

**WORPLESDON MEMORIAL HALL AND RECREATION GROUND**  
**AND THE SIME TRUST**

**Registered Charity No. 305151**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT, 2019**

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31st December 2019.

**1. TRUSTEES AND OFFICIALS**

Trustees who held office during the year were as follows:

Mr Christopher Ewbank, FRICS ASFAV, Chairman	Donor Trustee <sup>1</sup>
Mr Suresh Pillai, Hon. Treasurer	Donor Trustee
Mr Gordon Adam	Parish Council Trustee
Mr Roger Binfield	Donor Trustee
Mrs Mary Broughton	Donor Trustee
Mrs Jan Messinger	Parish Council Trustee
Mr David Snipp	Parish Council Trustee <sup>2</sup>

Hon. Secretary

Position vacant

Minutes Secretary

Mrs Marjory Stewart

**2. PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS**

Independent Examiner

Mr R Thomas  
5 Onslow Close, Woking GU22 7AZ

Solicitors

IBB Solicitors  
Capital Court, 30 Windsor Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1AB

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd  
25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

<sup>1</sup> Appointed on 1 January 2019

<sup>2</sup> Appointed on 4 June 2019

### **3. OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT**

The objectives of the Trust are:

- (1) to manage and maintain Worplesdon Memorial Hall and its associated Recreation Ground in order to provide recreational, social and sporting facilities for the residents of Worplesdon and surrounding areas;
- (2) to manage and maintain the Sidney Sime Gallery, situated on the first floor of the Memorial Hall, in order to conserve, display and promote interest in the works of art received under Mary Sime's bequest (see section 4 below).

The management of the hall, gallery and recreation ground is in the hands of seven Trustees: four Donor Trustees and three Trustees nominated by Worplesdon Parish Council. They are assisted by an Honorary Secretary who is not a Trustee (although this position was vacant during 2019). Although Worplesdon Parish Council is the formal owner of the land and hall, it is not responsible for the control or management of the property.

The hall is rented out for a wide variety of functions and meetings, while fees are received from local football, cricket and tennis clubs for their use of the recreation ground. Local and regular users benefit from discounted charges, as do specific charitable events. The income generated is used to operate, maintain and improve all the facilities on a continuing basis. The Trust employs a resident caretaker who is provided with accommodation in a cottage adjoining the hall.

In respect of the Sidney Sime Gallery, the Trustees have two primary aims: to conserve and, wherever necessary, restore the art works in the collection; and, by increasing visitor numbers and through special events, to raise awareness of Sime's work and to realise the Gallery's potential as a significant cultural and educational resource both locally and more generally. There is no entry fee for visiting the Gallery, although donations are usually forthcoming especially in respect of group visits, for which an introductory talk is normally part of the programme.

In exercising their duties, the Trustees, have, at all times, full regard for the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

### **4. HISTORY**

The Trust was established by a deed dated 16th October 1919. The Trust Deed included the conveyance of a parcel of land at Perry Hill to Worplesdon Parish Council by Sir James L. Walker CIE, at that time the owner of Worplesdon Place.

Subsequently, in 1922, Worplesdon Memorial Hall was built on the land in memory of the local men killed in World War I. This was funded by an anonymous donor, now known to be Sir Laurence Halsey KBE.

In October 1949 Mrs Mary Sime, the widow of Sidney Herbert Sime, a well-known painter and illustrator who had lived locally for many years, willed to the Trustees a gift of £3,625 and a collection of her late husband's work. In April 1956 the Sidney Sime Gallery was added to the Hall to house his paintings and the money gifted was used to achieve this objective.

## **5. REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

### **5.1 Governance**

The Trust Deed requires that the Chairman should step down at the end of each year, while being eligible for re-election. Mr Terence Cater formally stood down as Chairman on 31st December 2018 following over 60 years of service to the Worplesdon Parish Council and Trust in many capacities. Mr Christopher Ewbank was elected chair from 1 January 2019.

### **5.2 Hirings**

During 2019 some 125 separate organizations or individual hirers used the Hall or Grounds, indicating that the facilities offered remain an attractive choice for a great variety of activities and events.

The Hall hosted a live recording of BBC Radio 4's Any Questions? on Friday, 15 November, which was attended by over 150 members of the public from across Surrey; this event was three times oversubscribed and elevated the Hall into the national domain. The successful organisation of this event, as noted by the BBC, is a significant achievement for the Trust.

Total income from hall lettings, field charges and users' storage charges reached a record £55,375 during 2019, compared with £46,710 in 2018.

### **5.3 Hall Improvements**

The Trust completed a number of improvements to its premises during 2019, including floor repairs and maintenance (£3,200), tree surgery and hedging (£2,940), renovation of disabled toilet (£1,300), installation of LED lighting (£725), replacement of kitchen door (£650) and assessment of legionella risk (£545). These essential improvements are expected to improve the user experiences of hirers.

