

HILTON HALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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 2016

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Chairman's Annual Report for the period covering: 1st April 2015 to the end of March 2016 inclusive.

Another Year – Another Dollar, so the Americans say. Well! It has definitely been 'Another Year' . . . but not so many 'Dollars' flying around this year. Because of this trend (i.e. Not much money flying around, especially in local government and in particular the voluntary sector) we made a slight financial 'Loss' this year, but thanks to 'excess funds in-hand' from previous years' income we still managed to meet all of our outgoings and pay our way (without any external funding from the City Council or from National Government Grants).

With a lot of effort and personal tenacity we managed to provide and maintain the same levels of service and community engagement as we have provided right from when we started over six years ago. We owe a great debt of gratitude to our immediate Families, because without their continued support, help and encouragement (not to mention endless and unconditional patience) we would not have been able to sustain this amount of energy and capacity for the voluntary work we do at Hilton Hall. I am sure this is one of the many reasons 'why' we are still 'here', and why so many other enterprises offering similar services have now disappeared.

One such example (of a disappearing facility / service provider loss) was sadly the Lanesfield Community Centre which was situated in Ward Grove. The closure of said Community Centre was in part due to massive cuts in City Council community funding, but also to the fact that no one involved with that association was willing to take-on the responsibility and risk of taking on such an asset transfer, even with financial incentives on offer to the existing Association Committee. After being empty for quite some time, Lanesfield Community Centre property eventually went 'under-the-hammer' by Public Auction and was sold-off to a private buyer. This latest closure - makes our survival and 'Self-sufficiency-Model' even-more meaningful in such testing and hard-financial times. Our success bears testimony to the hard work and commitment shown by the three Directors of HHCA and to the support and patronage of the community groups and sports clubs who still use Hilton Hall Community Centre. Without which – Hilton Hall - would surely have fallen prey to the same fate as that of Lanesfield Community Centre, and other such 'Centres'.

As the Year unfolded this is 'The HHCA history', retold here in date order, starting April 2015:

We continued our community development programme working with Dudley Town Youth Football Club (who in turn was working with several other local Junior Football Clubs). Denis & Michelle, who run the Dudley Town Youth Football Club (DTYFC) use Hilton Hall & Pitches as their 'Club Base'. Denis & Team maintain and keep the Football Pitches in perfect condition (working all year round – not just during the football season). As well as the work done 'on the pitches' (seed sowing, cutting and marking-up) Denis & his team of Volunteers have also chipped in and helped us with some of the work to the Football Changing Rooms. This is very much appreciated as many hands make light work (of such a big and daunting task). On the 10th April we received a kind donation of £100 from DTYFC which went towards repairs, maintenance and the upkeep of the Hall.

We started-off our official fiscal trading period (April 2015 to the end of March 2016) with the first of many community events put on for the benefit of our local community; held on Tuesday 14th April. This was a Cycle Maintenance Course run as part of our ongoing Community Cycle Safety Initiative (see previous years' Reports for details).

This 'Free to attend' course was jointly sponsored by HHCA and BikeRight Ltd. and based around Puncture Repair & Maintenance. As in all of our ventures, you can see photographs of this event on our web site (hiltonhall.com).

As part of our ongoing Community Cycle Safety Initiative; our next community project was the first in a series 'Free to attend' monthly Bicycle Repair Sessions (starting on Friday 24th April) run by Lee from 'CycleActiFit' (aka Dr. Bike). These sessions were provided by Lee as part of his own Lottery Funded programme. The remaining dates were advertised and run on the last Friday of each month until the end of July. Lee set-up his Gazebo Workspace next to the BMX Track and fixed 'Visitors' bikes free of charge – fitting many new parts, such as brake & gear-change cables, brake blocks and the like, plus adjusting other cycle parts. All of this cycle maintenance & repair work was done completely FREE – completely without Charge - thanks to Lee and community funding from the National Lottery. Each of these sessions was well attended and Dr. Bike worked his magic from 5pm until 8pm on each and every session advertised.

