

HILTON HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015

HILTON HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Private Company Limited by Guarantee without Share Capital
Registered in England & Wales, Company Registration No. 06838077

Registered Address in the UK
HILTON HALL COMMUNITY CENTRE
HILTON ROAD, LANESFIELD
WOLVERHAMPTON, WV4 6DR
WEST MIDLANDS, UK.



HILTON HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year ending 31st March 2015

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Chairman's Annual Report for the period covering: 1st April 2014 to the end of March 2015 inclusive.

I am pleased to present this Year's Annual Report on behalf of Hilton Hall Community Association as we start our sixth year at Hilton Hall. Once more, I am pleased to announce "we are still here"! And even more surprising is; "we are still solvent", which I think in these difficult financial times is pretty impressive. Especially in a year that has seen numerous Local and National Companies go out of business and quite a few Community Centres and other public amenities being closed-down in and around Wolverhampton. Not to mention 'Massive Job Cuts' in many City Councils' right across the Midlands. So, I think under these circumstances, with all things considered we haven't done too badly. "Not a bad effort, or results from just three individuals with determination, commitment, tenacity and a Plan".

Well, beginning with April 2014, and following directly on from last Year's Annual Report (re: The BMX Cycle Track project) work began on the 10th of April with Diggers and Earth-Movers being delivered on-site at Hilton Hall (see the photographs on our 'BMX Track' page on <http://hiltonhall.com/bmx.htm>). Apparently, the correct title for this type of 'Track' according to the experts is a "BMX Pump & Exercise Training Track" (The experts being the BMX Construction Team from TrailCraft, namely; James, Shaun & Nikki). We simply refer to it as 'The Track' and right from the start of this exciting project we have been fully behind the whole concept and totally committed to this project. We are extremely optimistic of the benefits this Track will bring to local youngsters.

Whilst the BMX Engineers continued building the Track, we carried-on working all through the Easter School Holidays on the Hall. We spent our time working on the downstairs areas of Hilton Hall, dividing our time equally between working inside the Hall and doing Landscaping-work outside. We were at the Hall every morning at 7:30am to 'Open-up' for the BMX Construction Team to gain access to the site (& building) and remained at the Hall each day until they had finished-off that day's work (usually well after 7.30pm each day). In fact, we had to stay later than that each night because as the BMX Team were finishing off for the day and getting ready to leave – our regular community group hirers were just arriving for the start of their sessions – so we then had to open & close as usual for them too.

This regime of 'opening & closing' the Main Hall for our regular Community Groups continued all throughout the BMX building work (as it does anyway, all through the year). It was at this stage that we realised that we had spent an additional 96 hours of Volunteering just on the BMX project alone - right up to the end of April 2014. It was at this stage that we realised we had now completed a truly amazing "Ten Thousand Hours of Volunteer Work" (YES! 10,000 Hours) of Work done by the three Directors of Hilton Hall on the Repair & Refurbishment Programme (as unpaid volunteers) since we started this work at Hilton Hall since 4th June 2009. That equates to an average of 666.6⁷ volunteer hours per year for each unpaid Director (666.6⁷ x 3 [x 5 years] = 10,000 Hours Total). This is just one element of the secret ingredient of our success (we have other secret elements too, but if we told you, we would have to . . .).

Just as work started on the BMX Track, we were told we had been successful in our "Funding Bid" from Community Development Foundation (CDF) ~ via the Spring Vale Community First Panel, to enable us to run a whole year long community cycle safety support programme, which would run alongside and compliment the BMX Track project. As a result of this funding we ran a series of bicycle related sessions held at Hilton Hall for local people of all ages. The CDF funding paid for specialist cycle tools & equipment, cycle repair stands & other materials, plus a couple of bikes; to use as training bikes / loan bikes for people who do not own a bike, and as spare bikes for people work on to learn how to repair / fix bikes and learn new skills.

Hilton Hall 'Match-Funded' the CDF Funding with venue hire and personnel in the form of volunteer hours needed to run this year long programme, and as usual, all three HHCA Directors freely gave of their own time and effort to ensure this project was well-supported throughout the project duration and achieved the success it deserves.

The fact that we trained up with BikeRight Ltd last February 2014 as National Standards Cycle Instructors added extra value and experience to the whole project (see web site). This Cycle Training was planned specifically to enhance this year's (and future years) project activities, with an ongoing legacy.

