 2023

Executive Members -

Ian Norris – Health & Safety

Teresa Parrish – Deputy Health & Safety

Debbie Whitton – Events & Fundraising Lead

Stephanie Nunn

Sue Burchell

Bookings Officer - Rebecca Mazrreku



Barry
Mugglestone



Rebecca
Mazrreku



Andrew
Whitton



Ian
Norris



Teresa
Parrish



Debbie
Whitton



Stephanie
Nunn



Sue
Burchell

Annual Report of Elm Park Community Association 2022 to 2023

The past 12 months have been both exciting and challenging for the Association, there have been some amazing and positive changes made to the aesthetics of the building which we are all really proud of.

We started our financial year in June 2022, having made positive inroads compared to the previous year but also knowing that we still had a long way to go.

The most pressing issue that we needed to address was the hall hire process and trying to standardise what our hirers were paying and coming up with a system of processing payments.

It's no secret that when the committee began this journey; that the charity held £5,000 in the bank having depreciated funds of £25,000 over the previous 5 years. This in itself posed a challenge, in that, if we did not rectify this immediately then it was impossible for the hall to function.

The Executive Committee began analysing the running costs of the hall and looking in to what our regular weekly hirers were charged versus our ad-hoc hirers and where we could apply varying rates and discounts. What we wanted to achieve was a structure that was fair across the board, ensured the safe running of the halls and protecting our regular users and fellow charities and community groups. This meant that we devised 3 levels of payment structures, Ad-hoc hirers (one day here and there), regular hirers (weekly) and charity and community group rates. We undertook research of local halls in the area and looked in to the size of their venues compared to ours and took in to account our predicted running costs for the coming year.

After many discussions we came up with a collective decision that we felt fair. Our regular hirers are provided with a 10% discount on their hourly rate compared to ad-hoc hirers and our charity and community groups are provided with a 14.5% discount. This was implemented immediately for all new user groups, however we knew that for the groups who had been self-managing' their hall fees this would be challenging. We offered staggered increments to both Little Poppets and The Horticultural Guild as both of these groups would be the greatest affected.

We are really pleased to have been able to negotiate with the majority of our user groups and come to a mutually beneficial agreement. As the Horticultural Guild were a community group we were able to extend greater relief to them by offering a community rate that provided them with an extra hour free of charge toward their hire plus the 14.5% discounted rate. Throughout 2022 we also provided them with the use of the annexe on show days free of charge.

However come Winter 2022, we had to again review our costings due to the energy crisis as this hit us too. The committee decided that we would ourselves shoulder the energy increases rather than passing these on to our user groups. This meant that we had to reduce the amount of gift in kind we offered towards our charity and community groups. We were pleased to agree, that we could still provide one hour free of charge towards hire to enable them to set up and tidy up however, we could no longer sustain free annexe hire because it was costing the association to light and heat the space. This was a tough decision to make however, one vital in times where the association struggled to pay the increasing energy bills.

Winter 2022 came with further issues, the heating system failed us yet again and meant that we could not permit our groups to use the space in such conditions and offered refunds where applicable. Having made another temporary repair we knew

that the system needed replacing ASAP, we obtained quotes which were coming out at in excess of £35,000! This would require some serious fundraising and the committee would need to go back to the drawing board and figure out how to raise the funds. What was very clear from us all was that increasing our hire fees was an option that no one was prepared to take.

Over the festive period of 2022, Dulux paint store donated us around 40L of paint and with some funds raised from the festive fair we purchased a little more and the tools required to be able to give the main hall a much needed facelift into modern times. We had volunteers from both the committee and the community come forward pick up a paint brush and spend 2 days transforming the hall. It made such an incredible difference and there were lots of "WOWs" from groups entering the hall. We must thank the paint team volunteers who gave up their time between Christmas and New Year to lend a hand but a big thank you also goes to the young volunteers that came along to help too. Young people get a lot of stick in our community so it's important to highlight that not all are bad eggs and we have some great young people that give up their time to help their community. We know that these young volunteers will grow up to share the same community passion and love for the hall that we all do.



