

St Mary's Church Hall Report 2015

A year of ups and downs as far as the hall has been concerned. Bookings have held up well and we have only recently lost Musical Bumps who have been with us more or less since the hall opened but with the departure of Ruth Gordon, to take up a new career, the classes dwindled and it was felt to be not financially viable. Jane Housley has as always been our mainstay and is so reliable and amenable that it would be a tragedy if we lost her.

Half way through the year it became apparent that the floor in the office was lifting, obviously caused by damp from the flooding in January. It however proved somewhat difficult to get it replaced for although the Insurance Company was in complete agreement, it was extremely difficult to find a time when the hall was free and the floor fitters could coincide. It was however done at the beginning of January only to find that the floor was still saturated underneath and we had to install dehumidifiers for ten days and when they finally came to fit the floor it had been mis-measured and there was even further delay. It has finally been completed to everyone's satisfaction.

The kitchen is getting extremely tired and does not come up to the latest standards of health and safety for a kitchen that is rented out to the public. We had plans to perhaps have it re-fitted this summer with the inclusion of a dishwasher but these plans have had to be shelved for this year due to pressures on church finances in other directions.

The most recent disaster was to discover, at the most inopportune moment, that the toilet drains were blocked. Fortunately Barry Sharp was able to obtain the services of a company who arrived fairly promptly and unblocked the drains "pro tem" although it transpired that the blockage had been caused by tree roots growing into the pipes and in another area there was slippage. A hasty phone call to the Ecclesiastical Insurance reassured us that at least we were insured for all the damage.

Our cleaner Anita Page who replaced Debbie Campbell and proved to be most efficient, has unfortunately had to take up far more hours at St Mary's Abbeyfield due to shortage of staff there and in consequence her husband has been doing the majority of the hall cleaning in the meantime. This is not always entirely satisfactory but I cannot feel I would be justified in dispensing with their services especially as I am ever hopeful that we shall get Anita back full time.

Margaret Nicholas