Football returned to Hilton Hall this year after negotiation with Denis & Michelle who run the Dudley Town Youth Football Club (DTYFC). Their original base was on the Wrens Nest / Park Hall Estate in Dudley, but they wanted to use Hilton Hall as their New Club Base because of the quality & size of our Pitches. They have agreed to look after the Pitches and monitor & maintain its use. Locals will have undoubtedly seen Denis cutting the grass every couple of weeks on his 'Sit-On Lawn Mower', and also 'White-Line Marking-up' the Pitch in readiness for their 'Home' League Games every couple of weeks during the playing season. They have also donated club funds to Hilton Hall Community Association and helped out with repairs to the Changing Rooms, as well as actively searching for corporate & business sponsorship to help with our Football Changing Rooms refurbishment programme.

In early May we carried out more 'Landscaping, planting & cultivating' to the grounds at the rear of the Hall, which is part of our five year "Tree Planting" programme and is a continuation of what we have done in previous years. As always, we have been doing what we do best, and that is "JUGGLING"! We somehow manage to "Juggle" Time, Resources, Funding and Personnel to deal with all of the work at Hilton Hall.

The work on the BMX Pump Track was completed on 20th May and the BMX Development Team (Track Engineers; James, Shaun & Nikki) rode around the 'Track' for the final time and declared it was now ready for use by the Public. They gave the "Thumbs Up" and declared the Track was "Now Safe and Ready-to-Ride".

Temporary Safety Signs & Guidance Notes were put up on the entrance to the Track by City Council Officials, until permanent Signage' could be installed. As soon as James, Shaun & Nikki had packed-up their Tools – their prediction that we would be ascended upon by local kids on the bikes was 'Spot-On'. They turned-up, exactly 'on-cue' and christened the Track by riding around, and around and around yet again! It became immediately obvious that this Track was going to be a massive success because of the amount of fun and enjoyment these youngsters were having.

Shortly after the children had '*had their turn*' on the Track (on the 20th May) several 'More Experienced' (and much older) BMX Riders' turned up and after riding the Track for just twenty minutes they declared that this was "One of the best BMX Pump-Tracks around for Miles". They also declared this to be both; "Fantastic and Progressive" and " . . . being Ideal for all age groups and catering for all ability groups".

Another encouraging endorsement was when the older, more experience Riders started helping and guiding the younger riders by sharing their knowledge and skills - and within a really short time, we could see the difference that this 'Coaching' had on the Novice youngsters who started showing great improvement in their balance, confidence and abilities.

On behalf of my colleagues and Co-Directors Debbie & Heather, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Key Stakeholders in this whole BMX Project Process. Many Thanks to the following individuals: Mr Chris Jones and his colleagues from the City Council, who managed a large part of the planning and preparation with Mr Ed D'Oyle (from the City Council Architects Office) who helped draw-up the plans and do most of the liaison with Jason Carpenter & Associates from TrailCraft (i.e. James, Shaun & Nikki - who built the Track).

Many thanks also to our 'Spring Vale Ward Councillors'; Mr Mike Heap, Mr Richard Whitehouse and Mr Malcolm Gwinnett for their involvement during much of 2013, in supporting the Planning Applications and Lobbying on our behalf during the early stages of the BMX proposal. Many Thanks to Councillor Elias Mattu, Wolverhampton City Council's Cabinet Member for Leisure and Communities and his colleagues and Committee Members for re-directing the initial Section 106 money (from local business developers) to this project to enable this Track to be funded and built for the benefit of the whole of the Lanesfield community.

But most importantly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Tom Stokes (local Community Campaigner) who first suggested the idea of having a BMX Track installed at Hilton Hall Playing Fields site. His inspiration for this project was based upon another BMX Track that he visited way back in 2012. I've forgotten which BMX site it was, but I did see the photographs (of Tom interviewing the BMX'ers) and I saw the news article at the time.

We are sincerely grateful to Tom for his continued support, encouragement and commitment to seeing this fabulous facility come to fruition. I really believe that if it hadn't been for Tom's early involvement – this BMX Pump Track would not have been built. "Thank You One and All". In the end, it has truly been 'Whole Team' effort by all concerned to ensure the success of BMX here.

On May 22nd 2014, Hilton Hall was used for the very first time ever as an Official Electoral 'Polling Station' for the European & City Council Elections. This worked well for us because more people (who wouldn't normally have come along to Hilton Hall) attended our venue, which in turn, highlighted our 'Existence and Location'. We got paid for the Whole-Day's Use of Hilton Hall and in turn the City Council benefited from the massive financial savings gained (by not having to hire three or four other separate venues for this activity). I think a really important point to stress here is the corresponding 'Savings' to "Local Tax-Payers / Rate-Payers", so this opportunity had mutual community & City Council savings & benefits too.

