

Pulham St Mary Parish Council Annual Meeting 2016

Report from The Pennoyer Centre

Charitable Status

The Pennoyer Centre is a registered Charity (no: 1135788), and is managed by a body of Trustees. There are currently 10 Trustees, all of whom work on a voluntary basis. There are also approx. 60 volunteers who support the Centre in a wide variety of roles, as well as a part-time employee workforce of 11 local people, of whom nine live in the Pulhams.

Progress against Charitable Objects

Pennoyer's has three charitable objects covering heritage, education & social/recreation (community). During the last complete financial year (2014/5), we delivered 1,918 hours of community activity, an increase of 4% over the previous year, of which 25% are free of charge.

- In addition to the 1918 hours of community activity, we also provide 1500 hours that the café is open and accessible to the community, and make available a **free** internet café which is open 1750 hours per year.
- We subsidise community use of the Centre for use by the Trailblazers, Pulham St. Mary Village Society, Pulham St Mary Horticultural Society, Pulham St Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council, through the reduction of community rate charged for hire of the Centre for these organisations' events and meetings. It has been possible to maintain this subsidy through a grant received from the Parish Council.
- We subsidise commercial use of the Centre where there is a benefit to local people from the service provided – this includes activities like Yoga, Art Classes and Pilates.
- In addition we support the running of a PC Help Club helping elderly people in the community to access online services.
- We offer free Superfast Wifi throughout the centre and act as a community hub for wi-fi. We have received some funding via the South Norfolk Council for this purpose.
- In 2014 we started a Senior Citizens' monthly lunch which we have subsequently broadened to other age groups, now renamed 'The Lunch Club', with the aim of tackling social isolation. This has now become a firm favourite with about 25 at each month's gathering.
- We also provide hosting for the 'Oddballs' weekly knitting group and now the newly formed Sewing Group.
- For the first time in October 2015 we hosted a Silver Sunday event, which is a national campaign held on the first Sunday in October with the aim of combatting loneliness in the senior citizen population. We provided free lunch and refreshments, activities and a film in the afternoon. This was funded by £200 from South Norfolk Council and £50 from the Pulham St Mary Town Estate Fund and would not have been able to run it without this contribution.
- For the second time in 2015 The Pennoyer Centre hosted a free Childrens' Christmas Party and as we have done since we opened, we again organised a Christmas tree with lights for all the village to enjoy during the festive period.
- We continue to organise and provide, free of charge, a Community Bookswap for any visitor who wishes to borrow a book, from a range of 200 good quality adult and childrens' books.

- For the fourth year in succession Kath Jones, Trustee has organised an annual Community litter pick in April as part of the South Norfolk Council Big Litter pick initiative. Pennoyer's has made available facilities to host the litter pick free of charge for the benefit of the whole village.
- We raised £175 for Macmillan Cancer Care via the Big Coffee Morning in September and £274 for Annie Chapman's Big C Pink Ladies' Tractor Run from opening the Centre to the community on Sunday 5 July 2015, selling donated cake and tea.
- We continue to support the running costs of the community defibrillator.

Financial Performance

Income from business/private bookings and our fundraising events goes towards the upkeep of the Centre and partially subsidises community use by local groups and clubs. This level of support remains a challenge for the Centre.. The financial position improved in 2014/5 with a break even position. The Centre is likely to make a small loss again in 2015/6, largely due to the additional costs of having to manage VAT and also the introduction of the National Living Wage. In order to break even once more we plan to increase the emphasis on business bookings, successful fundraising, and tight management of costs. The costs we have to cover continue to be significant and increasing, i.e. utility, service charges, and insurance. Also, now that the building is 6 years old, we are seeking an increase in maintenance costs as ageing equipment, fixtures and fittings need be replaced or repaired more frequently.

Plans for the Future

The Pennoyer Centre is going to submit grant bids in 2016 for funding to improve building layout and to find ways of expanding our heritage offering. This will help to Centre to become more of a destination venue and improve visitor experience.

The trustees have recently completed a 3 year business plan in order to manage the work plan for the next phase.

Kath Jones

Chair of Board of Trustees, The Pennoyer Centre