

MONK SHERBORNE VILLAGE HALL

(registered charity 1175663)



Introduction

This is the second in a series of updates for the community on the new hall project. The first was published in June 2020. These updates, and other relevant information, can be found on the hall website at <https://www.monksherbornevillagehall.org.uk/new-hall-project>. There will be a chance to speak to the Trustees and members of the Building Sub-committee at the Village Hall AGM scheduled for Wednesday 30th September at 1930. It is hoped this meeting can be held in person, with appropriate social distancing, **and** via Zoom. If you wish to attend please sign up at <https://forms.gle/fFpfrzyJfwUkTRVq5>.

Building Sub-committee

In my last update, I explained that the Trustees had established a Sub-Committee to oversee the tender and build phases of the project. This team included myself, Cheryl McSoley, Martyn Fleming, Helen Perkins, Andrew Marshall, Paul Cave and Ben Du Boulay. Unfortunately, Ben has had to step down due to pressure of work but we thank him for his input. Over the past few months, working with our architect, Oliver Perceval, this group has worked on the detailed elements of the design including materials and fittings. The broad approach taken by the Sub-committee was to specify the hall to contain everything on our 'wish list' before testing the market, knowing that compromises could be made in the event of cost pressure. These options included provision of a security gate to protect the site out of hours, embedding a hexagonal grid system into the grassed areas to provide additional parking space throughout the year and piping the culvert to the rear of the site to provide additional usable space, whilst minimising future maintenance. Whilst the hall remains based closely on the design submitted for planning permission, Oliver has completed the full set of drawings required for interested contractors to quote against.

One of the key discussions surrounded the heating for the hall. Paul Cave led this analysis and reviewed four main options; air source heat pump, solar panels, electricity and gas. The first two proved to have both prohibitively high capital costs and were not suited to the hall's energy consumption pattern. Electric boilers are slightly more efficient than gas in terms of energy conversion but this is outweighed by the much higher unit costs. Hence the decision fell in favour of modern gas technology. Research showed that this conclusion has also been reached by several other local halls recently.

Other activity during the last few months has included:

- a) The commissioning of a Health and Safety report by an independent consultant that will guide the site operation of the prime contractor.
- b) The appointment of the engineer that will sign off compliance with building regulations in due course.
- c) The submission of information to the planning team at Basingstoke and Deane Council. We anticipate they will confirm compliance with planning conditions during October.
- d) The preparation of a site services plan which identifies the location of all current power, water and drainage services on the site.
- e) Formal notice to the landlord of our intention to proceed with construction of the new hall and to demolish the existing building.

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Tender Process

As planned, the tender package was issued by the end of July. The pack was sent to 13 potential main contractors. A number of these declined the opportunity to bid, having initially shown strong interest, indicating that the construction market remains buoyant despite the pandemic.

Four responses have been received. All are over budget. There are two contractors yet to respond, one being a major local builder which has asked for an extension beyond the official deadline for responses.

Fundraising

Fundraising has taken second place to the work on the new building, but the lottery continues to generate over £200 each month. The Trustees intend to apply to Hampshire County Council and some other small local grant providers, but we must recognise that the finances of all these organisations are likely to be stretched in the light of COVID-19.

Next Steps

Whilst we await this final bid, work has started with a number of bidders on amending the specification to remove any 'nice to have' elements, to defer non-essential work and to reduce the specification of some materials. There is also the option to reduce internal storage, all without compromising the overall design concept. The objective is to bring the build cost back in line with budget.

However, even if this cost management process is wholly successful, a contingency fund will be required for the build phase to cover small scope changes and other risks, such as imported material cost rises post Brexit. Hence, the Trustees are also looking to the local community for further support. If you wish to make a donation, funds can be transferred to the project bank account. Bank details, and a downloadable gift aid form, can be found at <https://www.monksherbornevillagehall.org.uk/new-hall-project>.

Final due diligence covering matters such as financial stability and the taking of references will take place prior to the appointment of the prime contractor. In the current climate, the length of time it will take the chosen builder to mobilise is uncertain. However, we remain focussed on starting on site prior to the expiry of the current planning permission in March 2021.

Please stay safe in these challenging times. We will continue to keep you updated on progress on the project.

Mike Wilson
Chairman
September 2020

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Questions & Answers

Tender Phase

Q1.1 When does the current planning permission expire?