Continuing on the cycling theme; the BMX Track proved very popular yet again this year (April 2015 to March 2016) and was used each and every day during this period. During school-time hours the Pro & Semi-Pro BMX riders took advantage of the quieter track times. And during evenings and weekends very much shared use by beginners, amateurs and professional Riders alike. What a fantastic Legacy! We are so pleased that this Track has proved so successful and dispelled the fears of 'Locals' who could only see the negatives and not the positive outcomes and potential.

A Big Thank You to Jason Akihiko Byno for taking on the role of 'Hilton BMX Track' Facebook administrator and for 'Posting' regular updates, photos & news about the Hilton BMX Track. Congratulations also to Jason for so many BMX Competition Wins and on achieving his BMX Cycling Coaches Award. Well Done Jason.

On Wednesday 6th May, we teamed up with the Prince's Trust (in the form of the Staveley 280 Team of Volunteers) Led by Nicola & Karl, to help us carry on with our environmental landscaping and development programme (which is a continuation of our five year Community Open Spaces project). We (HHCA) provided the funding to pay for the trees and shrubs - Conifers, Composting Soil & Wild Meadow Flower Seeds, and they (the Staveley 280 Prince's Trust Volunteers) provided the labour. See photos on our web site. HHCA also received a very kind donation from the Prince's Trust in partnership with the Wolverhampton College of £264.18 that was raised by Team 280 as part of their Community Fund-raising programme. Many Thanks Team 280 & Leaders.

It was also on Wednesday the 6th of May that Heather set up for the very first time, our very own 'Twitter' page at <https://twitter.com/hiltonhallcc> the idea being to enhance our presence on social media, and the first images 'tweeted' was the photos taken of the Prince's Trust Volunteers actually working at Hilton Hall on their project (tweet! . . . tweet!).

On Thursday 7th May, Hilton Hall was once more used as a Polling Station for the Wolverhampton City Council & Parliamentary Elections. Hilton Hall Community Centre was open for the general public to Vote from 7am and closed promptly at 10pm. As in previous year's, this highlighted and showcased 'Hilton Hall Community Centre' to people who would not normally visit the Hall as well as promoting the many activities via our Lobby Notice Board.

On 28th May we received further donations to HHCA from DTYFC (£50 & £100) and also a donation from their football partners Dudley Athletic East & Minors Football Club (£500) who also use the Hilton Hall Pitches for their junior league matches. And then at the end of May we entered the AVIVA Community Funding Competition, supported by Denis & Michelle (& FC Teams), of which we managed to achieve 1,570 Votes for our project, but despite the efforts of many of the community groups who lobbied on our behalf, unfortunately, we were unsuccessful this time around.

On Friday 26th June, HHCA hosted the Prince's Trust Staveley Team 280 Volunteers 'Presentation & Awards Evening'. This was organised by the Leaders of PT Staveley project Nicola & Karl and the 'Team 280 Volunteers' co-ran the event - inviting friends and relatives to celebrate in 'Their' Awards Ceremony and Presentations'. The event was attended by senior representatives from West Midlands Police, Wolverhampton City College and a representative from the Prince's Trust who praised the Volunteers for their hard work and commitment to this programme and spoke to the Audience about 'Their Organisation's' involvement in the whole process. The members of Team 280 Volunteers did individual presentations about their own circumstances and their experiences and the benefits gained from their participation in the Prince's Trust project, before being presented with their End-of-Course Qualification Certificates. This was a truly fabulous and unique Presentation evening and the Hilton Hall Management Team were extremely pleased and honoured to be involved in this project and wish ALL of the Volunteers and Prince's Trust Staveley all the very best wishes for the future.

July 31st 2015 (Friday from 5pm till 8pm): This was Dr. Bike's last FREE cycle repair session as part of his (*CycleActiFit*) project from April to the end of July. All of the sessions that Lee held was well attended and many local Cyclists benefited a great deal from Lee's expertise, help and support. A BIG Thank You to Lee (Dr. Bike) from ALL of us here at Hilton Hall.

From August to September the HHCA Management Team worked at the Hall throughout the Schools' Summer Holidays, mainly working downstairs, on the Lower Floor area of the Hall.

