

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting 2016

This is my report for the year since the last AGM. We have tackled a wide range of activities and have suffered from not having the full complement of Directors. I hope that this year we can elect the full complement of six elected directors.

Hall Management – John Mahoney has now been the Hall Manager for 18 months. In order to give John some flexibility and time off, we have decided to add to the hall management team. Les House and Diane Peters have been appointed as part time deputies. Between them, we are able to keep the hall open all through the day and provide coverage during evenings if necessary.

Hall usage – The income from hall bookings for 2015 rose by 67% over the year before. This is very encouraging and means that we can employ more staff. The first call on bookings income is paying for staff. We lost a few users during the year but these have been more than compensated by new users. We now have an aerial ballet user which necessitated the fitting of very strong ceiling bolts.

The aim is to increase the usage of the Willingale Room to repay the investment that we made in its refurbishment. We are particularly keen to encourage commercial users during the day.

Rate review – The hall rates have been revised and took effect on 1st April. The new rates reflect the rise in inflation since the last review. We have also introduced 3 bands of charging for the different type of users. Non-profit making regular bookings will attract the lowest charge, ranging up to commercial one-off bookings at the top of the scale. Details are shown on the website.

Incorporation – Last year, at the AGM, we decided to change the Trust management of the Lopping Endowment. For the last 130 years the Trust was managed by Trustees. The main disadvantage of this was that trustees were personally liable in the event of the failure of the trust. We have formed a company called the Lopping Endowment Corporate Trustee Ltd. This company takes the place of the human trustees. The company has directors: these are, in effect, the trustees. The directors manage the company in the same way as the old trustees, but with limited liability in the event of a failure. This arrangement is quite common nowadays and is approved by the Charity Commission.

Directors are elected each year in the same way as the trustees were. The Articles of Association are available to view on the website.

We have taken the opportunity to make the elections more democratic by modern standards. Any adult resident living in the Ancient Parish of Loughton is entitled to vote for directors and any motions offered up at the AGM.

Works Completed

Willingale Room – The Willingale Room is complete. It is fully equipped with an audio-visual system and new furniture. It can accommodate up to 25 people in a classroom. Alternatively, it has a full wall mirror which is used for dance classes

Main Hall – The radiators have been refurbished during this year and form part of the refurbishment plan. See the section of the main hall refurbishment plan below.

We have new chair trolleys. These can accommodate 18 chairs each and will improve the management of space in the chair store. It will also speed the deployment and clearing of chairs.

Fire Escape – The old external fire escape has been removed. It was removed for two reasons

1. It was preventing maintenance to the roof above the main hall fire escape, which was allowing damp to penetrate.
2. The stairs were far too steep. If there had been an emergency evacuation, there was a high risk that someone would fall down the steps and injure themselves.

A new fire escape has been constructed inside the building to give an escape route from the second floor changing rooms to the outside. My thanks to Ron Heath for his imaginative design and supervision of the works, which have been completed to a high standard.

Sewer – The carpet shop is a tenant of Lopping Hall. During the year they suffered from flooding during heavy rain. The fault was eventually traced to a blockage underneath the concrete floor in the shop. The floor was dug up and the pipes were repaired. We also took the opportunity to reline the sewer to prolong its life. The shop was partially redecorated also. Our thanks to Mr and Mrs Batten for their patience and forbearance during this difficult time.

Roof – After the fire escape was removed we were, at last, able to recover the roof over the Main Hall fire escape. The roof over the carpet shop was also replaced, this hadn't been done for at least 30 years.

Plans for hall

This year we employed the services of Alex Bawden to design the décor of the Main Hall and Bar. The material is available on the website and a hard copy for viewing at the AGM. The programme of work is included as an annex to this report. Work will proceed as funds become available.

Plans for other areas

Main Hall Fire Escape – The fire escape is now dry because of the newly laid roof. And thanks to LADS the area is clean. However it very tatty and we feel that it should be decorated as soon as possible. If it looks smart, it will encourage people to treat the hall with respect. We are currently collecting quotes and planning the work

Front Door - The front door leading onto the High Road is looking tatty and needs replacement. It is difficult to negotiate by people with mobility and strength impairments. We have Planning Permission to replace the door with an electric sliding door. At the same time we will make improvements to the fascia and bring it up to date. Detailed plans have been prepared by Ron Heath and we are currently looking for suppliers. This is not considered as important as the renovation of the Main Hall and is deferred for now.

Stair lift to Willingale Room – The application for a grant to fund the installation of a chair lift to negotiate the stairs from the first floor lobby to the Willingale Room has been delayed. This will ensure that all hireable rooms are accessible by people with impaired mobility. The project will be funded outside the general accounts and will proceed as soon as the grant money is available.

Small Hall ceiling and lighting - The ceiling in the Small Hall is sagging and needs replacement. We have the opportunity to improve the lighting and reposition the exhaust fan at the same time. This work is a lower priority than the Main Hall

We say goodbye this year to Peter Gotham as Treasurer and Trustee. He has carried out this role for 9 years and has brought us a high degree of professionalism and expertise in the charity sector. I will miss him and his sage advice. I am pleased to say that Martin Howarth has agreed to be the new treasurer. I think this makes his tally three treasurerships.

I would also like to thank my fellow Directors (Trustees) for their help and support over the past year and look forward to the changes we expect in the coming year.

Mike Walker

April 2016

Plan for the Renovation of the Main Hall

Issue 1

The plan is based upon the following key points:

- Phased development to reflect cash flow income
- Minimisation of disruption to current users
- The order of many of the phases can be altered
- Phases can be identified as separate projects for special funding
- The décor plan as produced by Alex Bawden

The main phases:

1. Ceiling
 - a. Fit side pelmet for new lighting (temporary)
 - b. Paint walls above pelmet white (temporary)
 - c. Fit new uplighting – see specification*
 - d. Remove old chandelier lights
 - e. Renovate ceiling and paint
2. Renovate the proscenium arch and stage front woodwork and protection
3. Rear wall
 - a. Renovate the large window, double glaze and coloured glass sections
 - b. Replaster wall around window and paint
 - c. New curtain pelmet, wider curtain (extra side drapes)
4. Fit 3 new decorative chandeliers under the air ducts
5. Renew electrical cabling
6. Replaster wall on chair store side and paint
7. Replaster wall on entrance side and paint
8. Sand and seal floor
9. Renovate the chair store

Specification of lighting

There will be three lighting circuits:

1. High powered LED uplighters, reflecting from the ceiling providing the same illumination levels as present. Mounted behind pelmet.
2. Multicoloured LED strip wall washing. Mounted behind pelmet
3. Centre decorative chandeliers

High power uplighters

10 LED spot lamps – 3000 lumens each, assumes same light output as current lights and additional power for 80% paint reflectance

Mounted in the pelmet between centres of the ceiling trusses

30 degree angle TBA

Controllers – DMX input
Dimmable to 0%, smooth
Additional dimmer for non-theatrical use

Multicoloured strip lights

Used for creating décor/mood. Infinitely variable coloured wash of the walls
Controllers – DMX input
Dimmable to 0%, smooth
Additional dimmer for non-theatrical use
Can be fitted at a later date

Centre decorative chandeliers

Opportunity for creative features. Lights can produce a shimmer or sparkle and make the décor more interesting.
Controllers – DMX input
Dimmable to 0%, smooth
Additional dimmer for non-theatrical use