### **5.4 Sidney Sime Gallery**

The Trustees have had a busy year with developments in the Sime Gallery. In order to sustain the future of the Gallery, the Trustees took advice from Marilyn Scott, Director of the Lightbox to apply for a Resilient Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant. Having had the first application rejected, a second application was submitted by the Trustees in January 2019 which resulted in a 90% grant of £43,000 being awarded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This highly competitive process has enabled a sound working relationship to develop between HF and the Trust with the appointment and subsequent advice from IBB solicitors and Alix Slater Arts Consultancy who were appointed along with the guidance of our HF mentor, Marilyn Scott. This is enabling the Trust to review its outdated governance structure of the Sime Gallery and split the Trust into two CIO entities so that a separate Sime Gallery Trust will be created as part of a sustainable plan to secure its future. The Business Plan will include marketing, sponsorship, display, audience increase, volunteer management, financial planning and targeted grant applications. There has been a close relationship built between the Trust and our Consultants as a result of regular meetings. New Trustees will be required for the New Trust with appropriate skills and are being actively sought.

The Half term family workshop took place in February. Our thanks to the organisers and (24) loyal volunteer helpers. Sponsorship for this event is vital and the Trust is grateful to Ewbank's Auctioneers for their continued support.

In March, a presentation was made to the Parish Council's AGM outlining the aims and objectives of the Sime Gallery and its future vision as a centre of Art Heritage in Worplesdon for the benefit of all.

The regular monthly open afternoons saw a varied number of visitors, but more opportunities to open more frequently are being considered in order to increase footfall. Guildford Heritage Weekend in September saw a record number of visitors with 195 (162 in 2018) welcomed over the weekend. An Illustrated talk on 'Sime's Aristocratic Connections' examining his relationship with his two wealthy patrons and Peers of the Realm was given, and refreshments were provided in the 'Ta Ta café (ie downstairs conference Room) for the weekend. Close collaboration with St Mary's church Worplesdon has resulted in even stronger links being forged within the local community.

One of Sime's large Oil paintings was returned safely in January from Rovigo in Italy after their prestigious Exhibition 'Arte e Magice' which was a collaboration between the Palazzo Art Gallery in Rovigo and the Conservatoire in Padua.

There were further group visits to the Gallery and one including St Mary's Church, Worplesdon, with an introductory talk and tea, with the resultant donations benefitting both organisations financially. These events continue to strengthen links with the local community and provide an opportunity to thank our supporters among local arts-related bodies. A further talk to a History Society in Shamley Green, Surrey was given in March. Our Archive historian for the 36 Sime Caricatures in the Gallery has revealed yet more fascinating information on the social history of these men Sime drew in the (old) 'New Inn' Pub in Worplesdon in the 1920's and are always popular with visitors. Emails are received from all over the UK as well as abroad and requests for the book written about Sime for the Exhibition continue which helps the income flow!

In October, two trustees assisted a local Alzheimers group to participate in a practical art session. This proved popular and has will become part of a regular programme session with new volunteers hoping to join a team to enable us to continue this.

A new volunteer has been responsible for typing Sime's fascinating letters to his patrons and friends, so that the originals can be conserved. These are on display in the Gallery. Another one who is undertaking art studies in London and has expertise in graphic design and wishes to participate in running art sessions, following a visit to the Gallery in September.

A further grant of £700 from the Surrey Museums Partnership was received towards a new donations box and display unit to be installed in the Gallery.

The Trustees would particularly like to record thanks to Curator Anne Philps, the hard-working members of the Gallery Sub-Committee, and volunteers who helped with archiving, guiding and serving refreshments.

## **5.6 Financial summary**

The day-to-day operations of the Trust (i.e. excluding movements in the restricted Sime Gallery fund) returned a strong surplus of £7,566, compared with £1,039 in 2018. The Sime Gallery returned a surplus of £17,365, inclusive of a grant of £37,800 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Total financial assets (cash and investments) amounted to £42,315, compared with £17,384 at the end of 2018. Although this is below the previously agreed target of maintaining one year's rental and field charge income (about £55,000) as a reserve fund, it is a significant improvement on 2018.

## 6. FUTURE PLANS

During 2020, the Trustees will focus on operating within a balanced budget and aim to increase unrestricted cash reserves. The Trust will continue to renovate the facilities within the Hall, including replacing the existing external signage to improve visual marketing of the Hall, build and launch a new website, remediate findings from the legionella risk assessment, and continue with programme of tree works. Additionally, the Trustees expect to separate the Sime Gallery from the existing Trust to create two distinct and independent Charitable Incorporated Organisations that meet the needs of the local community.

### Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Signature	Full name	Date of approval
<i>[Original signed in manuscript]</i>	<b>Christopher Ewbank</b>	<b>8 January 2020</b>
<i>[Original signed in manuscript]</i>	<b>Suresh Pillai</b>	<b>8 January 2020</b>