



JUNE UPDATE FROM THE TRUSTEES OF THE LEIGH AND BRANSFORD MEMORIAL HALL THE MEMORIAL HALL BY NUMBERS

Last month we held our Annual General Meeting. A time each year not only for the trustees to take stock of the past twelve months but also, importantly, as the Memorial Hall is a registered charity, to formally agree our accounts and end of year report. Inevitably that meeting deals with lots of facts and figures – in other words, numbers, numbers, and even more numbers. So, this month my update is to tell you what just a few of those sets of those numbers are telling us and how unlocking those messages helps us stay viable.

Now before you stop reading at this point – because it seems that around **1 in every 3** of us in England has some difficulty in grappling (or even wanting to grapple) with numbers – let me try and convince you that *'numbers can be our friend'*. With just a little thought they can quickly tell us much more about what's going on – the trick I find is simply to put them into a context that is meaningful and relevant to us. So here goes . . .

First a very big thank you to everyone who has supported the Hall over the past year through generously donating a total of **1140 kilograms** of your old and unwanted clothes and textiles. For those of you that aren't aware, there is a large blue collection skip on the Hall car park – see the photo below. It may not be pretty, but it's worth its weight in . . . er, textiles to the Hall as it generates much needed additional income.



Well, that's the first big number – **1140 kilograms** – but it's pretty meaningless just on its own. Until, that is, we put it into some kind of context. For those of us like me brought up on pounds and ounces, that works out at well over **1 ton**. But there's a much more interesting and relevant way of looking at this. We're told that, on

average, wearing clothes adds about **1kg** to our body weight (slightly less for women and slightly more for men). We also know that in our parish we have around **2,000** residents, evenly split between males and females, living in **930** or so households. Remarkably, that means, on average, over the past year at least **1 person from every household** has donated **1** complete outfit of unwanted clothes and, in some cases, more.

When you consider that every kilogram collected is worth **12p**, what you have donated has generated almost **£140** for Hall funds. **Thank you!** And please keep up the good work – we need all of your cast offs!!

Then we come to the number of hires that took place over the last accounting year (compared to the previous year) and how the Hall's annual income and expenditure (the overheads) have changed during that time.

This is important to understand because the Memorial Hall is 'owned' by the community – it's not a Church Hall or a Parish Hall as such – and its survival really depends on the hire income it generates. Well, last year the Hall was hired on **364** occasions. Putting that in context, that's the equivalent of just about **1** hire every day of the year. By comparison the year before (a year that had still been heavily impacted by covid restrictions) the Hall was hired just **297** times. So, (using the same contextual measure) in that previous year, the Hall was unused for the equivalent of **68** days – or **over 2 months**, which puts the impact of covid-19 into yet another perspective.

But the good news about the **22%** increase in hires was tempered by the fact that, as with every household and business in England, the annual cost of electricity had gone through the roof. Of course, having fewer hires during the previous year meant that we used less electricity, but on a like-for-like basis, last year our electricity bill increased by a whopping **125%**. To put that rise into context, we now spend an average of over **£20.25** a day on energy, whereas before the daily charge had averaged just **£8.30**. That's why we've now installed solar panels to keep our energy costs under control and our hire charges still very affordable.

So, it's not all doom and gloom; far from it. Other numbers tell us we're in great financial shape overall and we're hoping than even more of you will choose to hire the hall in the coming year. We're ready for you!

Jon Gamble, Chair of Trustees