

WISSETT VILLAGE HALL

Trustees Report for the Year 2020-21

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SUMMARY

- The original plan of works, with a few additions, was completed in February 2020.
- Fund-raising has exceeded the initial target and additional income has allowed for further work to be carried out to refurbish and improve facilities in the hall.
- Further improvements to lighting in the main hall might be possible later this year, if funds are available.

AGM AND THE PANDEMIC

It is impossible to arrange the AGM for the village hall due to the current Covid-19 restrictions. The village hall trustees are therefore unable to report in person or arrange for the election of officers. The trustees will publish arrangements for the 2021 AGM as soon as we are allowed, hopefully later this summer. In the meantime, this Annual Report will be circulated as widely as possible; if you have a copy, please pass it on as you think appropriate.

ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

Following our presentation to Wissett Parish Council in October 2018 we set about raising money to fund the essential repairs required to keep the hall running and to halt further deterioration. Estimates for the work at that time amounted to about £33,000, although that figure increased slightly as the project developed.

The essential repairs were completed by February 2020 and resulted in:

- A completely new roof with insulation.
- Repairs and refurbishment to barge boards, soffits and gutters.
- Repairs to the cracked floor and walls.
- New hard-wood windows and doors throughout the building (except the two windows in the ladies WC) and a replica window in the kitchen; all made in accordance with the terms of our planning permission.
- A new concrete base for the external storage shed and a new rainwater down-pipe to improve drainage at the end of the hall.
- A new external storage shed.
- A new door to the internal store room, repositioned in the foyer to improve access.
- The removal and capping off of disused water pipes in the store room, new flooring and repositioning the light switch.

- The 'false' external kitchen door has been repaired with a new sill to improve rainwater drainage.

IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Initially the Parish Council donated £15,000 from the funds given to the village by the solar farm and the Village Hall account provided £3,000 from reserves. A further £3,185 was generated from fund-raising events and £18,700 was raised from donations made by individuals and local businesses. Fund-raising continued during 2020 and we obtained grants from Councillor Tony Goldson (£1,500) and East Suffolk Council (£10,000). We have also reclaimed VAT, through the Parish Council, which has added a further £2,300. This additional funding has allowed more work to take place which has so far resulted in:

- A new heating system replacing the old wall mounted bar fires with modern thermostatically controlled radiators.
- The replacement of the two toilets in the gents WC.
- A new water heater in the gents WC.
- New lighting in the foyer and both WCs.
- A new kitchen cabinet.
- A new hot water urn.
- The floor to the main hall has been sanded and resealed with lacquer.
- The re-plastering of the ceiling in the main hall.
- The complete redecoration of the building.
- The refurbishment of all the curtain tracks.
- The removal of the internal cold water tank to conform to Health and Safety guidance, so that all cold water in the building runs directly from the mains supply.
- The repositioning of the internal stopcock so that it can now be accessed easily from inside a cupboard in the kitchen.
- New posts and the repair and refurbishment of the metal fences along the beck.
- The replacement of the flooring in the foyer, kitchen and gents WC.

FUTURE WORK

Some funding remains available and the trustees are considering options to:

- Replace the lighting in the main hall with LED bulbs and dimmer switches.
- Replace the kitchen worktops.
- Replace the microwave.
- Replace the vacuum cleaner.

It is unlikely that we will be able to undertake all of the above with the funds available and the trustees will take decisions in the next few weeks as estimates and options become clearer.

MANAGING THE VILLAGE HALL

The costs of running the village hall each year exceeds the amount of money collected from those who pay fees for using it. The village is therefore obliged to raise money each year to make up the difference. The approximate costs of running the hall for a normal year are itemised below:

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Utilities (Water, Electricity etc.)	800	Hall Hire	1,120
Premises Licence	80	Electric Meter	220
Cleaning	500	Monthly Donations	300
Maintenance	500		
Insurance	470		
Hedge/Grass Cutting	100		
Insurance paid by Parish Council	-470		
Total	1,980		1,640
Deficit			340

Since the pandemic we have been unable to raise any income from fees or fund-raising events, so the annual deficit is about £1,500 for 2020 and is likely to be similar for 2021. This will be reduced somewhat because we are not paying the full estimates for maintenance and cleaning, so the deficit is probably nearer £800 per year. We have retained funds to cover this shortfall for the next 18 months. The trustees hope to reopen the hall later in the summer of 2021.