

NPWG Report for Parish Council Meeting: 19th September 2024

Construction Update

The regular monthly contractor's meeting was held on site with Draper and Nichols on 5th September. It was reported that work is now principally taking place to the interior of the hall as the outer walls and roof are complete and the windows and external doors have been installed. The external cladding and sign over the main door have also been fitted, and the final external appearance of the new community hall can now be seen.

A significant amount of work on the interior has also now commenced with all of the floors now screeded and the first fix of internal services in place. The majority of the smaller rooms, kitchen, entrance area and toilets, have been plastered and the main hall has had its ceiling installed and plastered.

Work has also commenced on the exterior surfaces and slab laying is due to commence shortly. A recent complication has been identified that has resulted in the need to reassess the patio levels and the planned siting of the steps to the playing fields. A revised layout has been agreed to ensure that the existing disabled ramp is retained and the entrance from the main hall to the patio is accessible to all.

D&N have informed us that they are now working to a handover date of 25th October, subject to there being no further delays caused by issues beyond their control. Our project managers have been asked to investigate whether the claimed delays can all be justified in terms of the construction contract, as it will cost the Parish Council approximately £3000 for every justified additional week of delay!

The New Pavilion Working Group

The group met on 16th September and discussed progress with the project, funding, and the actions that need to be undertaken to facilitate the opening of the hall in November. Whilst there is now more time than anticipated to agree the latter, the budget shortfall reported to the last Parish Council meeting, means the Parish Council needs to decide what fixtures and fittings it needs to acquire to allow the hall to open in November, and how it is going to finance these to supplement the predicted shortfall in funds. It was agreed that any opportunities for additional funding should continue to be investigated in the meantime, not only by group members but also by all Parish Councillors.

The NPWG has commenced work on an 'equipment wish list' but is unable to take this further until the decision is made by the Parish Council over the amount of finance that will be available to purchase items on it.

Work has also been undertaken on how the hall will be used, and a draft timetable is being prepared of potential users, including those who have responded to the recent adverts. It was agreed that a visit to the hall should be arranged for interested users in early October, if possible. In the meantime, it is important that the Parish Council decides and agrees hire rates, and a draft schedule of hire charges will be available at the meeting to discuss.

It was also agreed that there will need to be a series of management policies and procedures in place to allow the new hall to open, such as responsibilities, conditions of hire, health and safety, etc. Carlo has volunteered to contact a similar village hall to discuss this, so these can be drafted and agreed by the Parish Council in good time before the opening.

The Pre-School

The pre-school staff have visited the hall and are investigating the purchase of furniture, trolleys, and storage racks, that will be necessary to enable the dual usage of their part of the main hall. The funding raised from the 75@75 cycling challenge has now raised over £1300 and will help the purchase and acquisition of this equipment.

Finally, can I thank the members of the Working Group for the continuing hard work and commitment throughout the project, but particularly in recent weeks, to provide Stoke Holy Cross with the type of Community Hall it deserves!

Glyn Davies – Chair, New Pavilion Working Group