



Chairman's Report

17/01/2022

A look back at 2021

2021 was always going to be a challenging year for planning and running community events. Despite all the challenges presented, our local area benefited from a range of covid-secure events – and raised a fantastic amount of much needed funds for Thames Valley Air Ambulance, and other local causes.

Our usual events for the Spring and early Summer were again thrown out due to the pandemic, with the Bulging Craic for St Patrick's day, the May Fayre, Bulging Egg Sack at Easter, and of course the Burghfield Box Kart Bash cancelled due to Covid, amid the ongoing restrictions.

Socially Distanced Sack



Luckily things got better over the summer months with the easing of restrictions and we were delighted to return with the popular Pop-Up-Pub – the 'Socially Distanced Sack' at the Recreation Ground Pavilion.

Even some very wet weekends didn't deter our locals – and we managed to raise an incredible **£11,209.51** for Thames Valley Air Ambulance and many smiles amongst our community clientele.

The series of events supported nine local breweries, plus local distilleries and food vendors, with 100 volunteer shifts from 37 returning volunteers. Our grateful thanks to everybody who was involved with these events.

Equally important, given some of the challenges this year, the Socially Distanced Sack was covid-secure, and for the second year running, resulting in zero notified cases of Covid-19 in the community over this period.

Burghfest

After a year's absence, Burghfest returned, bigger and better than ever. This year nearly 1,500 'unlimited fairground' tickets were used, providing a great way of ensuring that Burghfest could be fun for all the family.

We were supported again this year by the Parish Council, with a grant for the toilets, and huge support from local businesses as our event sponsors, for which we are incredibly grateful.

The event would not be possible without 106 volunteers, providing 640 hours of volunteer time over the weekend – our sincere thanks and admiration goes out to those in our local area who are so willing to offer their time to support events.

The event was not without its challenges this year, costs have increased year-on-year since our earlier events, with beer, wine and spirits all significantly increasing in cost, and whilst this increase was not passed on, in terms of drinks pricing, this did impact our fundraising effort significantly.

The extra tent coverage also increased our costs to £12,000 for marquee rental but ironically did guarantee the rain held off for the weekend! Security costs also increased this year, and over the weekend as we were forced to add additional security measures to ensure people adhered to the Premises License restrictions, and to address the increase in people being stopped from bringing their own alcohol into the Premises.

The Burghfest organising committee for 2022 intend to explore other grant funding to support the expenses of the infrastructure, plus a review of pricing and the approach to open access and security measures to ensure the event continues to be safe and family-friendly.

The other main item of concern this year was the loss of the majority of our reusable glasses for events. This year we relied on an honour system for glass returns instead of the previously successful deposit scheme, due to refund process complexity with card payments. We will be coming up with a cunning plan to address this to ensure the return of the reusable glasses, and minimise losses.

The revised site layout this year also helped address impacts to local housing, and ensured the football pitch was protected from traffic, but did increase costs for temporary fencing.

However we are still incredibly proud to announce that despite the additional costs the event raised the significant sum of **£9,723.96**.

We will continue to reflect and review how we run the event and will aim for, Burghfest 2022 to provide a lower financial risk profile, whilst maintaining the incredible family-friendly atmosphere, and ensure the event is inclusive for all in our community

Feedback from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive, the atmosphere, quality of food and drink was higher than ever.



Santa Cruise 2021

As the situation with new variants added concern, we decided not to run the 'Bulging Sack' Christmas pub, but were incredibly happy to once again ride our reindeers for the Burghfield Santa Cruise.

The event was low-key, but the participants still raised an incredible **£3,315.11** mainly through private, and corporate sponsorship. And as usual at the best time of year, as Santa's, we thoroughly enjoyed the event.

2021 Summary

So in total from these three events **£24,248.58 was raised for Thames Valley Air Ambulance** during 2021. And not forgetting that in addition to this crucial fundraising, the events provided much needed Covid-secure socialising for many in our community; and we are grateful that our community remains incredibly positive and supportive to our efforts.

Looking towards 2022

We are currently planning a more 'normal' 2022, but with planning and development work underway at the Guide Dogs HQ and Rose Lawn hotel, we will not be running the Box Kart Bash in 2022. The organising committee are currently reviewing options for the event, or a replacement for 2023

During 2022 we will arrange a 'glass amnesty' for people to return recyclable drinking vessels, not the "commemorative glasses" purchased with the advance tickets' during our events, to ensure we have enough to support the Burghfield May Fayre and other events through the year.

We have also set ourselves the goal of achieving Charity Status during the year to improve our options of grant applications and improve our tax status.

Overall, I am excited about the future of the Burghfield Santas, it's still remarkable what was achieved, given the uncertainty during the year, and I look forward to our continued provision of high-quality, fun, inclusive events for all our community.

Lastly, we rely on you, our community to continue to run our events, if you would like to get involved – please get in touch via our contact information on [Burghfield Santas](#), we would love to hear from you, be it as a local organisation that can provide volunteers, in exchange for fundraising, or individuals looking to meet new people and engage with the village!