On June 5th 2014, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Inspectors carried-out a 'Site Safety Audit' visit. They had been invited down to the Hilton Hall Track by the City Council to do an independent safety assessment of the site. Their 'Report' stated that this Track is ". . . *well constructed facility with only minor damage where it has been used before it settled. It offers a good range to beginners and experienced riders. There are no obstructions within 3 metres of the track.* . . . Another Great Result!

Shortly after the RoSPA inspection, we entered into negotiations with the City Council's 'Sustainable Transport Officer'. We were requesting 'Security Cycle Racks' be installed outside the Front of Hilton Hall (these Stands are

commonly known as Sheffield Cycle Stands). These Sheffield Stands allow cyclists to secure their parked cycles to said stands when they come to visit Hilton Hall. Over the next two months, plans were drawn up and these went through the usual due process. More information later on in this report on the progress made.

James & Co from TrailCraft re-visited the site in June to carry-out minor repairs to the Track and to carry-out a bit more Landscaping. Many local people will have seen us 'Watering the newly-laid Grass Turf' each day (for three weeks) to help the Turf to 'Establish Itself' and encourage 'Growth' in an unusually Hot Month. "Typical – It rains when you don't want it to & then, just as you need it to Rain – It doesn't".

In July & August 2014 HHCA hosted two Community Fun-Days and both of these whole community events were well attended. The first one was run by the staff from Windsor Centre for Children & Families and local families and children benefited from many activities, such as; face painting, crafts & hobbies, book club and many other fun-based games. The other event was organised by Craig & Kym – our Spring Vale Community Neighbourhood Wardens – and they were supported and joined by Wardens from across the City, who came together for this Community Wide Fun-based / Link-Up event.

During the Schools Summer Holidays we continued the work started earlier in the year (working downstairs) sharing the time between indoor work (preparing the way for plastering & re-wiring work, and making good the floor & walkways) and yet more landscaping. In August the construction company HFN Landscapes Ltd started work on the installation of a New Tarmac Access Pathway - from the Car Park entrance to the BMX Track. They installed the new DDA Compliant Access Gates (known as 'K' Gates) and finished off (Stage Two) of the BMX Track project.

Not surprisingly; during the Schools Summer Holidays the Track proved most popular and was inundated with bmx bikes and scooters galore. Literally, hundreds of school-aged children were using the Track every day during the school holidays, just as it was intended. What a Popular and Fantastic Facility this has proven to be. People have been saying for ages "there's nothing around her for the Kids to do"! WELL. . . There is now! And, we are planning the 'Next' new addition & attraction to our Site Facilities from April 2015 to March 2016. So! Watch this space (hiltonhall.com) for further details.

Our CDF Funded Community Cycle Safety Initiative came into its own during the Schools Holidays and we managed to use the Bicycle Repair Tools and Equipment to help fix visiting BMX'ers bikes. We regularly 'loaned-out' tools such as allen keys, spanners and cycle track pumps to the youngsters – who did much of the work themselves - whilst we supervised and guided them through some of the more complicated jobs. We obviously made sure their bikes were safe before they ventured off again. For instance; in just one week during these schools holidays, we helped youngsters to repair over twenty punctures, fixed & fitted numerous sets of new brake blocks, tightened-up loose steering head risers, tightened-up loose handlebars stems & seat-posts. We fixed loads of loose pedals and wheel nuts, but undoubtedly the most popular tools we made available to youngsters to use was the Cycle Track Pumps used to inflate / blow-up their Tyres. All of which helped us to achieve our project objectives; of better social engagement and provide a valuable community service using bikes and the Track to provide the opportunity to deliver this community initiative.

On Thursday 21st of August, Hilton Hall was once more used as an official Polling Station, but this time for the Police & Crime Commissioner Elections. We are very pleased that the Hall is being used once more as a Polling Station as this can only strengthen and develop further community cohesion for Hilton Hall. Visiting Voters also got to see our Notice Board promoting all of the other community activities held at the Hall. Again, massive savings were made by the City Council because of using Hilton Hall Community Centre (instead of the usual four or five individual centres used in previous years), but more pertinent to us; we benefited from this patronage in the form of extra sustainable income.

On September 23rd, the third and final stage of development work began on the BMX Track project. HFN Landscapes Ltd erected new Football "Catch-All" Fencing (between the Playing Fields and Residential Housing) and installed a second Litter Bin (next to the New BMX Safety Sign) which has made such a positive difference to our 'Litter' problem and now pleased to report that youngsters are now clearing-up their litter and 'Using' these Bins as they were intended. Yet another Great Result! I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parks Department Council Staff who regularly empty these Waste / Litter Bins on our behalf and for all of the hard work that they put into community sites and facilities such as ours.