The association continued to build on the previous 6 months of events and worked hard to bring in events that were different that would appeal to a broader range of the community and also help raise funds towards the boiler repairs. Our table tops have

been a huge success, the tea room is a massive hit and our Quiz nights are well attended. These events have been the bulk of our fundraising achievements so in February 2023 we launched an events and fundraising sub-committee. Following on from the establishment of the committee we applied for the Mayor of London's Community Weekend Fund and were successfully awarded £1,300 to host a community cultural weekend. Again this was a steep learning curve for the committee as none of us appreciated just how expensive cultural entertainment would be. Nevertheless, we managed to secure a Pearly King and Queen, a Bollywood Dancer and a Dhol Drummer to attend. Everyone who attended fed back that they had a lovely day and really enjoyed the entertainment and the activities provided. We spent around 6 hours decorating the hall for this event, creating cultural displays and features around the hall and we had colourful bunting hanging from the ceiling. Which by the morning of the event had fallen to the ground but we were determined to make the hall look wonderful and stuck them back in place, thankfully they lasted the event. Whilst this wasn't designed to be a fundraising event, we still managed to raise money on the day towards our boiler fund!



Chair's Report

I would like it put on record my thanks to all the Executive Committee for their time, support and efforts in all the tasks they have undertaken during the last year. Opening the hall for users, DIY days, fundraising and all the associated financial and administration tasks, without these people I am sure we would be handing the keys back to the London Borough of Havering. On behalf of the residents of Elm Park thank you.

We are now financially more secure, but there will be challenges next year with the rises in the cost of living and energy supplies. I am very proud of what the committee has achieved this year, new Fire Doors, a new Heating System, Kitchen and redecoration.

We have a good working relationship with the user groups, we had a challenge with the finances and yes we did have to increase what they paid, but without these hard conversations we would not have survived.

This committee takes the running of the hall and the safety very seriously. When we took the management of the hall over, the shrubs were higher than the fences and we cut them back, we made sure fire doors were replaced, we marked where people couldn't park their vehicles and we installed a new ramp to make the hall accessible to all.

In conclusion, it is not just about the committee, we have had many volunteers who helped on table top days, at the warm hub (which I must say was a major success) and in general and I give sincere thanks to all.

Best Wishes

Barry Mugglestone

Up until February 2023, Stephanie had been looking after all of the hall bookings, arranging viewings and who would be opening and closing the hall for hirers. From discussions with Stephanie and the committee it was decided that the months ahead may become busier for Stephanie and that we needed to pass on the baton to someone else. She did a fantastic job and we would like to thank her for managing the bookings for the past year; it's not a small task at all.

May and April were busy months for the hall; we received a grant from the National Lottery Awards For All and a portion of this fund was to improve fire and security in the building. We engaged a new, more cost appropriate fire extinguisher company who came and assessed the building, made recommendations and replaced all units on the premises. During these months we also had an electrical safety test, undertook a building risk assessment and emergency lighting check; we then moved onto the fire exit doors. The committee decided that the doors and push bars needed replacing and we set about obtaining quotes to have these replaced; we have successfully replaced all 4 fire exit doors and mechanisms. We also arranged for new signage promoting the hall and have a notice board to go up externally too, all from this fund. We are also extremely proud to now have a proper access ramp to the main hall with safety railings; this will make a huge difference for those with access requirements when visiting our halls.



April 2023 and the long bank holiday weekend saw the prime opportunity for the committee to tackle the hall floor and finally get rid of the taped over holes. With left over money raised from the festive fair the committee were able to have the holes resin filled but due to the wear and tear the colour could not be matched. The floor is in a poor condition and from advice received, we were informed that we could not sand or stain the floor and the only option was to use hard wearing floor paint. Two volunteers, one from the exec and one from the community committee then spent bank holiday Friday painting the floor. When the floor was finished it looked fabulous and really made the hall look modern, the majority of the feedback received have been positive regarding the floor. Unfortunately, because the floor could not be sanded there was no key for the paint to absorb and it has scuffed and scraped far

more than we imagined but nevertheless it is still a darn sight better than the tape that previously adorned the floor.



Being Part of the Executive Committee

It's very easy to forget that the executive committee are volunteers who freely donate their time to the hall but being part of the executive committee is much, much more than attending a meeting, making a few decisions and popping off until the next one.

For many of us we have extremely busy lives, full time jobs, parenting and grand parenting duties and heaven forbid some kind of family/down time. However, the hall is never far from our day to day or week to week lives, we don't have the luxury of caretakers, maintenance people, building managers or building faculties, the executive committee are all of those services.

Being part of the executive committee isn't always fun, it can be at times, very time consuming but we are so invested in ensuring Elm Park has access to a community centre, hall and hub that when we look back, reflect and look at the supportive team around us it makes it all worth it.

There are times that haven't been easy; we've faced tough decisions and problematic hirers. Even though there have been tears, sleepless nights, worry, upset and all the rollercoaster emotions that go with being part of the exec, we do operate as one committee. We are safe and confident in the knowledge that any decisions made by the committee are done, openly, together and agreed.