A1.1 *The initial three-year window expires on 27/03/21. Even if construction cannot start by this date, the Trustees have no reason to believe a second approval would not be granted.*

Q1.2 Can I see detailed plans of the new hall?

A1.2 *Detailed plans have been drawn up by the Architect. However, these are still subject to amendment so have not been released publicly. The design is consistent with the drawings that received planning permission in March 2018. These can be found by clicking the link to planning reference [17/03515/FUL](#).*

Q1.3 How will local residents be kept up to date with progress?

A1.3 *The AGM on 30th September 2020 provides an excellent opportunity for the community to engage with the Trustees and Building Sub-committee. Currently, social distancing rules preclude significant face-to-face contact. If this situation persists, updates will be posted to the hall website and the link circulated via email and Facebook. The sub-committee can be contacted on msvhproject@gmail.com and the Chairman's contact details are available on the website.*

Q1.4 Why is the existing hall still closed?

A1.4 *Prior to the early August date when community centres were permitted to re-open, the Trustees polled regular hirers to assess their enthusiasm to return to the venue and whether the risks presented by each activity could be managed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Whilst all hirers wished to return at some point, they were generally cautious regarding the timing of restarting. With the rebuild imminent, the Trustees concluded it was fairer to all concerned to keep the hall closed and allow hirers to make alternative arrangements in their own time. The hall has been made COVID secure, as those who attended the recent 'mini Horti' show will have seen.*

Build Phase

Q2.1 When do you anticipate the work starting on the new hall?

A2.1 *With the quotes received to date coming in over budget, further work needs to be undertaken to match funds available with the hall specification. The Trustees remain focussed on commencing work on site before the current planning permission expires in March 2021.*

Q2.2 What times will the contractors be working? Is this likely to cause any inconvenience?

A2.2 *The Application Decision Notice issued by B&DC prohibits site work or deliveries happening at unsociable times.*

Q2.3 How will construction traffic through the village be controlled?

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A2.3 *This will need to be discussed with the contractor once selected. However, the building is single storey and relatively simple in design terms so does not require significant volumes of complex materials to be brought onto site.*

Q2.4 How will access to the site be managed when building starts?

A2.4 *This will be managed according to the Health and Safety plan prepared by the consultant appointed by the Trustees. The Trustees have considered if the existing hall could safely stay open during the construction phase. They concluded that this could not be achieved. With the hall closed throughout the build, it can be used by the contractors as a site office, reducing costs associated with hiring temporary buildings.*

Q2.5 Will there still be access to the playground?

A2.5 *Yes – safe access will be provided at the top of the plot between the current hall and the hedge running along Ramsdell Road. The field will be secure for children playing at all times.*

Q2.6 Who decides any minor additions/alterations to the approved build plan?

A2.6 *The Project Manager will recommend changes to the Sub-Committee who will either approve or reject up to a financial limit. Above this limit changes will have to go to the Trustees of the Hall for sign off.*

New Hall

Q3.1 What will the name of the new hall be?

A3.1 *No firm decision has been taken. The Trustees currently favour retaining 'Monk Sherborne Village Hall'.*

Q3.2 When is the new hall expected to open?

A3.2 *If work can start in March 2021, subject to no unforeseen delays and construction being able to proceed under any government-imposed social distancing rules, the Hall should be ready for use around Christmas 2021.*

Q3.3 Is the new hall larger than the current building?

A3.3 *Yes – net internal space increases by around 85%, although some of the increase is taken up by internal storage and disabled toilet facilities. Storage may need to be reduced to bring costs back in line with budget.*

Q3.4 Will hire rates for the hall increase?

A3.4 *Yes – as the new hall will cost considerably more to run than the existing building. Pricing will be set nearer to the opening date but the Trustees' approach will be to keep rates highly competitive compared to local competition. Members of the CIO will continue to benefit from discounted rates.*

Q3.5 How have environmental considerations been factored into the design?

A3.5 *The hall will conform to all environmental requirements. The main principles for sustainable design are high levels of insulation throughout, sensor-controlled lighting and low energy fittings/appliances.*

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Q3.6 What facilities will the new hall provide?

A3.6 *There will still be a single hireable space with a kitchen. There will be increased internal storage and disabled toilets. As the new hall is oriented to look out over the playing field, sliding doors and an external paved area will be available. The new hall will benefit from a modern security system and wifi. By installing gas-fired heating, a background level of heating can be provided during the cold winter months. This will make the new hall much more welcoming for hirers. Specific parking for pedal cycles will be available to encourage this mode of transport.*