

## Chairman's Report 2017

The past twelve months has seen the hall used for a wide range of events. Regular users include: Alston Moor & Eden Dance School; the Gardening Club; the W.I.; Yoga; Village Coffee Mornings and the Lakeland Windband. Six wedding receptions, private parties, a singing workshop, the Guild of Spinners, Hospice at Home events, Waters Edge, the North Pennines AONB, the Parish Council, and CrossFell Commoners have all taken advantage of our facilities and we have been a polling station twice in the last two months.

The village Christmas party was greatly enjoyed by all who attended and the annual Scar Challenge attracted a record number of participants. I would like to extend our gratitude to Jane Jones and Jason Brownlee for organising these events.

Monthly coffee mornings organised by Julia Page continue to be well attended and our thanks to her for her efforts. The hall has been offered as a venue for a "Men in Sheds" initiative. Through the "Highlights" programme, we continue to host performances of the highest calibre and we have gained praise for our hospitality from both performers and audiences. In order to further enhance these experiences, a grant has been applied for to provide blackout curtains and mood lighting together with help to cover the cost of broadband installation. We await the outcome.

The Village Hall Committee has organised events which include the ever popular ceilidh, the big breakfast and the annual BBQ. Race night and quiz night were both well attended and proved to be most enjoyable. It is hoped these will be repeated again during the year.

Simple maintenance issues have generally been addressed through the Boon nights and my thanks to you all for turning up and mucking in. However, despite the hall being just thirteen years old, we do face some challenging times. Much of the perimeter wall is in poor condition and liable to collapse and requires rebuilding on firm footings. We are in the early stages of applying for a grant to assist us with this. The central heating boiler continues to be unreliable and we have yet to get to the root of the problem. The main hall lighting has just been overhauled. We have had to use the services of Beacon Fire Protection on several occasions and we also continue to be charged an unrealistic sum by United Utilities for the rainwater that runs off the car park at the front.

It is vital therefore that we continue to promote the hall to outside groups and work hard together to raise funds. To that end the village hall committee is always looking for people who are willing to give up time to help and serve as a committee member.

The last twelve months has been a real eye-opener for me in recognising how much work goes on behind the scenes in the day to day running of the hall and in the staging of the various events. I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their commitment and hard work. Thank you also to Dawn Threlkeld for her flexibility and efficiency with keeping the hall clean and tidy and to Raymond Wilkinson for his help in cutting the grass.