



# Community Hall's Newsletter

## Spring 2017

This is a Newsletter for members of Community Hall Committees. We would be grateful if Hall Secretaries could endeavour to circulate the Newsletter to their fellow Committee Members. You may like to use the circulation box provided.

Circulate to:

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## New Halls



A community celebration was held at **Beckley and Stowood Village Hall** on Saturday 18th March. It marked the completion of the fantastic new hall, a project that began in 2009.

Around 350 Beckley residents and other guests attended the celebration, including the Chairman of South Oxfordshire District Council, Cllr Paul Harrison, who congratulated the community on completing such a fine hall.

The entrance to the new hall is a focal point set between 'Gabion Basket' walls, comprising laid limestone in wire mesh cages, that over time will become a living wall with plants growing all over it. This natural looking feature is the first view from the road, and is offset by western red cedar cladding that will weather to silver-grey over time.



The glass doors and windows to the rear of the hall overlook lovely views of the sports ground, and beyond to the church spire and across Otmoor toward Charlton. Congratulations to everyone who helped to make this project a success, I am sure the hall will be used and enjoyed for many, many years to come.

**Hiring details** :The main hall can seat 125, and is for hire for general meetings and as a wedding or party venue ([johnbaker245@btinternet.com](mailto:johnbaker245@btinternet.com)). A "committee room" is available for smaller meetings. There is a spacious well equipped kitchen in the center of the hall, and sports changing facilities that access directly onto the playing fields. The car park will hold 50 cars, and overflow onto the playing field by agreement.



**Congratulations too to Harwell for the opening of their halls.**

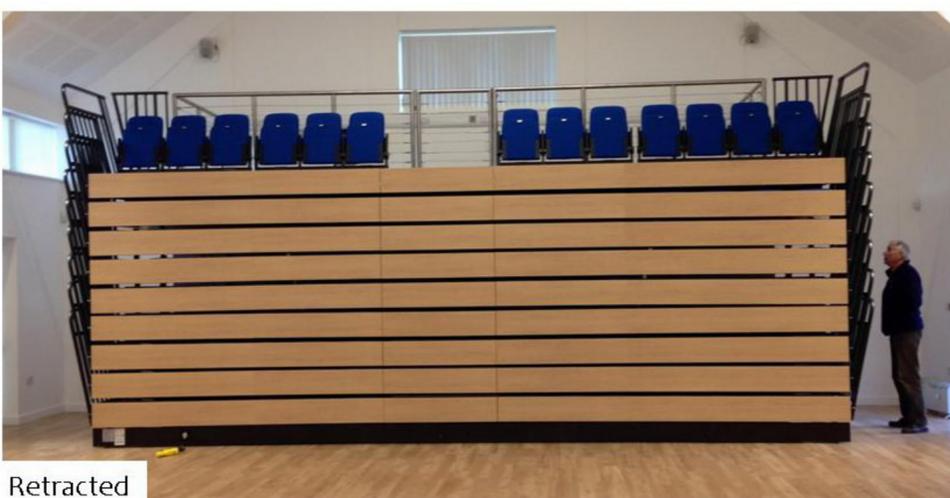


Two celebrations were held for the opening of Harwell's Cherry and Orchard Halls. One on 27th April which was a buffet lunch where the halls supporters and funders were invited to see the wonderful new halls and one on May Day which was a celebration for the Village. This was attended by hundreds of visitors from all over the parish.

