

PARISH PLAN REPORT JULY 2013

The Village Hall Committee has discussed the points raised in the questionnaires and put together a draft Development Plan to include the many positive suggestions put forward by the community.

The Committee was very encouraged by the results which showed that the community as a whole listed the Village Hall as being the central hub to the community and the most important facility to village life.

The results show that almost 80% of those who responded to the questionnaires use the Village Hall either regularly or just on occasion.

Since the Hall opened in 2009, minutes of meetings and annual accounts have been regularly uploaded on to the Newsletter website to ensure full transparency of its affairs.

Copies of the Village Hall Charter and Constitution are also included together with the Development Plan.

In order to put ideas for future development into context, I thought it might be relevant to explain how the new hall was funded and the current financial situation.

The total amount awarded in grants was £650,000 – the project cost was £630,000 - the balance of £20,000 was placed on deposit for future repairs and renewals.

To meet grant provider requirements this fund had to be increased to represent 5% of the capital rebuild cost i.e. around £30,000. The annual Village Hall budget includes a sum to be set aside each year to ensure the fund keeps pace with inflation.

On a cost benefit analysis Enford was considered by many grant providers to be too small for capital cost funding but we won through mainly because of the 5 acre site owned by the village which, together with the new hall, allows so many activities to take place.

There are ongoing legal obligations to the funders who carry out regular site inspections with detailed annual reports and accounts required.

Last year the Hall achieved the highest possible award for Hallmark, a government Quality Assurance scheme.

This accreditation will assist the village hall when we apply for further grants, as Hallmark is increasingly being requested by grant providers to prove viability and high standards in management.

Coming back to the future development of the hall, the Management Committee has now almost achieved the required target for the 'rainy day' fund.

As a result, any surplus over and above what is required for running costs can now be diverted into projects to improve and upgrade facilities.

The detailed suggestions put forward for improvements to the hall and recreation ground fall roughly into four categories – Sport / Recreation / Entertainment and Improvements to the venue.

Now that finances are in a position to allow capital expenditure this coming financial year, we are planning to increase storage, extend the terraced area and put in steps to make the short cut from the car park safer.

Wooden benches will be installed under the entrance canopy for spectators and other benches will be sited to make a picnic area.

Almost everyone commented how much they liked the building and simplicity of the décor. There were suggestions including a sliding wall between the two areas of the hall / exercise equipment / simplifying and reducing charges for locals / and more staging.

The Committee has included all of these in the Development Plan. Charges are currently being simplified for next financial year 2013-2014 with additional reduced rates for local residents.

Additional funding will have to be raised through grant applications for other suggested capital projects – the play park will cost £20,000 to £30,000, a tennis court £25,000 to £30,000 and a further £5,000 for the outside circuit exercise equipment. The dividing sound proof sliding wall will be £5,000 and staging a further £2,000.

Four or more events each year will be organised, some of which will be free of charge. Plans are already in place for a family bbq day next month, a music event in the autumn, a ceilidh, and a pantomime early in the New Year staged by a professional theatre group.

Next year we will try and arrange some additional events with speakers on various topics, more music and theatre evenings, and more activities for the young. The Fete and Fireworks Events are very popular and thanks are due to the Fete Committee for arranging these so successfully.

Getting new recreational and sporting clubs up and running is more problematic for us as a Committee. Organisers, teachers and volunteers are needed to get these started. Suggestions have included tennis, children's rugby and cricket, athletics, amateur dramatics, craft clubs, dancing, singing, archery, darts, bingo, zumba – the list is almost endless!! If you have a talent or would like to help set any of these up, the Committee can promise full support.

The Village Hall would not be in the strong position it is today without the support of all members of the community, the Parish Council and the Fete Committee. I would like to thank them for their donations which help towards the annual £1,000 + cost of maintaining the recreation ground for everyone to use, whether or not they are hiring the hall. The Management Committee will continue to subsidise users and provide free events – the total contributed by the Village Hall in this financial year amounts to around £1,700 worth of subsidies and free events.

The new hall has revitalised the village through the fete and fireworks events, through the new clubs and user groups, and with the provision of a venue for private celebrations, weddings and children's parties.

The Committee plans to build, metaphorically speaking, on the twin achievements of having provided a new hall for the village and on the success in attracting 80% of the community whether regularly, occasionally or on single visits from time to time.

We plan to improve the venue, provide more facilities, and organise more events – but - as ever - more volunteers and organisers are needed and would be welcome!
Thank you