

F.O.P.W.A.

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Broadway House and "the Hut" volunteers'
NEWSLETTER

No. 54

December 2023

Best Wishes for Christmas and a very Happy New Year to Volunteers, Visitors and Everyone reading this Newsletter

Richard and all Trustees.

BROADWAY HOUSE

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR

Opening times reminder

I expect that most of you have seen the posters in Broadway House advertising our opening and closing times this Christmas - OPEN as usual Mon. 18th to Fri. 22nd Dec.

CLOSED Sat. 23rd to Tue. 26th Dec.

OPEN Wed. 27th to Fri. 29th Dec.

CLOSED Sat. 30th Dec. to Mon. 1st Jan.

then

OPEN as usual from Tue. 2nd Jan. onwards

Let me know if you can't do your usual sessions shown on the December rota.

Volunteer coming and goings -

We've welcomed Katarina Lee back onto the rota alongside Helen Lakey and also thanks to Helen who is going to cover some Thursday mornings in the New Year while Sheila is away.

We've had a very settled team for some time now which is wonderful and makes my rota task easy, but please don't hesitate to say if you'd like to do more or less sessions.

Another welcome - this time to "the Hut" meet and greet team - Elizabeth and Keith Horne have volunteered to look after our Sunday visitors - they have been on the "reserve / standby team" for a long time already. I'll carry on looking after Thursdays - unless anyone else would like to do it?

"the Hut"

In no time at all after the close of the summer 2023 season, it was time to start planning for 2024 and beyond.

The first consideration was that our Lease with the East Suffolk Council (taking over from Suffolk Coastal District Council) was due to run out in December 2023. The good news is that E.S.C. quickly agreed to extend the Lease for five years, and while we haven't seen or signed the paper-work yet, we are carrying on as before. Some of you with long memories may recall that the original S.C.D.C. Lease took several years to finalise after we took over occupation of "the Hut".

The next item to think about was the daily hire rate which has remained unchanged since 2005. You will know that as far as possible we manage our Accounts to keep Broadway House and "the Hut" money in two separate "pots". After some debate between Trustees (mostly via emails and phone calls) we decided to keep the hire fee at £60 per day. It is enough, with some left over, to cover the running costs including setting money aside for what now seems the inevitable maintenance costs of the external roller shutters. And we have healthy reserves to cover other unexpected items.

2024 BOOKING PHONE 07842 179734

From 9am Wed. 17th January 2024

More news on page 2

"Christmas Special" in Broadway House

Friday 22nd December 2023

Free mince pies or other Christmas treats all day and a Tombola.

“the Hut” news continued....

We will probably increase the evening hire fee from the present £25. That’s still under discussion, but no hurry as the evening bookings won’t start before April 2024.

“the Hut” booking paper-work

(Booking letter, conditions and booking form)

We review these every year and this time we’ve made some changes which we hope will make things a bit easier.

Invoices - up to now we’ve been happy to send out Invoices when requested, but the trend is increasing and last summer about 1 in 4 reservations asked for one - just to meet their own internal accounts system not ours. So we’ve altered our standard Booking form, to say that if a visiting group needs an Invoice - please will they take a copy of the completed booking form and use that as an Invoice. We’ve altered the Booking form slightly so that it now includes all the information that would have been shown on an Invoice.

Payments by Bank Transfer is now becoming the norm for many groups, which is fine when it works but a nuisance when it doesn’t. The confusion comes when bank statement payments don’t include reference details that allows us to link the payment to the right booking reservation. We’ve reminded groups to include a reference and that’s about all we can do and to say that we still prefer payment by cheque.

Other snippets of news about “the Hut”

The East Suffolk Council recently carried out an Asbestos survey.

Over the winter we have arranged to have the inside re-painted. It is in quite good order, but looked a bit tired in places, so it will nice and fresh for 2024.

Postcode - we’ve been telling everyone that we don’t have a postcode - then during the summer almost by chance we found out that we do. It is IP11 7SF and covers us, the kiosk and the buildings at the bottom of Bath Hill.

And to end this newsletter with a few more items about **Broadway House** -

Lincat water boiler - gave us some trouble earlier in the year. We’ve temporarily replaced it with one from “the Hut” -which will go back in the spring, when we’ll make sure that whatever we use in Broadway House is working perfectly.

Warm Spaces - was the “big idea” with lots of publicity in the 2022/23 Winter. We’ve not heard so much about it this winter, but the Rural Coffee Caravan people did say that they would keep Broadway House shown on their website.

Menu price review - yes we’ve been thinking about this for some time and maybe some time soon we’ll have another look. It is not desperately urgent -as I’m sure you know from our published Accounts, we’ve healthy reserves and are not short of cash.

Closed for the day?

We’ve had just a couple of enquires asking if we might close Broadway House to be used by others during our normal opening times - you’ll remember that the Heavy Goods Vehicle Driver training company have done that. If the new enquiries turn into actual reservations, I’ll give plenty of notice to our visitors and volunteers.

Visiting groups to Broadway House

In the last couple of years, we’ve welcomed a few groups visiting Felixstowe, who were not able to get a reservation in “the Hut”. Of course they took “pot-luck” if Broadway House is busy or not when they came. There may be some more in 2024, but we’ve made it clear that it is **“Coach Parties only by Appointment”** - we can’t cope with more than one at a time nor do we want coach parties coming too often and “crowding out” our usual “regular” visitors.

Broadway House Lease

In the new year we’ll be talking to Felixstowe Town Council about our Lease which runs out in June 2024. We’ve been on this site since the mid 1970’s originally in what had been the (St John) Ambulance H.Q. then demolished and re-occupied in 2005, so I’m hoping that we’ll carry on being here for a good many years yet.

Richard