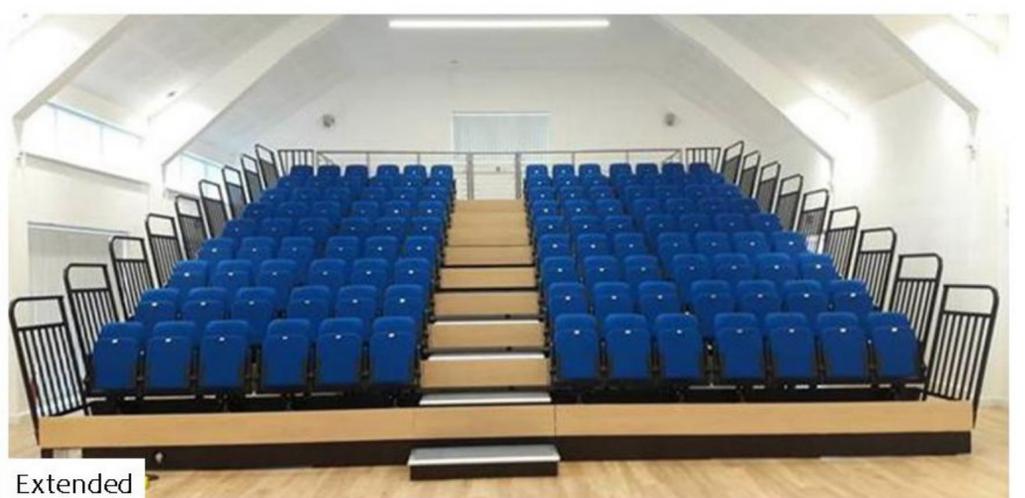
The new build is a state of the art facility. One of the halls has tiered, retractable seating and an area for performances and the other, the original hall, has an overhead projector, screen and blackout curtains. There is a fully fitted and well-appointed modern kitchen; a beautiful communal entrance foyer with café-style seating surrounded by a fascinating museum with a professionally displayed exhibition of the history of Harwell and the Village Hall; brand new toilets including baby-changing and disabled facilities; and freshly tarmacked car-parks at either ends of the site.

**Funding**

The money needed to build this hall was about £1.3 million in total. Section 106 money was obtained and funding was secured from WREN, Biffa, Garfield Weston, VWHDC, TOE2, Grundon, Bernard Sunley, Taylor Wimpey, Bloor Homes, Infineum, JA.Pye and many smaller grant givers who can be seen on the halls' website- [here](#)



Retracted



Extended

## Acre's Chairman addresses the issue of VAT paid by Community Halls on improvement works.

ACRE Chairman, David Emerson CBE, has written to the Chancellor on behalf of ACRE's Village and Community Halls Network to reinforce the need for VAT refunds for village halls and other similar charitable community buildings such as church halls, community centres and scout huts. He has pointed out that the halls network provided essential facilities for a wide range of community groups.

In January ACRE submitted a budget representation, urging the government to pledge £3 million in the Budget to refund the VAT paid by village halls on improvement work such as modern kitchen and toilet facilities and new meeting rooms.

Read more about it [here](#).

## Throw Away Your Mains Socket Protectors

Advice from Bill Peachey an electrical engineer and Village Hall Trustee.



Many halls still use those plastic devices which fit into mains sockets and purport to make them safer for children. They should be removed and disposed of; this article explains why.

The mains sockets we use in the UK are the safest in the world and were designed in the late forties with the aim of making them safe against small prying fingers. In some other countries, the sockets are not so safe and special plastic plugs were designed to block up the holes. Someone saw a market and designed some for the UK, where they are unnecessary. Our sockets all have internal shutters which prevent objects being inserted into the live or neutral sockets. Inserting these plastic "protectors" does not make them safer and, in many cases, causes serious safety hazards.

### Here are a few examples:

Some protectors are made of brittle plastic and often break, leaving the larger earth pin inside the socket. This opens the shutters and exposes the live terminal to small objects such as paper clips etc.

Some brands of protector are very badly designed and allow the standard paper clip to be inserted even when the protector is fitted.





## **Norris and Fisher offer of help with buildings evaluations.**

Norris & Fisher are delighted to be able to offer their clients a free buildings valuation, subject to a three-year Long Term Undertaking being arranged.

If you are not a client of Norris & Fisher, you can still access this service and Community First Oxfordshire have negotiated a fee of just £100.00.