On Saturday the 26th of September we (HHCA) sponsored and ran a Macmillan "World's Biggest Coffee Morning" charity fundraising event. This fund-raiser was organised and run by members of the Jones Family and proved a major success for all concerned. We managed (with the help of friends 'n' family) and members of the local Community to raise over £500 (and at that time, still counting).

On Thursday 15th October we had the final '*grand total*' of Money raised by Hilton Hall Volunteers for the Macmillan Cancer Support programme which turned out to be an amazing £570.04. The final Pledges came in as: £30.00 raised via Charity Prize Draw Tickets, £505.04 from the main Event Day (25th September) and final pledges received came to £35.00 (= a Grand Total £570.04). A MASSIVE THANK YOU to EVERYONE who supported us and donated both time and money to this fantastic Charity. Please visit our web site at hiltonhal.com to see the photos & report.

On the last Saturday in October we were pleased to announce that the Emily Clare Dance School would be using Hilton Hall for their regular Saturday morning '*Childrens Ballroom Dancing*' lessons. This coincided with the launch of the very popular TV programme '*Strictly Ballroom*' being shown on BBC1 from October leading up to Christmas Finale. This provided another healthy physical activity for local children to participate in at Hilton Hall.

On the 5th November we received another donation of £100 from the Prince's Trust Team 310 Volunteers – who carried-out some fund-raising as part of the community element of their PT project, and raised enough funding for two separate community projects, of which HHCA being one of the beneficiaries of their labours.

Friday, 20th November; we hosted a Community Fireworks Display and Family Fun Night at Hilton Hall Playing Fields. The Firework Display was organised and run by Malcolm Gwinnett (one of our local Ward Councillors – and one of our most ardent supporters) who provided the Stalls, Childrens Rides, Bouncy Castles and Out-Door Refreshment & Food Kiosks. The firework display was fantastic and everyone I spoke to said how brilliant the whole night was and asked "when can we hold the next one"? This is an example of yet another successful community event we managed to host. This event was well supported by locals and members of the various clubs held at Hilton Hall and remarkably, the weather stayed Dry for us (yet again). Lovely blue Sky - albeit quite cold, right up-to when we packed away for the night and as soon as everyone had gone and we locked up at 10pm - It started Snowing! An added bonus came in the form of a Donation to the Hilton Hall Restoration Fund made by Malcolm Gwinnett (£100). Our sincere thanks Malcolm and his team.

The last session to be held in 2015 was the Wednesday Slimming World Class – run by Kerry – on 30th December 2015. This class rounded-off our calendar year and we locked-up for the Christmas Holidays. And; our first class back after the Christmas Holidays was on Monday 4th January 2016 with Aneka who runs the weekly Zumba Dance, Fitness & Exercise to Music Class.

2016: Monday 11th January, The Annual General Meeting of the Lanesfield Tenants & Residents was held at Hilton Hall. At this meeting of the LTRA, I was very disappointed to hear that the decision had already been made (prior to the AGM date) to disband and finish the LTRA as a tenants & residents association.

So it is with regret and sadness that the very last Meeting of the LTRA took place on Monday 11th January 2016. Betty Jones & Beryl Weaver (Joint Chairpersons) informed everyone present they no longer wished to carry-on as Committee Members or Officials of the LTRA and after private talks with Wolverhampton Homes both parties made the decision to use the AGM as the date to disband the Lanesfield Tenants and Residents Association and for the LTRA to cease activities as an Association forthwith.

There was an offer from a local Resident to take over the Chair of the LTRA, who was willing to help raise funds and put on various activities to help rejuvenate the association in order to save it from closure, however, the representative from Wolverhampton Homes Ltd stated that they were no longer willing to fund or support the LTRA (and to "call it a day") in view of recent low attendance numbers (over the winter period), as well as concerns over future funding and viability.

Pat Wilkes (representing Wolverhampton Homes) thanked Betty & Beryl for their long service and hard work over the years and said this would be the last LTRA Meeting to be held.

