Village Hall and Playing Fields Trust - Chairman's Report – Mrs Sue Sweeney:

This year has been a long and rather difficult year for all of us due to the prolonged requirements in respect of Covid. This past year we have concentrated on bringing to completion, several outstanding jobs which were in the pipeline for longer than expected.
The pathway to the tennis courts, that was made to accommodate disabled access, was completed. This path will also provide easy, safe vehicle access to the Show container.
All of the memorial benches and seats in the Playing Field were repainted. This was a much needed job to prolong the life of these facilities.
Work was also carried out on the Devon Air Ambulance lights. The Parish Council met the payment for this work.
We also finished off work on the pavilion ventilation and replaced 2 of the stanchions. Nigel Hall carried out some extra work on the football changing rooms.
During the last winter, we became aware of a number of cars driving on the field, after entering from the Clarks Barn Road and leaving deep ruts in the surface. We decided to address this problem by putting in a removable barrier to prevent this happening. So far it appears to be working well.
We demolished the ball wall. This was not really fit for purpose and beginning to weaken.
By far the biggest expense has been the Playground area, where we have made significant expenditure in repairing and refurbishing the play equipment. This has proved to be an expensive and frustrating job, partly due to delays by the suppliers of parts and labour when needed. .
We were very disappointed when we found that one of the playground gates had probably been kicked open and severe damage caused to the fencing and gate. Unfortunately, our playground is vandalised on occasions causing extra labour and costs to our organisation. The surround fencing has now been repaired and painted. We are very grateful to Nigel and Marilyn again in this respect who carried out this work and received many compliments, one of which came from a SHDC playpark inspector who was very impressed by the condition and upkeep of our Playpark.
We are pleased to see the steps down to the Tennis Courts have now been constructed, and handrail fitted. We send our thanks to Webber Bros who have provided their labour in this respect free of charge.
With the support of the Parish Council, The Trust have been discussing the possibility of selling the Village Hall and building a new Sports/ Community Hall on the Playing Field to accommodate our usual village activities.

Last June, Martin Rich who is the Community Projects Advisor for D.C.C with special responsibility for village halls, met with the Trustees and Chair of the Parish Council to discuss the project. Martin advised that we would need to circulate our vision and then hold a village meeting for a discussion and a vote to be taken. If the village agrees we will then be able to proceed with our project. Martin advised he would be able to help us with an application for a feasibility grant of up to £10,000 to get us started. If the vote is in favour of proceeding then we will be looking for people to help with the project, especially fund raising.
We are of course concerned about how the situation might impact the Pre-School, as this is an important and very necessary facility for our Parish and community. I have spoken to Lorna Pitts. Her role is supporting Ofsted registered childcare provision in the South Hams area and meeting sufficiency needs. Lorna advised me that DCC are now responsible for our Pre-school and they are looking into the situation and the possibility of providing facilities on the school site. This she says is her preferred option, and the one she will pursue. I did say that in all probability the pavilion would still be available for the next 3 years if we do proceed.
We will be carrying out a Parish survey within the next month to ascertain the interest and support of the Parish in the construction of the new Community/Sports Hall. A printed version will be issued with the village magazine. Paper copies will also be delivered to all outlying houses within the Parish. The survey will also be available online. We hope to have the results of this with in a few weeks of the closing date.

It was good to see local children and families enjoying the Playground as the pandemic restrictions were lifted. The P.F. became quite a busy place. Our village has grown much larger over the last 10 years, and more growth is expected with the planned houses on the old school field.
I thank all the committee for their hard work over the past year. Some enabled committee members and others, have worked extremely hard carrying out jobs we would normally have to pay for, saving our orangisation a substantial amount of expense. We sincerely thank them for their efforts in this respect.
As a committee we unfortunately struggle to carry out the many and varied work necessary to fulfill our duties and follow the stringent legal requirements of the law..

We sincerely thank the P.C. and S.H.D.C. for all their help over the past year, and the generous amounts of grants that have come our way. It has certainly helped us over a very difficult period .