

**PETT VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2020
REPORT OF BOOKINGS MANAGER**

Introduction

1. This is my report as Bookings Manager for Pett Village Hall Management Committee. It covers the period from June 2019 to the end of May 2020, although because of Covid-19 the only bookings from 17 March, when the Hall was closed, were the Harold Road Surgery prescription service on Monday afternoons and Friday mornings.
2. As ever, I would like to thank my colleague Committee members Carol Pecorini and Carol Glasson for their invaluable work in checking the Hall after events so that a decision can be made as to whether or not deposits bookings should be returned in full, in part, or not at all. I am pleased to say that during the past year it has not been necessary to retain part of a deposit and all deposits were returned in full. The Committee are grateful to all hirers for respecting the Hall during their bookings..

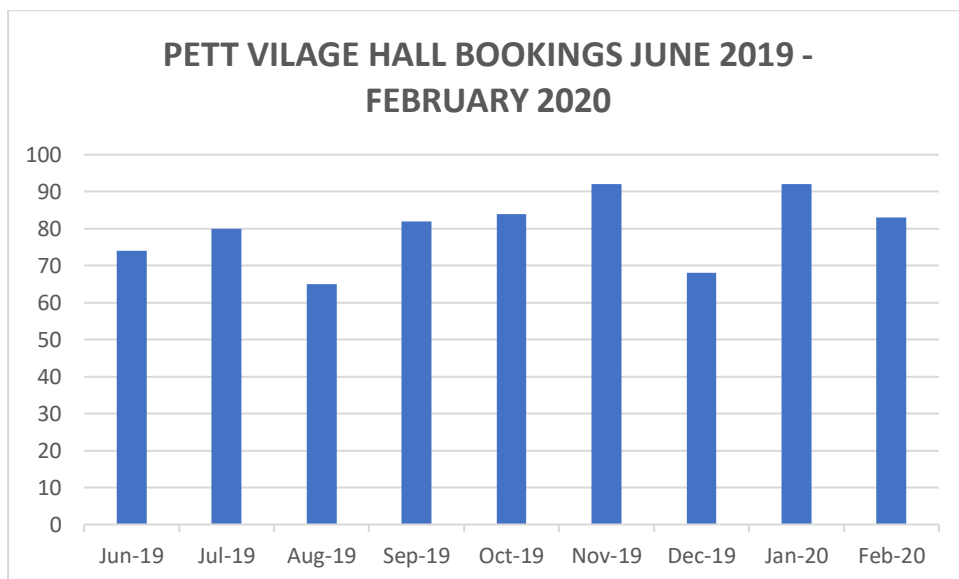
Booking system

3. There have been no changes to the booking system for the Hall over the last year, and it seems to be working satisfactorily. The fact that the calendar of bookings for the year is available on the Village Hall pages of the Pett on the Net website means that hirers can see when there are slots available to book.
4. The use of the website pages has enabled us to access a wider range of potential hirers, especially from outside of the village. These pay higher fees than Pett residents which results in increased revenue for us.

Booking numbers

5. The Hall continues to be very popular with users, and the community is rightly grateful to those who had the foresight and commitment , some 20 years ago now, to commission the Hall and raise the necessary funds.
6. The features which often draw favourable comment from users are the size of the main hall, the facilities in the kitchen and the ample parking. The recently installed curtain and blinds and sound system in the main hall are also popular, as is the Superfast Broadband now available throughout the Hall.

7. The outside space, although somewhat limited, is also valued by many, especially those with children as it gives them somewhere to play when the weather is kind. It is also a popular outdoor space for parties, wedding receptions etc.
8. Sadly, activity at the Hall was brought to a sudden halt when we were forced to close the Hall (apart from the Harold Road Surgery prescription service) on 17 March 2020 because of the Covid-19 regulations. The Hall remained closed for the remainder of the period covered by this report.
9. The figures in paragraphs 12 and 13 show the number of individual bookings from June 2019 to the end of February 2020, month by month. They include the regular users of the Hall and those who hire the Hall for one-off events.
10. Over the year some 20 individuals and organisation have hired the Hall on a regular basis, whilst in addition, up to the time the Hall closed, there had been 49 individuals and organisations hiring the Hall on a one-off basis – some 69 in all. This is comparable to the total of 67 for the previous whole year. Had the Hall not been closed, there would have been a further 20 additional individuals/organisations booking the Hall, which would have made an overall total of 89 different people and organisations using the Hall. This would have been a significant increase on the previous year and indicates that the Hall’s growing popularity.
11. There were 51 bookings in March up until the time the Hall closed, and 200 or more bookings were lost for the period up until the end of May. Sadly, that figure included two wedding receptions.
12. This chart shows the spread of bookings throughout the year up until the end of February.



The breakdown of the figures is:

June 2019	74
July 2019	80
August 2019	65
September 2019	82
October 2019	84
November 2019	92
December 2019	68
January 2020	92
February 2020	83

Total 720

(The total for the comparable period in 2018/2019 was 698)

Types of Bookings

13. Many of our regular hirers have been using the hall for a long time. These include Badminton, POPP, Flowerpots, the ESGOG Railway Group, Short Mat Bowls, the WI, Weight Watchers, Pilates, Yoga, Dance and Exercise Classes, Pole Dancing, Gongs, Shamanic Healing, Gardening Club, Tai Chi, Coffee Mornings etc. We were able to welcome Art Classes to the Hall, which are proving popular and much appreciated.
14. The Hall also hosts meetings of the Pett Parish Council and the AGMs of various local societies and groups. A much valued source of income is the generous donations paid by Chris and Robin Hutt at Fairlight End in return for the parking and toilet facilities at the Hall being made available to their open gardens visitors.
15. Sadly, Annie Cuthbert had to discontinue her Pilates classes mid-way through the year because of ill-health. We all wish her a very speedy recovery.
16. Unfortunately, it also seems unlikely that POPP will be able to return to the Hall in the near future unless a replacement organiser can be found for Ann Nicholls.
17. As well as the regular activities, the Hall plays host to a wide range of events and functions including parties, for both adults and children (the latter increasingly popular), wedding receptions, wakes, jumble sales, craft fairs, fashion shows, musical evenings, dances etc. The Hall was also the polling station for the General Election on 12 December 2019. The Harold Road Doctor's Surgery normally have twice-weekly sessions at the Hall, although these have been suspended since the lockdown. But as mentioned above, the prescription service still operates.

Summary

18. It has been a highly unusual and at times difficult year, as it has been for everyone. Although it is encouraging that the Hall continues to be a much-loved venue, with bookings on the increase this year, it is a great pity that so many bookings had to be cancelled because of Covid-19.
19. We can only hope that once the current restrictions in the use of the Hall are over, it will return to business as usual with an ever-growing number of bookings and users.

Tim Rothwell
Pett Village Hall Management Committee Bookings Manager
August 2020