Finances

The events & fundraising team have been working exceptionally hard, table top sales and quiz nights are still proving exceedingly popular and remain part of our stable fundraising plan. From January 2022 – July 2023 both Rose and Julie have been looking after the table top sales but have decided to take a break and pass the baton on. We would like to thank them both for the time they have given to the table top

sales and hope that they will still be involved with the events and fundraising committee. For now the events and fundraising committee will be hosting the table top sales.

Here are a few reminders of our events over the last 12 months:



We have also had a successful year of grant funding and have been successful in securing income from:

- Tesco – Bags for Life Fund - £1,500
- Ford Britain - £2,900
- NHS Community Chest - £4,330
- Mayor of London - £1,300



The Ford Britain funding, which was awarded in September 2022 but took an awful long time to reach us along with some money from fundraising enabled us to purchase 20 5ft tables and 150 new chairs for the main hall. The new tables are much lighter than the smaller 4ft tables and with the previous chairs becoming thread bare new chairs where a priority. We would not have been able to purchase these items without obtaining the small pots of grant funding to back up our fundraising events that help us to make such big changes.

We were really proud to receive NHS Community Chest Funding which enabled the committee to open a warm hub / social session. We were able to use the funds to purchase a new urn, toaster, kettle, refreshments, table cloths and all the items

needed to make guests feel welcome and valued. We could not have facilitated the hub without the volunteers who come along and help make it a success but we must pay particular thanks to both Linda and Kerry who go the extra mile each session. Unfortunately the funding has come to an end but we have been able to facilitate the hub bi-weekly by utilising a small portion of our fundraising to self-fund the sessions.



As well as grants and fund raising, lettings are our main source of income. We have had a core band of hirers, Little Poppets, Kaichou Kai Karate, Zumba, Hornchurch and Upminster Tutors, Arise, LOGAC, SHAAF and Ballroom Dancing. We have also had a very successful year of ad-hoc hirers who have utilised the hall for children's parties, life ceremonies, baptisms, baby showers and engagement parties to name a few.

Treasurers Report

When Listening to Sue's report this time last year I thought to myself "I have got this in hand" and in a blink of an eye, here I am reporting on the past year.

I was handed this role on the understanding that 2 hours a month would be all it would take to get the Associations financial controls in hand. In reality it's more like 20 hours a month and a few sleepless nights, however it has been a successful year, which makes it all worth it!

We have increased the usage of the hall with regular hirers as well as ad-hoc hires enabling us to keep our heads above water. However, it has not been without challenges, the local authority decided that in 2018 the Association should have had an increase in the rent. This meant that effective immediately the rent increased and we subsequently owed 4 years of backdated rent. Fast forward to October 2022 we were then faced with the increased energy costs; both of these resulted in very careful considerations and many discussions. We made the decision that we need to increase our hire charges across the board to reflect the rental increase the hall had received but we would absorb any increases in utilities for as long as possible. We had to increase our hall hire charges otherwise the hall wouldn't survive but are pleased to say that at this stage the Association, although have received extortionate energy bills have not passed any of these costs onto our users.

We have had an incredible amount of support over the past 12 months, from donations, gift of time, products and maintenance. We have been able to calculate the time and donations etc and equate these to a value, this is known as cost avoidance. Cost Avoidance is a term used to depict an item or object that ordinarily would have a cost behind it; the object or item still has a value and it's important to recognise these avoidances. EPCA's Cost avoidance for the past 12 months has been in excess of £20,000, that is an incredible saving and everyone who has donated their time, skill, expertise or an item has equated to that staggering saving!

You may have noticed another achievement that we are all very proud of and that is the new heating system throughout the hall. This is going to make a huge difference

for our user groups just on the reduction of noise alone when using the system. For once, we are looking forward to a cold snap to test it all out.

One of our next projects will be the roof which has been troubling us for a number of years. This will take some considerable fund raising. Talking of Fundraising we have had another excellent year with grant applications which is no easy task as well as some amazing community events that have really helped us tread water.

Now for the part everyone is looking for, over the last 12 months our income was just over £63,000 but our expenditure was over £73,000 with our biggest outgoing being utilities and maintenance. This means that we had a £10,000 over spend, this eats into our reserves and that we will begin our next financial year working even harder.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that we are not a business; we are a charity run by volunteers. Most of us have full time jobs that are demanding and any spare time we do have is going towards running the hall. We are a not for profit organisation which means that we have to be fair and also accountable for the decisions we make. Believe it or not the committee has a heart, we don't always want to make some of the decisions that we do but we have to if we want to keep this hall here, open and serving the community.

