

WITHYCOMBE ACTIVE LIVING
Report to the Annual Parish Assembly 2018

Withycombe Active Living Group continues to provide friendship, fun and social activities for the older members of the community. We have been in existence for over 14 years during which time our supervisory body at County level has changed from Age Concern (UK) and Somerset County Council to a private company called Somerset You Can Do whilst all the time our annual budget has diminished, in accordance with the County's financial plight. We now operate with an annual grant of £158 which no longer pays for our hall rental and I envisage we shall soon become totally independent or have to terminate this vital community activity which I would be reluctant to do. I would, however, this year like to publicly thank the Parish Council who, aware of our finances, kindly made a one off but very welcome donation to enable our rent to be paid for a further year

We meet at least twice each month and are one of the Memorial Hall's most regular hirers. We always welcome new members in the past year and our average monthly group of about 16 persons continues to support and enjoy a range of activities which include light chair related exercise, lectures, music, luncheon outings and popular afternoon tea parties at which we endeavour to show appropriate DVD's using equipment we have purchased over several years. I would emphasise, however, that we are *not* a film club.

In the winter months our members enjoy soup and fresh bread before leaving and this ensures they get lunch time refreshment in colder weather, particularly those living alone and with sight problems etc. We are very relaxed and friendly with the emphasis being on companionship, local issues and fun. Our outings are generally to places of interest such as gardens, garden centres, museums etc. where there is a provision for food. The highlight of our year is our annual Christmas Luncheon outing. We always look forward to welcoming new members from our own Parish.

I thank those members of the village who continue to support this long standing and important local activity, the Parish Council who continue to handle our finances, the Memorial Hall Committee for allowing us to use the excellent facilities. Special thanks go to Valerie Barnham Carol Wright and Judith Tilley for their enormous help in all manner of tasks not least their excellent catering efforts.

May I reiterate a previous plea concerning parking at the hall which I appreciate is not easy to address. We are all aware of the protracted negotiations over the land opposite the hall which includes developing a car park. Sadly this has now reached such a chaotic state that it is having an adverse effect on our members, many of whom have to drive to the hall. On some occasions persons arrive, find nowhere to park and return home. I know it is not just my group that this affects but I feel obliged to continually mention this

Finally and in keeping with other community groups faced with decline I reiterate my annual message to the community which is "Use it or lose it".

Roger Hurst
(Active Living Co-ordinator)

April 2018