

The Lopping Endowment

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting

2018

This is my report for the year since the last AGM. 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 – I reported last year that the income from hall bookings was down 6% over the previous year. After we have taken into account late payments, the income was increased by 7%. Last year the income from bookings showed an increase of 20%. Over the last four years the bookings have increased from £18,820 to £43,736 (nett of VAT).

Rate review – We did not increase the hire rates last year. This year we will be increasing the rates by 5%, which is roughly in line with CPI over the last 2 years.

Rent review – The rent that we receive from our two tenants is reviewed every 5 years. There was no increase in the last year.

Chairs – This year we have replaced the chairs. The old chairs were uncomfortable and had come to the end of their life. **Jean Cooper** organised the fundraising and she coaxed nearly £8000 from the residents of Loughton. This was topped-up by £1300 from the hall funds and paid for 200 new chairs. **Thank you, Jean.**

Events – The Hall Management organised 4 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. More events are planned. The events were:

- Partnered in running The Panto
- A quiz Night
- Running the bar for an event
- Working at Heights Training day.

Terms and Conditions – We have decided to change the way we take payment for bookings. In future, we require that bookings are paid for in advance of users taking occupation of a room. This has been found to be necessary because some users are tardy in paying. We still have over £5000 owing in overdue payments.

Peninsular Business Services – We have taken on the services of Peninsular Business Services Ltd to keep us up to date and in line with Employment Law. They also provide services in Health and Safety. As none of the directors are qualified or experienced in these areas, we believe this is a prudent way of discharging our responsibilities.

Works Completed

Small Hall – As reported last year, the Small Hall had a problem with the floor. The floor was examined and found to have rot and insect damage to over 70% of the timbers. These were all replaced and the floor recovered.

This is an example of unplanned repair work which is revealed while we are doing planned refurbishment work. Our approach at all times is to carry out repair and refurbishment work to have a life of at least 50 years.

Storage in loft – Our thanks to **Lee Kenneth**, who worked during a hot summer to lay flooring to part of the loft above the bar. Previously, the space had been insulated. This has enabled it to be used for storage. The work is covered by Building Regulations and approved by the Local Authority. Currently it is entirely occupied by the Loughton Operatic Society. If anyone else wants to use the loft for storage, they will need to lay their own flooring; there is still plenty of room.

Health and Safety Assessment – Peninsular Business Services Ltd carried out a Health and Safety Assessment. We have several actions to improve our Health and Safety. Most of the actions are procedural and clerical. Les House is responsible for collating our actions and activities in this area.

Fire Risk Assessment – One of the actions from the Health and Safety Assessment was to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment by a qualified Fire Risk Assessor. This has been done and we await the report. There has been much activity in this area in the past, such as a comprehensive fire alarm system, a new fire escape and updated emergency lighting.

Current Plans - Last year I proposed that the work on the Hall, Stage, Bar, and Kitchen be accelerated. I estimated that the work could cost up to £200,000 and we would pay for this by taking a further loan. On reflection, this would prove to be too disruptive to the activities in the hall. We will continue to plan work as funds become available from our income. Our improvement plans change dependent on opportunities and unplanned Maintenance and Safety tasks.

Kitchen – The kitchen needs work. The sink area has deteriorated significantly in recent years and this has prompted us to consider bringing forward the plan to refurbish it. Work will take place over the summer holidays. The new kitchen will allow us to offer more facilities to our users, including the facility to prepare food. We will need to develop new procedures for the use of the kitchen and the training of users. We will apply for an inspection by the local authority to maintain its current 5-star rating.

Window renovation – As you can see, the window at the back of the Main Hall is being renovated. The window frame is basically sound but there was a lot of rot in the outside cills. All rotten wood is being replaced. The single glazing is being replaced by double glazed units, which will reduce the heat we lose and eliminate cold draughts in the winter. The curtain track will be replaced by a more robust electrified track.

Fire Risk Assessment actions – We are expecting some actions to come from the Fire Risk Assessment. These will be done as soon as possible and may have some large cost implications.

Lighting in Main Hall – We are planning to update the lighting in the Main Hall. WE have consulted with a lighting designer and are awaiting his plans. The main features will be:

- Removal of the ugly and difficult to maintain pendant fittings
- Hidden indirect uplighting.
- Central chandelier on a separate circuit
- Possible coloured mood lighting on a separate circuit
- Fully dimmable from theatrical lighting racks + manual control for general users
- LED throughout

Plans for other areas

Main Hall – The Main Hall was to have been replastered this summer, but other more essential work has taken its place. Our plans remain flexible.

Front Door – As you have seen, we have not replaced the front entrance. However, thanks to **Alan Martin**, it now looks smarter with a new coat of paint.

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. We have applied for funding from the council, who are likely to provide 50% funding.

I would 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 - Chairman

April 2018

Current Directors

Mike Walker	Chairman	Elected
Stephen Pewsey	Vice Chairman	Local Council representative
Martin Howarth	Treasurer	Assumed
Alan Martin		Elected
Karen Rogers		Elected
Richard Silver		Elected
Ron Heath		Assumed

Current Employees

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