

Seend Trust and Community Centre – summary of key events 2021/22

Background: Covid Timeline – summary

- 23rd March 2020: Closed for first lockdown. All activities and events stopped or cancelled. Perishables (mainly beer and out-of-date snacks) sold off cheaply or ditched. Salaried staff furloughed; no foreseeable need for casual staff.
- June 2020: Reopened for bar sales only in the Main Hall and outside. Elaborate social distancing measures in place. All drinks served to seated customers at tables. Profit from bar sales trivial or non-existent.
- 14 August 2020: Restrictions eased allowing us to start some activities under 'rule of 6'.
- 31 October 2020: Second lockdown. Centre closed from 5 November and no plan to open before Christmas. Stock of perishables and out-of-date stock again sold off or ditched.
- 2 December 2020: Second lockdown ended. Some activities restarted but we took the decision not to open the bar for any activity before Christmas, and then only for sales of bottled drinks.
- 6 January 2021: Third national lockdown. Membership recruitment closed. Decision taken to make subscription for 2021-22 membership £0.
- April – June 2021: Gradual easing of restrictions allowing certain indoor 'controlled activities' (e.g. Emma, SMB etc) to restart plus 'permitted activities' (e.g. Alzheimer's singing group). Booking requests start.
- 21 June 2021: All restrictions lifted. Celebration barbecue held.
- June 2021 – April 2022: New Bar Manager in post (commenced 12th July). Gradual return to normality (Friday nights, Breakfasts, Nosh & Natter, First Friday Coffee etc.). Centre not open on Mondays or Tuesdays.

Maintenance and improvement of facilities

- Only essential maintenance during lockdown period because of need to contain expenditure. Integrity of the building during this period checked daily by a rota of members of the Committee.
- Huge clear out and deep clean of bar area in readiness for reopening.. (This included getting rid of a resident mouse who was helping himself to out-of-date biscuits!)
- Intruder alarm (disabled during a thunderstorm) upgraded and repaired.

- Repair of water damage to ceiling in main hall
- Grass cutting continued (thanks to Michael Johnson) and outside area kept tidy (thanks to Tessa Doe and others)
- New plastic furniture purchased for patio (to replace deteriorating wooden tables etc
- New (expensive) glass washer purchased
- Maintenance tasks now needing attention include renovating and painting exterior woodwork and gutters, repointing the patio.
- Behind the scenes there is the ongoing need to attend to dripping taps, replace broken lights etc. Thanks to Fritz for doing much of this.
- Looking ahead, we are now exploring installation of a computerised booking system and remote control of our heating system

Finance

- Huge thanks to David Purdy for handling the finances throughout this difficult time, for seeking and obtaining grants where available, and particularly for giving early warning of the deteriorating financial position which required urgent and drastic action if we were to remain solvent. Recovery of bar trade after reopening has been slow but progressing and gross profit has increased thanks to Tom Redman's skilled negotiations with suppliers. Both the club and the trust are now in profit. This outcome would not have been possible without Government grants totalling nearly £40,000 and some savings on administration costs when the Centre was virtually unused up to Christmas 2021.

Events (both in-house and external)

After cancellation of nearly every event in 2020 (including some private bookings) , since reopening in 2021 we have held (or plan to hold in 2022)

- Reopening barbecue and schools back barbecue
- First Friday Coffee mornings
- Nosh and Natter lunches
- Summer breakfasts (a record)
- Some informal folk music sessions in the Members' Bar on Friday nights

- Roaring 20's Evening (20th November)
- Village pantomime (February 2022)
- Beer Festival (30th April 2022)
- ABBA Sensations tribute band (17th September 2022). Tickets now on sale

Sadly we had to cancel the Burns Night Supper, scheduled for January, due to low ticket sales

People

- We have been pleased to welcome Tom Redman as Bar Manager. As listed above, he has already suggested, several innovative ideas, such as informal live folk music sessions in the Members' Bar on Friday evenings and the Roaring 20's event in the Main Hall. We have reduced his hours during the period of slow recovery to allow him to do other work.
- Sadly Hatty Stafford Charles has stepped down as Chairman of the Management Committee after 10 years of sterling service. Her contribution to the running of Centre through some difficult and challenging times has been invaluable. We look forward to the trustees appointing a replacement as soon as possible.
- We have lost the services of Jo McManus and John Wilford from the Committee for personal and/or health reasons. Jo has been enormously helpful in handling bookings, revamping and managing the website, as well as setting up online ticketing and subscription payments for us. John has worked with Fritz as the core of the 'Friday Team' carrying out numerous small repairs and doing a lot of painting. In addition, he has run several highly successful barbecues. Both have offered to continue to help the Committee, for which we are very grateful. However we really need new committee members. Please spread the word.
- **This has been a difficult and stressful 18 months. Thanks are due to everyone on the Committee, and others outside it, especially Rose Dick who works hard, and largely unseen, to keep this Centre clean. All have helped us through and kept us afloat. But we cannot do it all alone. We rely on lots of other people, not only for suggestions for improvements and events, but more particularly in providing the help to make them happen and supporting them by attending.**

Jen Dalton
Acting Chairman, Seend Community Centre Management Committee

May 2022