

MEMORIAL SOCIAL CENTRE NEWS

The new carpeting in the foyer has made a remarkable improvement to the 'first impression' entrance to our village hall. The carpet tiles were obtained free of charge (thanks to our cheeky Chairman) but were laid professionally to ensure a good quality finish and safe passageway.

The clearing away of much of the auditorium-side stage lighting gear has dramatically improved the appearance of the Main Hall. Peter Bayman's work doing that has been very much appreciated by everyone and he has been thanked by the management committee for what must have been a difficult job. Peter has left a dozen lights in place, which we hope will be usable for stage lighting for small productions.

Two proposals for improvements to the ladies toilet have been sketched out and, if a project manager (or two) can be found, could be taken through the process of drafting a specification, obtaining quotes, seeking the Trustees approval and progressing the whole thing from concept to conclusion. Of course, much depends on funding, but that is an ever-present problem.

Vehicular access onto the recreation field has been restricted to try to prevent further vandalism by reckless driving across the grass. It's not the most welcome change to the field access, but was made necessary due to the actions of the usual 'few' who wreck facilities made available for community use. Arrangements should soon be in place (perhaps already done by the time this goes to print) which will allow easy access for authorised vehicles. Some changes are also planned for the building's security, including re-instating the alarm setting/unsetting procedures.

A meeting is planned with the Parish Council to explore the possibility of providing a bus shelter facility to serve Cemetery Road. It's very 'early days' on that proposal, and again, much depends on funding.

Timesheets for weekday hourly-paying hirers have been in use since the beginning of March. Precise entry and exit times are being recorded as required. This is in order to ensure that the terms and conditions of hirings

are not being abused, for which reason payments for hirings can only be accepted against invoices based on accurate records.

During the roof repair work made necessary by the February gales, wet rot was found and woodworm was confirmed in the roofing timbers. This highlights the need for a roof survey and will require extensive, and no doubt expensive, repairs. All to be borne in mind when the subject of hire charges is raised. That will be on the agenda for the next Trustee meeting (Monday 11th May). While mentioning hire charges, it is not widely known that hirers benefit from a 50-60% subsidy which keeps the hire fees to the present minimum. This subsidy, which depends on the community spirit which motivates people to support their village hall, even if they themselves don't use it, comes from the materials given freely, the value of the time and effort in the voluntary work done by the Scene and What's-On editors and distributors, the hall's project workers/managers who save hired labour costs wherever possible, the 'far-too-few' committee members who undertake all, and pay for much of, the admin work, the many volunteer folk who 'walk the lanes' (or drive at their own expense) collecting subs, delivering Minutes, mags, flyers etc to save postage, the selfless people who undertake the sometimes risky fund-raising work, including the weekly draw, and the Association members throughout the community who contribute their annual cash subs. The Newmarket Memorial Hall costs just under £30 per hour to hire, plus £5 extra if the kitchen is used. Kept down at £8.19 per hour (which includes the use of the kitchen) our Wickhambrook hall is a real bargain for the hirers!

Any items for the Trustee's agenda can be given to any committee member, provided it is not less than a week beforehand so that the agenda can be distributed.