Also in September we received a Pack of Wild Flower Seeds from the Friends of the Earth, as part of their campaign entitled "The Bee Cause". The Wild Flower Seed Packet contained: Yarrow, Wild Carrot, Viper's Bugloss, Lady's Bedstraw, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Common Poppy, Yellow Rattle, Red Campion, Chewings Fescue, Crested Dogs tail and more. These seeds went into our Wild Meadow Flower Rockery (on the right hand side of Hilton Hall).

In November, we received a Box of Green Trees from the Woodland Trust (which we ordered in the spring) ready for planting over the coming Winter Months. These Tree Packs have been generously funded and donated by Woodland Trust and their Lead Partners (i.e. IKEA Family, Sainsbury's and Biffa Award, also funded by WHSmith, Wilko and Players of the People's Postcode Lottery). This project is part of our Five Year Tree planting programme and our continued commitment to 'eco-enhancing' our local environment.

On 3rd December 2014 James & Shaun from TrailCraft re-visited the Track to carry-out another Track repair. They travelled over from Wales to do this vital resurfacing work to the Track (checkout the photos on hiltonhall.com). Although the Track had only been open since May, it had seen more than its fair share of 'Use', but the main problem has been the damage caused by continual and relentless use of small-wheeled scooters and skateboards. James and Shaun spent the whole day working from the early morning until just after 5pm. fixing the pot-holes and top-surface of each Ramp. Many Thanks to them for their hard work and excellent aftercare service provided. The following day the Track was once more open for business, and once more, back to its former 'New' condition again, and just as usual . . . the Track was just as busy as ever!

2015: After the Christmas Holidays ~ during January and February ~ we carried-on as usual, doing the odd little job or two, both indoors and outdoors, and with funding received from the Geoff Hill Charitable Trust and the help of our latest sponsor Ryan (Ryan is one of our ex-judo players, who now runs SOS Landscapes and volunteered his time and services) we managed to replace broken and cracked Paving Slabs at the front of the Hall.

16th February 2015; Work started on the installation of our New Sheffield Cycle Stands outside the Front of Hilton Hall. Stave-Con Ltd was the construction company employed by the City Council to do the work on this project and we were well pleased that this work was done very quickly. As soon as the New Cycle Stands had been finished, and the workmen had left, our volunteer team were the first to use our new cycle stands.

I am pleased to report that upon their return to the Bikes, they were still there, safe & sound and the Cycle Stands had done their first job. Another Great Result!

These New Sheffield Secure Bike Parking Stands are great and we are very grateful to the following people for their involvement, planning and hard work in getting this equipment installed for us. They are; Tim Philpot, Gerwyn Owen, Mark Nicholls (from the City Council) and Dave Claire; former Chairman of the Local Neighbourhood Partnership (LNP). It was Dave who first enquired about the 'Cycle Stands' on our behalf in April 2014. And finally; a big "Thank You" to the Construction Team from Stave-Con Ltd for doing a great job.

I would just like to add . . . This equipment (Sheffield Cycle Stands) was NOT paid for by local Rate-Payers money, but was funded through the National Government's Campaign to encourage 'Sustainable Low Energy 'Greener' Transport Options. This Government initiative is aimed at getting more people out of their Cars and into more eco-friendly, low carbon transport alternatives, i.e. getting more people back into cycling (this being just one of the options). We were informed that the funding for 'Our Cycle Stands' was provided by Centro who are one of the Government's Key Stakeholders in this national initiative; who are entrusted to manage & distribute funds, and to support local companies and communities willing to encourage and meet Government 'Greener' policy outcomes.

We are pleased to report that on Monday 16th March, Hilton Hall was chosen to host our local area's PACT Meeting (Partners and Community Together). These meetings are held every couple of months, where our Local Police Team & City Council Representatives get together with members of the local community to identify problems and concerns, as well as to share in best practices and the successful stories from around the area for the benefit of 'the whole Community'. Please come along and meet your local neighbourhood Policing and Support Teams. A second meeting (to be held at Hilton Hall) has also been scheduled for Monday 18th May 2015.

To end our official '*Companies House – End of Year*' period (April to the end of March each year) we organised, as part of the CDF Funded Community Cycle Safety project, a 'Whole Community' Family Fun Open Day & BMX Open Day Launch. We had planned to hold this event sometime in the Summer of 2014 (following the completion of the actual Track in May), but unfortunately the remaining work on the infrastructure and the rest of the Track project went on throughout the summer period and took much longer than estimated to complete. This was because the work was done in 'Stages' (but not always following on immediately from one stage of work to the next stage) i.e. the work on tarmac pathways finished and there was a gap in time before the landscaping began, and so on with the other work done such as new Fences, Litter Bins, Entrance Gates, Track Signage, etc. etc).