Thank you to all those that have made what we are trying to achieve a little easier and as always we thank you for your patience and understanding.

Best Wishes

Andrew Whitton

Unfortunately this year we say goodbye to Elm Park Horticultural Guild, who made the decision to relocate to a new premises. The committee did extend an olive branch and asked them to reconsider however wheels were already in motion by the time we were made aware. The Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish them then very best of luck as they settle into their new home for future shows.

We have been very fortunate in having a kitchen gifted to the hall by DSW Contractors LTD. Our previously annexe hall kitchen was tired, dated and had a leaky kitchen tap but with thanks to Debbie and her beady eye she spotted a pre-loved kitchen being donated on a local eco site and we were lucky enough to be selected to receive it. Dave from DSW Contractors LTD was amazing from start to finish, he made this kitchen fit our space, you would never know it was pre-loved and he did all of this on his gift of time too. We will be eternally grateful for his support in supplying and fitting this kitchen to the association as it has made a huge difference to the volunteers at the warm hub.



The Future

The future is bright, we expect challenges and further rent increases imposed by the local authority, high utility bills and expected repairs.

However we can report that the Committee have just installed a brand new central heating system, our fundraising efforts and support from the community has been incredible and we no longer have a noisy, unreliable system but rather child safe radiators and a Wi-Fi controlled heating system – very modern!

We are not without challenges, our roof and floor is still in need of attention. Unfortunately every time it rains the hall still floods and is now lifting the flooring. We have had both the main and annexe hall roof looked at and repaired on more than one occasion but unfortunately nothing seems to be holding. The roof is going to be a huge challenge and we will need to take lots of advice as it will need to be treated professionally by council contractors at the committee's expense.

We would also like to install LED lighting to become more environmentally friendly as well as replace the soffits and fascias to prevent the birds and squirrels nesting and who knows maybe some external insulation to reduce those costly energy bills!

Our events and fundraising team are looking into events to host over the next 12 months and will be rebranding table top sales into Indoor Boot Sales and hosting specific craft fairs a number of times throughout the year. A member of the community shared why, as a small local business they no longer attended the table top sales and we felt that we needed to do something that could support our local crafters and businesses. We felt being more specific with Indoor Boot Sales and Craft Fairs was a positive step forward and a way to best serve the desires of the community. You said and we listened!

In Closing

They say it takes a village to raise a child and the same can be said for community halls. We have and continue to receive fantastic support, from those who attend the events, those that help set up, run stalls, run tea rooms, collect raffle prizes and preloved items to help us income generate and those that help with the maintenance days too. We know that not everyone has the time to give to the hall so we too appreciate all those who share the events and what's going on at the hall.

We are making good progress in keeping this hall at the heart of the community but we still have a long way to go and hope that you continue to join us on this journey.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Executive Committee – you have been invaluable and should feel equally proud of your achievements.



ELM PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Balance Sheet for Accounts ending 31st May 2023

Charity No: 1057074
Business Current Account

INCOME	£
Hall Hire	42,692.85
Grants	8,530.00
Fundraising	7,597.20
Deposits	4,900.00
	63,720.05

EXPENDITURE	£
Cleaning	5,224.21
Telephone	60.00
Sraronery	108.47
Miscellaneous	477.28
Maintenance	11,030.54
Insurance	96.00
Electric	3,933.02
Gas	7,381.27
Rent	7,181.24
Water Rates	869.80
Transfer to Reserve Account	20,000.00
Projects and Training	12,254.35
Business Rates	317.00
Deposit Returns	4,930.00
	73,863.18

Surplus/Deficit	(10,143.13)
Opening Balance Brought Forward	35,117.88
Surplus/Deficit	(10,143.13)
Closing Balance @ 31st May 2023	24,974.75

ELM PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Balance Sheet for Accounts ending 31st May 2023

Charity No: 1057074

	Current Account	Reserve Account
	£	£
Opening Balances Brought Forward	35,117.88	20,080.27
Surplus/Deficit	(10,143.13)	20,186.42
Closing Balances @ 31st May 2023	24,974.75	40,266.69
Represented by:		
Overall Closing Balance @ 31st May 2023	65,241.44	

Accounting Policies :

The accounts are prepared on a cash received and paid basis

The Association writes off all asset purchases in the year of expenses under non-recurring expenditure

No provision is made for accruals or prepayments

Approved by the Managing Committee on 21/10/23 2023 and signed on its behalf by :

Name ; [Signature]

Date : 21/10/23

Independent Examiners Report

[Signature]

Name : BRIAN PETERS

Date: 9/10/2023

