

# THE LOPPING ENDOWMENT

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

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We have tackled a wide range of activities and again 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 because we have much work to complete.

**Hall usage** – The income from hall bookings for 2016 fell by 6% over the year before. The main reason for this is that we have many outstanding debts from users' unpaid bills. When these are paid, the bookings income will show an increase of around 9%.

**Rate review** – Hall Hire rates were increased last year along with a wider range of rates for different users. The lowest rates are for regular small non-profit making hirers, the highest for single event, commercial users. The rates will not increase this year. Generally, rates will increase with CPI or RPI, whichever is greater. We will keep an eye on the local competition, but we are around the least expensive in the area.

**Rent review** – The rent that we receive from our two tenants is reviewed every 5 years. We took advice from our local surveyor/valuer and we concluded that the market for retail units in Loughton has become saturated. The current market is static and therefore we have not increased the rents. We need to be mindful of the current trend in the closing of High Street banks.

**Commercial partners** – We received two approaches from organisations that wanted to run shared profit ventures. One wanted to run a teashop during the day and the other wanted to run a bar in the evening. We decided that these did not comply with the aims of the original charter and declined the offers. We may reconsider these type of offers in the future when we have refurbished the kitchen and bar.

**Child Protection Officer** - Lopping Hall accommodates many activities for children. Most of these activities have children not accompanied by their parents (except while delivering and taking home). We have a responsibility to ensure that the children are safe as defined by the various Children's Acts of Parliament. We have appointed Les House as the Child Protection Officer.

**Chairs and Tables** – We have decided to replace the chairs in the Main Hall. The current ones are over 30 years old and many users complain that they are uncomfortable. We have chosen the replacement: there is a sample available for your inspection. Jean Cooper has kindly volunteered to lead the fund-raising activity to pay for the chairs. They will cost £11,000 for 200 chairs.

Many of the tables have been replaced. The new ones are foldable and have metal trolleys to make for easy handling.

**Server** – We now have a file server, which will allow the sharing of files within the building. It will also allow authorised external access to working documents for the Directors.

**Events** – The Hall Management organised 3 events over the last year. The aim was to publicise the hall to people who did not know of its existence and to provide more income. The events were a partial success with lessons learned for the future. More events are planned. The events were:

- Quiz evening
- Folk and Ale evening
- Pantomime

## Works Completed

**Small Hall** – The Small Hall was not planned to be the next area for refurbishment. However, Alan Martin, our most recent Director, was very keen to carry out the work last summer. He has created a superb renovation. For those of you that have not seen it, the hall was replastered, rewired, painted. It has a new ceiling, new curtains, new lighting and secondary double glazing. Thank you, Alan

We still have an issue with the floor and this summer we will close the hall for two weeks while the floor is repaired and resurfaced.

**Insulation in loft** – Our thanks, once again, to Alan Martin, who laid the insulation in the loft above the bar and kitchen. This will allow us to be able to lay flooring in the loft and use the space for storage. We have had a volunteer to lay the flooring and we will need to move some cables before we start.

**Electrical inspection and rectification** – All areas, including the Carpet Shop and Art Centre have been fully electrically inspected. Any observations and faults have been tackled, including minor ones.

**Plans for hall** - I have proposed that the work on the Hall, Stage, Bar, and Kitchen be accelerated. I estimate that the work could cost up to £200,000. We would pay for this by taking a further loan. We are in the process of developing a fully costed plan. In anticipation, we have shown the Main Hall as provisionally booked for all of August and September 2018. The Directors will consider the proposals when they are ready.

## Plans for other areas

**Main Hall Fire Escape** – The fire escape has now been painted. Hopefully this will encourage people to keep it clean and treat it with respect. Further work on the door at the bottom of the stairs will be completed soon.

**Front Door** – As you have seen, there is no change to the front door leading onto the High Road, which is looking tatty and needs replacement. As reported last year, this is not considered as important as the renovation of the Main Hall and is deferred for now. In the meantime, we will paint the front entrance.

**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 is in progress. 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.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors, Stephen Radley and the Hall Management Team for their help and support over the past year and look forward to the changes we expect in the coming year.

Mike Walker - Chairman

May 2017

## Current Directors

Mike Walker	Chairman	Elected
Stephen Pewsey	Vice Chairman	Local Council representative
Martin Howarth	Treasurer	Assumed
Alan Martin		Elected
Karen Rogers		Elected
Nicky Fuller		Resigned
Ron Heath		Assumed

**Secretary** Stephen Radley

## Current Employees

John Mahoney	Hall Manager
Les House	Deputy Hall Manager
Diane Peters	Deputy Hall Manager