

**Westbury-sub-Mendip**

**Parish Council Meeting**

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April**

**Report From Footlights Committee**

Footlights has been a dormant organisation since the Covid restrictions for obvious reasons. However, during 2022 the committee felt it was time to restart its activities and early in the year we began trying to recruit new people to participate in our activities. This involved a campaign of using social media, village communication structures (such as the parish council email programme) and taking a stall at the jubilee market in the village hall.

Footlights has a charity status with a brief to bring the arts to the local community and has always strived to ensure this is fully inclusive. In essence, anyone who wishes to be involved can be.

Through this campaign we received a very good response, and several new faces came forward offering help. Many had not been involved in the arts at all but equally some offered valuable experience and skills gained in the past. As a result of this increased interest, it was agreed by the committee that a pantomime would be our next production.

The pantomime was written by Footlights and plans to stage the performance in February 2023 were agreed.

For the pantomime production we created teams such that each volunteer could participate in whichever activity they wished to do. These teams needed to build on the strengths of our new volunteers and were:

- Production
- Scenery and Props
- Costumes
- On Stage Performance
- Behind the Scenes Organisation

As a result of the recruitment drive Footlights welcomed four new members to costumes and scenery, ten new on-stage performers (including five new children) and two new members to the behind scenes team. This was considered by the committee to be a great success and something to build on going forward.

The production of Jack and the Beanstalk did three shows, selling nearly two hundred tickets. The production also made a profit and covered our annual running costs despite a decision to reduce the price of the tickets due to the cost-of-living crisis. However, it was felt that the over-riding success was bringing the arts to so many more people, many who had no previous experience at all.

Also, during the year, Footlights registered the organisation with the Disclosure and Barring Services to ensure the safety of our younger and vulnerable members. Footlights now has three of its members registered with the service and holding the relevant certificates. Should anyone need help with registering their society we are happy to share our experiences.

Footlights will shortly be having its AGM on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May in the village hall at 8pm. All are welcome.

A new production is planned for either the end of this year or early 2024 and discussions will start shortly as to what this may be. We will of course try to build on our membership and try to involve as many of the local community in our plans.