



# CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2013

*HILTON HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
HILTON HALL COMMUNITY CENTRE  
HILTON ROAD, LANESFIELD  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
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**Chairman's Annual Report (April 2012 to March 2013) Year Four / Phase Four**

Following on from last year's adventurous and active year – this year has settled down a little, starting off at a more relaxed pace. The Energy Saving Trust community consultation trainings days (held last March) went much to plan, but proved hectic due to the really short timescales for both 'bid-writing and delivery' because the funding had to be applied for, spent and delivered before the end of March 2012. Well! We managed to do it 'somehow' and with help and support from Climate Consulting Ltd. of Croydon, the LEAF project ended last Year's activities 'Off' nicely, although we had to wait until May for the remaining LEAF funding to reach us.

Between January and April 2012, the HHCA Management Team attended a ridiculous amount of meetings (30 meetings during this period) both at Hilton Hall and at various community venues & schools (networking & organising future events). No problem you might think, but all of this ran alongside the usual Hall opening & closing, and in between general caretaking duties & cleaning. Not to mention holding down three full-time Jobs as well as doing all of this Volunteering. So, during April, the HHCA 'Team' decided to have what we term as a 'Working Rest!' Not a complete 'Rest', because of the need to do all the menial routine stuff like caretaking, etc. but at least a 'Rest' from the heavy-duty building work & repairs that has been our 'Norm' for the past three years.

April 2012: So! What were the 'Challenges and Successes' for this Year? We managed to attract further funding (albeit several smaller sums) which enabled us to carry-out a wider programme of community engagements this year by working with more local schools and more community organisations than in previous years. We also helped three other Community Groups to successfully apply for funding to run their projects at Hilton Hall. Below is a list of some of the successful activities we managed to put on this year at Hilton Hall.

May 2012: We hosted the first of two School Environmental Awareness Days held at Hilton Hall. We linked up with Lanesfield Junior School for this one. The other Environmental Awareness Day took place in March 2013 with Spring Vale Junior School. Both events were combined with a Photographic Competition (with Digital Cameras as prizes). We employed the services of a professional Wildlife Photographer Ian Butler, as Guest Speaker, who shared his worldwide travel and photographic experience with over 60 'Year-Five' pupils from these two local schools. The May project was funded by Wolverhampton Homes Ltd via a Diversionary Activities Grant (see details of this and all other projects on our web site at: <http://hiltonhall.com>), and the March 2013 School Enviro-event was funded by the Community Development Foundation (CDF). At both events, our Neighbourhood Wardens (Craig & Kym) ran their Enviro-Quiz and at the March event the PCSO's did an Asbo- Word search.

June 2012: Was the start of our Fourth Year of Work at Hilton Hall, although most of the BIG Building Project work slowed-down a pace this year (mainly due the lack of funding, but also hindered by bad weather conditions) we soldiered on and managed a relatively lighter, but consistent caretaking role and general maintenance work programme. The simple task of opening & closing, setting-out (& putting-away) chairs & tables for hirers, and the inevitable clearing up after hirers and cleaning everything ready for the next group is so time consuming.

July 2012: Wolverhampton Youth Judo Centre (WYJC) in partnership with HHCA offered free judo classes to local school children and ran a Pre-Olympics mini-judo competition (aimed at children aged 8 to 11 years of age) which was funded by CDF and co-sponsored by Ni-Co Coaching Partnership. The competition attracted 50 entries from youngsters representing nine different schools. Over 100 spectators attended the Competition and the event was a major success 'Thanks' to CDF funding and to our Team of volunteers & young participants (and their families). Also, during the Schools' Summer Holidays, several Activity Days for children was held at Hilton Hall funded by our local Police Team. The LTRA also held a Community Fun Day, raising money for Charity & for HHCA.

August to November 2012: We co-hosted a series six community engagement & awareness training days in partnership with Lanesfield Tenants & Residents Association (LTRA funded by CDF). During these sessions 'Other Community Groups' were involved; including the Wolverhampton Youth & Community Team who ran a series of fun-based Football matches at Hilton Hall Playing Fields. The organisers of Bilston-In-Bloom project, and Lanesfield Neighbourhood Partnership team (LNP) supported the events as well as the Spring-Into-Springvale 'Lanesfield Planting Day' project team and the volunteers & members of WYJC helped at the LTRA events too.

December was a busy time: We entered into negotiations with the City Council Planning Department about the possibility of putting a BMX Cycle Track on the Playing fields at the rear of Hilton Hall (more of this later). We also received funding via CDF to buy CCTV security system. December was rounded-off nicely with three community events that were run in partnership with HHCA. The LTRA held their AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> December. WYJC ran a series free judo sessions followed by a Post-Olympics mini-judo competition (culminating on 5<sup>th</sup> December), and finally, an end-of-year Christmas Party held on 18<sup>th</sup> December for WYJC Club members and the HHCA Volunteers.

January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013, we re-opened after the Christmas holiday break and all returned to normal with regards the usual timetable of lettings, opening & closing for our community groups, and general caretaking duties, etc.

