

The Future of the Village Hall

As you know, Ken Munday and I held two consultations with interested villagers. In addition, one person wrote to me with two suggestions beforehand. Although the meetings were not well attended, probably about a dozen people altogether, there was a remarkable consensus about what we should do with the Village Hall once the lease has been signed.

Twin track approach

People agreed that it would be best to fix outstanding maintenance issues as soon as possible and to make the hall a more attractive venue. In the longer term, we should start scoping the work now to make better use of the playground. It was recognised that this work will require professional help, such as architects and engineers.

Immediate action

Four areas should be tackled immediately:

- A professional survey of the electrical wiring with upgrading as necessary.
- Replacement of the main room's windows.
- Insulation and soundproofing of the main room.
- Replacement of the chairs with more comfortable ones and fitting curtains to match.

There are several minor maintenance issues, noted at Annex A, which should also be completed as soon as possible.

Ken has kindly volunteered to coordinate the immediate actions.

Development of the Playground

Several options for making better use of the playground were discussed. It was agreed that radical action to redesign the back of the building (kitchen and the male and female toilets) was worthwhile if it gave access to the playground directly from the main room. Placing French windows on the front of the building was discounted because of the risk of vandalism, lack of privacy and damage from passing traffic.

Although it is early days, the leading idea was to replace the old toilet block with an open barn to provide shelter and to create a family friendly area, possibly with artificial grass, a childproof gate and a fixed BBQ.

Ken is arranging an informal discussion with an architect to understand the practicalities in more detail and I will test the landlord's attitude to any rebuilding.

Summary

Most of the work and the immediate action is required by our obligations as a tenant. The rest of the work is essential if we are to use the hall without disturbing our next-door neighbours and if we want more people to use the hall.

At this stage, I would be grateful for council to agree in principle:

- that it agrees to carrying out the immediate action listed above and in Annex A.
- that it wishes to investigate the feasibility of developing the playground, as described.

Dr S C Chapman
29 Feb 24

Annex A

Immediate Maintenance

Renovate the Attic. It needs clearing out, boards replacing and insulating.

Full Electric Survey. Check safety and remove redundant wiring and sockets.

Replace Windows. One wooden one is rotten, PVC panelling is coming off and some PVC windows have condensation in the panels.

Fascia boards. Check for rottenness.

Wall covering outside kitchen. Breaking off, may need replacing.

Ease Fire Exit Door. It is difficult to shut.

Replace Skirting Board. It is rotten in places.

Damp Survey. Salt is coming out of some brick work. The kitchen is damp, making the floor smell and unit shelving is bowing and falling apart.