

Jiggins Memorial Village Hall and Playing Field Trust. CIO

Report to Annual Meeting 18th September 2023

Report period April 2022 to September 2023

This last Eighteen Months has been a difficult time with further problems delaying many of our objectives and plans. The slowness in producing the Local Neighbourhood Plan continues to prove a problem but in general we are slowly recovering from the double hit of covid and energy price inflation.

I now wish to comment on some of the important issues of the year and I cannot but begin with: -

1 The Provision of a Youth Club

The Jiggins Ixworth Youth Club is now up and running and the Trustees offer their profound thanks to Mike Jones the trustee who has put together this new asset for the village. Thanks particularly go to Zoe and Sophie the two youth workers who have made it all happen. The attendance continues to increase.

There are and have been some teething problems, but I am confident that these can be resolved.

2 Finance and Inflation

This year has been a difficult year in terms of our accounts. We began the switch from Sage to Zero with our new Accountants, Twin and Co who are giving an excellent service. As we speak Twin are developing a bookkeeping system which will facilitate the early production of annual accounts for the Charity Commission and give us greater control.

3 Vandalism

This now seems to be much reduced, and I hope this will continue. The problem was partly solved by locking the toilets with keys readily available in the library, the village shop and issued to all regular users.

4 Recreation Area

The Trustees continue to work on a redesign of the recreation area, and it is hoped to have a new design of the area soon.

One issue has arisen however, the original lease agreement although extant is said by the Parish Council to have been superseded by a subsequent agreement. The current Jiggins CIO has no record of this putative document. We await a copy of the Parish Councils document and in the meantime, we continue with the redesign but recognising that any design and its implementation will be affected by the resolution of this issue.

5 Ixworth Events Group.

The Jiggins Trust continues to work with the Events group and looks forward to the Next Christmas Fair.

6 The Potential New Village Hall

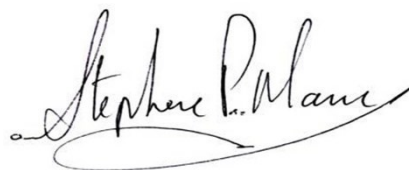
In late August 2022 the Parish Council asked the Jiggins Trust to produce a financial appraisal of the cost of building a Village Hall. Although in the opinion of the Trustees this was too early

since no formal site inspection has been possible. The Trustees nevertheless were given to understand that the West Suffolk District Council would like some reassurance of the viability of any such project and agreed to produce a confidential analysis for the Parish Council referencing other such projects in England that had been successful. This analysis confidential to the Parish Council was produced. Published current national costings were used for estimates while professional opinions were obtained for valuations and other costings.

The main conclusions were: -

1. Based on an initial design of 884 m², a footprint suggested by an existing building on the site a design was produced to include main hall, ancillary rooms, library, social area, sanitary facilities, kitchen and bar store. Given published national building costs it was estimated that the building would cost AT 2022 prices £1,884,400.
2. A potential contribution from a local landowner which was confirmed in writing would be an offer of a site for the building of 0.5 hectares (1.25 acres). This has been valued at circa £400,000 and £500,000 by Merrifield's. Also, an additional, £500,000 would be available to kick start fund raising activities.
3. A survey of the potential site and an evaluation of building space on the site of the existing village hall was commissioned by the Parish Council was executed by Reese Pryor Architects and Surveyors who concluded the new site of 0.5 hectares was not only suitable but the preferred option.
4. The report also considered funding such a project and found that similar sized projects had been funded in England by Charities and other local organisations. The report concluded that although the time frame of fundraising was still in the future it was demonstrably viable to undertake a project of this nature in Ixworth and its environs.
5. In addition to the report Trustees also considered the future use of the existing village hall. A report again by Merrifield's found that the hall could be usefully converted into business units economically with the potential income in the region of £50,000 to £60,000. This would of help in the long term with subsidising the use of the new hall by Ixworth residents.

My final note on this is to emphasise to all Ixworth residents that these possibilities will only come to fruition by the combined efforts of Ixworth's residents and institutions. It will take many years and sadly I am not sure I will be here to see it. I have told the Board of Trustees that I think it appropriate that I should step down as Chairman next year although remaining one of the Trustees. This is for no other reason than I shall be 80 next year and I believe that a younger person with more energy is needed to push these wonderful opportunities to a conclusion. Meanwhile I will do all I can to assist the Trust in its endeavours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen P. Mann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dr Stephen P Mann FRSB

Chairman Jiggins Trust.