The Hilton Hall Management Team are disappointed at the closure of the Lanesfield Tenants and Residents Association because they have totally supported the association right from the start and firmly believe the LTRA has provided a valuable and much needed representational forum and support-network for local people from this Ward, to address various housing and estate issues with our elected Ward Councillors. As well as support and engagement by our Local Police Team and representatives from many different Departments of the Wolverhampton City Council (and directly from Wolverhampton Homes Estate Managers) who regularly attended these meetings over the years. HHCA will continue to provide as much support and varied activities as we can to our local community, much as before, but will miss future potential opportunities raised via the LTRA monthly meetings.

Also, on Monday 11th January, work restarted on the Lower Ground Floor at Hilton Hall (on the Football Changing Rooms). This work was co-funded by Dudley Town Youth Football Club & HHCA. Stud-walling and panelling was put in place ready for a full rewire due to start sometime in April or May. (read about our progress in next year's Annual Report).

A week after the above work started, we *teamed-up* with Prince's Trust Staveley (Wolverhampton) Volunteers yet again. This time with a New Group (Team 310) to help paint the Football Changing Rooms. This new team of volunteers (Lead by Nicola & Karl) carried-on 'Painting' until Friday 22nd January. On behalf of my colleagues and I; I would like to Thank members of Team 310 for ALL of their hard work and kind volunteering ~ "Thank You One & All". As usual; you can check-out our web site to see the latest photos and up-date reports.

On 27th January we received a kind donation of £200 from the Geoff Hill Charitable Foundation which went towards our Restoration & Repair Funds. Michelle (DTYFC) applied to the Geoff Hill trust on our behalf and so it was somewhat of a surprise when Michelle handed over the cheque to us. Many thanks to Geoff Hill (& Trust Members), and to Michelle.

On Tuesday 1st March the Prince's Trust held their 'End of Programme Presentation & Award Ceremony at Hilton Hall Community Centre (just like the one they held in June 2015), but this time for Team 310 Community Volunteers (Staveley Wolverhampton). Karl Broadhurst (Wolverhampton College PT Team Leader) welcomed everyone to the Presentation and introduced 'Team 310'. Each member of the Team then individually delivered their own personal speeches, followed by a 'Theme-based' Group Presentation to the audience. The Right Worshipful, The Mayor of Wolverhampton Mr. Ian Brookfield presented the Qualification Awards to this Year's Volunteers and Paul Edwards (Prince's Trust Team Programme Executive) followed said presentation; by expressed his thanks (on behalf of The Prince's Trust) to everyone present and explained some of the details and ethos of The Trust to all in attendance.

Nicola Cooke (PT Team Leader) wound-up the proceedings and wished everyone 'Good Luck for the Future' and thanked everyone for their commitment, hard work and achievements over the past twelve weeks. Nicola also publicly thanked HHCA Management Team for our involvement and support in the various Team Community Projects held at Hilton Hall.

Wednesday 23rd March a brand new Ballroom Dancing Class for Adults began, hopefully this will continue & thrive.

On 26th March, our last 'Community-wide-project' (for this trading period) took place at Hilton Hall when members of the RSPCA used our facilities (as an outreach service) to carry out 'Dog Chipping'. The Law relating to Dogs changes in April 2016 – stating that ALL Dogs require a 'Tracer Chip' – with heavy fines for those not complying after the April deadline. So, on Saturday (26th) the RSPCA staff spent three hours providing this service to over forty dog-owners ('Chipping' their beloved dogs) in a most efficient and successful afternoon's work. This was of great community value in preparing dog owners for this new legislation, not to mention the added benefits of tracing 'Lost' pets (but hopefully not) in the process.

In closing, on behalf of the HHCA Management Team I would like to Thank Denis and Michelle Robinson from DTYFC for all of their hard work, support, and encouragement (and kind donations) over this past year, and finally; to finish-off this year's report with an equally BIG 'Thank You' to my co-directors Debbie & Heather (and members of 'Our' immediate Family) for all of their hard work and total commitment to Hilton Hall Community Association and to the local community of Lanesfield for the whole of this time (right from when we first started our epic journey in 2008 – right up to this present time).

Keith Jones, BA (Hons) Director & Chairman HHCA
31st March 2016