

## **Little Eaton Village Hall. “The Difference Our Project Will Make.”**

### **The impact of the project**

Will be to release the potential of all the village clubs and groups that have hitherto been hampered in their development by a lack of suitable modern facilities of a reasonable size, which would be able to cater for all residents regardless of any disability or disadvantage. There would also be many other people who would be able to take advantage of these new facilities when they visit the village for the many sporting and other social events that take place.

It will help maintain over 27 clubs and groups that already exist in the village. The survey undertaken of these organisations highlighted the need for suitable modern facilities, particularly in being able to accommodate more than sixty people which is the limit for both the school and the Church Hall. Lack of suitable premises is seen as the greatest obstacle to the continued success and expansion of these and new user groups.

This new Village Hall will be built as an extension to the existing Sports Pavilion, augmenting it and producing a truly universal building capable of staging a wide range of activities and functions, by its design being able to host multiple events simultaneously and have the built in capacity to be able to expand its user base in future years.

We have identified these needs by consultation with the projected and potential user groups and individuals. The building will be appropriate to the needs of these users and members of the community, as its facilities and construction are based on their identified requirements.

Little Eaton Community Association conducted village surveys in 1999 and 2001. A more recent survey of clubs, groups, local businesses and individuals was completed in February 2007 by the Little Eaton Village Hall Project Committee. Information from these surveys indicated that 3,500 people could directly and frequently benefit from the project and around 2,000 people indirectly.

Our existing facilities have been reduced in recent years to a point where it is impacting an adverse effect on the community, reducing the number of activities available, the numbers taking part and also forcing people to travel further to obtain the required facilities. As an example, the Scout and Guide groups have been reduced from seven to three due to lack of suitable premises and personnel and now travel two miles to an alternative venue.

The Women’s Institute Hall, which had a stage, was sold off for housing in 1985. The Methodist Church Hall, also sold off for housing in 1980. The Scout and Guide building had to be demolished three years ago, when it became structurally unsound. This now leaves us with three premises, the OAP Hall, The Church Hall and the Village School, the latter two are restricted by fire regulations, and none have dedicated parking or cater specifically for disabled or disadvantaged people. Our new hall will directly address the last two issues. We would estimate that there are approximately 15,000 visits to the existing premises annually. The school is used infrequently as a venue, due to its high cost.

Our observed indications are that the enthusiasm generated by this project when completed, will stimulate the community and invigorate many more individuals to become involved, either as participants, organisers or leaders. The Parish Council would give formation of a youth club a high priority. We know from the 2001 census that we have a higher than average population of 12 to 18 year olds that we are only able to provide occasional activities for at the moment.

A part time job of caretaker/booking clerk would be created. His/her duties would be at the discretion of the Hall Management Committee. The web domain name of [www.littleeatonvillagehall.com](http://www.littleeatonvillagehall.com) has already been appropriated and the site would be used for information on the facilities and how to book them. At present the site is live and used to give information on the progress of the Village Hall project.

The Village Hall will be managed by a committee made up of key stakeholders and user groups, elected annually, who would be responsible for its day-to-day running. We would envisage that bookings for the new facilities would be taken once we have a firm date of completion, and a regular and occasional user base will be established.

We do not envisage any shortfall of income over expenditure, but in the event of this occurring the Parish Council would offer financial support, more importantly both the Little Eaton Community Association and the Little Eaton Sports and Carnival Committee have pledged financial support either as revenue support or by enhancing the facilities as the building part of the project finishes and advances into the community use phase.

**Project Management.**

Morcon Foundations Ltd, a locally based nationwide specialist civil engineering, design and construction company have agreed to monitor the project in addition to providing programmes, method statements, health and safety, final design and public indemnity insurance. Full company details include equal opportunity, financial status, qualified staff and workforce, etc.

A project management committee will be formed, comprising some of the main stakeholders, our principal architect, and our quantity surveyor. We will also be able to draw from a considerable number of professional and senior management people who have offered to be of assistance after reading about the project in the village newsletters. Meetings will be arranged as required to ensure smooth progression of the project. We envisage a total build contract as this is deemed easier to control and monitor.

The Parish Council have recently completed a new car park at St Peter's Park, to enhance the facilities already there and to comply with the planning conditions on car parking for any new village hall. Specifications were drawn up and four companies were asked to tender. The winning bid was £144,000.00. By consultation with the winning contractor, we were able to secure an equal specification SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) car park at a much reduced cost by doing some of the basic site clearance and earth works ourselves using local contractors and reducing their final bill to £60,035.00 and at the same time increasing the area of car park by 80sqm at no extra cost. Full details can be found on the Village Hall website.

Project costs were last revised in March 2007 at £374,300.00. We already have substantial offers of services and materials towards the project that will reduce the overall price and give us flexibility in containing any cost fluctuations. Since we are building onto our existing pavilion, all the services, water, electric, etc, are already provided. We are building on known ground, using similar building materials and combining this with modern day building methods to give us a energy efficient facility with a low carbon footprint. Because of our familiarity with site we envisage no unforeseen problems, however any unbudgetted costs would be met by the Parish Council.

Since 2004 when the Parish Council offered a new site for the Village Hall, we have pursued its fulfillment with passion and commitment. This project represents an exceptional chance to produce an outstanding facility that will impact on the quality of lives of so many people. What makes it a winning project is that it would not only maintain, but enhance the community activities and interactions in a time of changing demographics and social cohesion. Little Eaton would be able to offer activities to a broad spectrum of ages and social groups and also be able to make these facilities available to the surrounding villages and farther afield.

By engaging in consultation we know we are providing the facilities that this and future generations require. We have been successful in being able to produce a project that gives us excellent value for money by utilising building onto the existing pavilion and providing the car parking required in advance. Organisations in the village have raised and pledged substantial amounts of money towards this project. Since March 2007 we can count another £7,000.00 raised by the village community towards our goal of this facility, with your generous support we can call it match won and get on with the job of turning so many peoples dreams and aspirations into a reality.

Simon Downing.

Little Eaton Village Hall Project Committee.  
August 2007