

Update on **The Portway Annexe** for the Parish Council meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2023

The Wells City Council owned Portway Annexe is a thriving centre for multiple community activities and continues to grow in its outreach since opening in May 2022.

The Annexe is manned full time and led by Manager Alex Westwood who, along with WCC Officers, has great vision for the facility.

A Portway Annexe Management Group has been convened and meets every 3 months. This comprises 2 WCC Officers, 4 WCC Councillors and two residents from the vicinity.

Facilities for hire include the well- equipped Music Centre with rehearsal space for creating all types of music, a 100 seated Hall, an art room, IT suite, AV Studio, rooms suitable for dance and exercise workshops, meeting rooms and a large colourful café for social gatherings such as children's parties.

The annexe has excelled at providing a Welcome Hub for the Ukrainian families living in the area where they can socialise, undertake language classes and gain all manner of support from the Charis funded part time Hub Manager assisted by WCN Ukraine.

A CAB access point has also been installed.

The stained-glass expert Edgar Philips is currently resident there.

Negotiations are also taking place for new courses to be run by Somerset Skills and Learning.

The Reception is manned 6 days a week and on numerous evenings.

Income from lettings this month will be in the region of £3,400. Hire charges are intentionally kept very reasonable so that it fulfils its intention of being an affordable community facility.

24 parking spaces also yield a considerable annual income (predicted £24,000)

Refurbishment of the building and grounds continue.

Continual updating of the heating system and reduction of heat output via roof installation is enabling the building to become more environmentally efficient.

Parking for users of the Portway Annex in the immediate residential area is limited but short term car parking at Tesco and Waitrose is available.

Please do contact Alex on 01749 673091 or [comms@wells.gov.uk](mailto:comms@wells.gov.uk) if you wish to make bookings.

Cllr Deborah Orrett.

Chair, Portway Annexe Management Group.