This meant that the whole job was not fully completed until late October and so this is why we eventually chose March 2015 to run the event (expecting Snow & usually wet & miserable winter weather to be a barrier between December 2014 and February 2015).

So, on Sunday 22nd March 2015 we finally held our BMX Open Day / Family Fun Day. The weather could not have been better. It was more like a warm summer's day, with the Sun shining all day long through a lovely blue Sky. Our Team of Volunteers managed to organise an amazing day of activities and it turned out to be yet another major success for Hilton Hall and for the Lanesfield Community. The support and help we received from everyone was

truly gratifying and 'Our Local Community' paid us the compliment of their attendance, without which 'this event' would simply not have worked. One of our sponsors said that there must have been well over six hundred visitors at this event (based upon his experience of crowd numbers and the amount of activity at this event), and this figure is quite believable because there were 81 participants & spectators at the Judo display alone (actual numbers) with similar attendance figures generated by the Zumba display and by the Childrens Dance performance which was held inside the hall. This figure alone represents at least 243 visitors to our open day. And therefore I would safely estimate another three or four hundred more visitors who attended the outside activities – throughout the day.

There are so many people to 'Thank' for helping to make our Open Day the success it was, it is hard to know where to start. So, many thanks to Craig Gutteridge - our Local Neighbourhood Warden – for taking the excellent photographs of the day's activities & visitors, these photos can be seen on our web site (hiltonhall.com/photographs.htm). Our main Sponsor, whose funding helped us run this 'Whole Year Long Project' (culminating in this end of project Community Open Day) was the Community Development Foundation via our very own Spring Vale Community First Panel, with Hilton Hall Community Association providing 'Match Funding' which collectively paid for the whole project. This funding and the support of local community groups and companies was crucial to the overall success of this project, therefore a BIG "thank you CDF, SVCF Panel & All who contributed".

Continuing with our 'thanks and indebtedness': I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people: Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett and Lin sponsored and supplied the Inflatable Bouncy Castle & Slide and Hot Food Van), Lesley from BikeRight and Lee (Dr. Bike) from CycleActiFit (for repairing kids bikes free of charge). The West Midlands Police Team (Bilston & Spring Vale Branch), Wolverhampton City Council Recycling Team / Amey Ltd. And, many thanks to ALL of the Members of the following Community Groups who provided excellent Displays in the main Hall: Wolverhampton Youth Judo Centre, Matteka Zumba Group, Inspire-2-Dance Group & the Forever Freedom Team Lindsey & Sarah. Denis and Michelle Robinson from DTYFC for running the football skills training sessions.

I Massive "Thank You" to Andy Hodson (#FYBMX) and to Jason & Colleagues (the professional & semi-pro BMX Riders) who came along on Sunday 22nd and provided us all with spectacular, breathtaking BMX riding and aerial acrobatics display ALL Day Long. And finally, last but not least: I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Right Worshipful The Mayor of Wolverhampton Councillor Mike Heap for attending our BMX Open Day, and for watching the many Sports & Dance Displays and Demonstrations in the main Hall and for kindly offering to Officially 'Open' Hilton BMX Track with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

I would like to end this Annual Report by thanking those, not already named elsewhere in this report (but are represented, mentioned and thanked individually on our web site), who have contributed in so many ways, either to our funding, or volunteering, and/or supplying us with sponsored goods, etc. that has helped us with the overall success and survival for yet another Year. Hilton Hall can only continue being a self-sustainable enterprise with the help, support and patronage of our local volunteers, community groups, partners and sponsors. So, on behalf of Debbie, Heather and myself I would like to take this opportunity to THANK YOU ONE & ALL and please accept "Our" sincerest and very best wishes and eternal gratitude to you ALL.

And finally; one very special and enormous "THANK YOU" to Dee Cox for all of her hard work over the past five years. She has been one of our most valued HHCA Volunteers who has tirelessly continued her help and support throughout all of this time.

Keith Jones, BA (Hons)
Director and Chairman HHCA
31st March 2015

p.s.

Please visit our web site soon. This is our main vehicle / medium for sharing what we have achieved so far, what we are doing now and what we have planned for the future. Check-out our photos & sponsors page, read our timeline page and visit our other community groups' pages therein. We can be found at:

<http://hiltonhall.com>