To take advantage of the facility, please email Norris & Fisher and state that you are a member of Community First Oxfordshire. Their email address is [survey@norrisandfisher.com](mailto:survey@norrisandfisher.com)

## **Utility Aid (UA) are working with Community First Oxfordshire to ensure all their members are receiving the best possible rates for their gas and electricity.**

UA helps charities by providing services that reduce their energy costs and help them become more energy efficient. Third sector groups can benefit from their wide range of services, including a free remote energy review. To read more about it and to find a letter of Authority to complete, please click [HERE](#)

This letter of authority allows UA to check the tariff your hall is on, check your energy use and make recommendations all free of charge, confidential and with no obligation to switch.

Please return the form to Tessa at [tessa.hall@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:tessa.hall@communityfirstoxon.org)

## **Toilet Twinning in Fringford Village Hall**

Earlier in the year, Fringford Village hall held a coffee morning and raised £300 which has gone to twin a toilet block in the developing world with the toilets in the village hall. The certificate they received has been proudly placed in the village hall cloakroom area.

Toilet Twinning can change lives: Lata in Pakistan didn't go to school. As a girl, she was expected to stay home and help her mother. But then one day her brother, Vijay, came home from school chatting excitedly about the importance of hand washing and things he'd learnt through a project which Toilet Twinning helped fund. Their mother wanted the same for her daughter... so she enrolled Lata in school too. 'Lata is now a confident student and a role model for many other girls in the community,' says our partner in Pakistan.

More details on how to get involved in toilet twinning can be found [HERE](#).



## News from TOE2 – Oxfordshires Independent Environmental Funder.

The 5 year ENRICH programme has now come to an end. During this time energy audits were carried out on 134 community buildings across Oxfordshire, 59 buildings received TOE2 grants totalling £288,372, supporting works including insulation, double glazing, LED lighting and heating. The estimated carbon savings were 679 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e (Carbon Dioxide and associated greenhouse gases), with an estimated financial saving of £358,050. Based on data collected from 70 buildings on progress towards achieving audit recommendations.

ENRICH was developed and run in partnership with EiE (the Environmental Information Exchange) with funding from the Patsy Wood Trust. Advice was also provided by the Community Buildings Advisor based at Community First Oxfordshire (CFO). You can read a full report of this very successful scheme [here](#) (summary on page 2)



**Shutford Village Hall.**

Shutford Village Hall is a step closer to completion after the successful acquisition of a grant to help fund the final stages of the build. The insulation grant of £5,000 has been provided by TOE2 and Grundon Waste Management through the Landfill Communities Fund. With work due to be completed by late June, the insulation of the building will not only help reduce energy bills but also provide a much more pleasant environment as a meeting place for the local community.

Shutford community members pledged £100,000 towards the costs of this new village hall. This, along with villagers supporting the project with time and skills to help with the rebuild, demonstrates what a community can achieve when they pull together.

**Click Here** for some more examples of projects undertaken





## Energy Audits and Funding still Available

### Energy Audits

TOE 2 Energy audits are still available at full price. Also funds are available for projects coming from these audits. Please contact Moira Dorey at EiE Email: [mdorey@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:mdorey@brookes.ac.uk) phone: 01865 483299

### Funding

1. Main grant scheme: TOE2 welcomes applications for funding; most grants are up to £5,000.

#### Projects are invited to apply that;

- Promote and improve biodiversity
- Support Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Agenda through encouraging energy efficiency and the sustainable use of renewable resources in community facilities
- Improve access to green spaces and the countryside

2. TOE2 also has Third Party Funding available.

If you are applying for funding from an Environmental Body in Oxfordshire and require up to about £5,000 as the third party funding contribution, we would be pleased to hear from you.

#### Third party funding can be provided for projects which:

- Are located in Oxfordshire
- Fall within 10 miles of a landfill site and are eligible for LCF funding
- Are seeking funds from an Environmental Body that distributes LCF funding in Oxfordshire; this could be WREN, Viridor Credits or Biffaward.
- Fall within at least one of TOE2's funding areas (biodiversity, access to green spaces and energy efficiency/renewables)

The application deadlines for the rest of the year are 5 June and 4 September. For further information **click here**: or phone: 01865 407003 or email.

[admin@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk)