February 2013: Our Central Heating Boiler broke-down (another unexpected challenge) but we managed to get it repaired and 'Serviced' at the same time which was a good job really, seeing as Feb & March was so cold. Our vigilance & thrift paid off again, we managed to keep our 'Utility Bills' to a minimum, even though heating costs at the Hall rose by just under one percent (.94%) from last year (due to cold weather conditions). I'm not too worried about this slight increase, especially as our 'Total' utility outgoings for the Whole Year only cost £1,701.69. In mid-February we re-started work on clearing-up the rear *Fenced Compound* (at the back of the Hall) of rubble and last summer's overgrowth in readiness for 'Landscape Planting'; as part of our involvement in the 'Spring-Into-Spring Vale' planting project. There is still plenty of work to do with the Landscaping & Planting though!

March (5<sup>th</sup>): We ran our second School Environmental Day. Thankfully the weather was on our side (yet again), providing us with a brilliant sunny day. The event went like clockwork thanks to the many volunteers, support and funding received. It also helped using the same 'tried & tested format' and timetable as used in May. Our Neighbourhood Wardens provided five volunteer helpers on the day, plus three HHCA Volunteers, three School Staff, and two PCSO's. Other support staff was provided by the LNP and the Wolverhampton City Council Recycling Team, who used our Car Park for their 'Recycling Trailer' as part of our Community Environment Awareness Day. "Many Thanks" to Ian Butler for judging the photographs & selecting prize winners. In both cases the HHCA Management Team attended morning Assemblies at each of the participating Schools to present competition entrants & winners with certificates and Digital Camera Prizes. We look forward to running a similar event(s) next year, with different school(s) - subject to securing further funding in 2013.

March (11<sup>th</sup>): In partnership with Wolverhampton City Council and Lanesfield Tenants & Residents Association we held a Consultation Meeting at Hilton Hall, regarding the proposed BMX Track development (mentioned earlier in this report). The meeting was well attended by local people, who were given the opportunity to ask questions and to view the 'Plans' showing the location of the BMX Track in relation to the Hall, the Fields and the surrounding properties. On 27<sup>th</sup> March (5pm until 7pm) we held the second BMX Consultation Meeting. The results of the Consultation process should be released sometime in May when we discover if the Plans are accepted or rejected by City Council Planning Committee. Whatever the case, I will look forward to reporting the outcome of this proposal in next Year's Annual Report. If it goes ahead, I think it will be a positive step forwards for the local Youths of the area who will benefit greatly from such a facility. We also realise there may be some local opposition to this project, and therefore; 'only time will tell' if the BMX Track will be built. Just to clarify the situation: the BMX Track (if it goes ahead) will not affect the Football Playing Areas. There is sufficient 'Room' on Hilton Hall Playing Fields to accommodate the new Track and Two Football Playing Areas (see plans on web site).

So far, I've only mentioned the highlights and successes, but we have also had our fair share of challenges this year. We try and keep as optimistic and upbeat as possible, and try to forget the 'negatives'. Most of our 'challenges' have revolved around 'Breakdowns & Breakages' at the Hall and the inordinate amount of time, energy and funds required to 'Put-Things-Right' and get things working again (especially as we are NOT funded by the City Council, or by anyone else, and have no other source of Income other than that which WE generate).

We have encountered several such setbacks this year, however, the only 'challenge' I will recall here is the latest situation that presented itself this Month. Yet again, our strange weather provided us with one of the coldest winters recorded for over 50 years and it was these extreme conditions and high levels of Snow-fall & Frost that caused damage to the Main Roof (yet again!). The Resulting Melt-water entered the building causing the electricians to 'Blow' all of the Electric Contact Breaker Fuses – leaving the Hall without electricity. No Lights! No Heating! We (the Management Team; Debbie, Heather & I) spent the next two days fixing these problems. We also ended up clearing Tons of Snow from the Hall Car Park, Pathways and Main Entrance Ramp, in order to keep Hilton Hall 'Open for Business as Usual' – with the least amount of inconvenience to our regular and loyal Hirers.

Finally, a mention and "BIG Thank You"; to the Community Groups and Hirers who are our main benefactors. They are our 'Bread & Butter' and are essential to our survival, because without their support and patronage we would not be here. Our gratitude goes to the following groups who have been 'Our Backbone' this year: Wolverhampton Youth Judo Centre, Lanesfield Senior Citizen Tea Dance Group, Lanesfield Bingo Group, Zumba-with-Suzanne, Slimming World, Lanesfield Tenants & Residents Association, Wolverhampton Homes Ltd, High Arcal School, and the Community Development Foundation. We have also had quite a few individual / occasional hirers using Hilton Hall this year and we consider these with equal importance because it represents further community engagement and progress (as the word gets out What a Fabulous Venue - Hilton Hall is!).

So! After all of the opportunities & challenges we faced this year, I can safely say it has been yet another busy, eventful, often trying, but also, most satisfying time at Hilton Hall. We managed to remain positive (most of the time), we managed to remain socially and communally pro-active (all of the time), and more importantly; we managed to remain solvent and in-profit (miraculously - all of the time too). On that note, I would just like to say on behalf of HHCA Directors and Management Team "Thank You" to ALL of our Supporters, Funders and Volunteers. I look forward to 'Reporting' future opportunities & challenges to You ALL next Year.

Keith Jones, BA (Hons)  
Director & Chairman HHCA