

VILLAGE HALL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Firstly, thanks everyone for your views and comments as part of the consultation, which started back in September 2018. We know how much the Ramsden Village Hall (RVH) means to residents as 173 said it is an important community asset in your Village Plan questionnaire responses. Over the last two years, over 100 people have attended the consultation events and have overwhelmingly supported the idea of refurbishing and developing the hall. Two people even took the time to provide drawings! So everything you have told us has helped to get to the point we are at today.

Back in 2018, the aim and the objectives of the project were set, and whilst the aim remains the same, the objectives have been revised this month to take account of all your feedback. Our aim is to ensure that the RVH continues to be a central setting for leisure and social activities within the village; the role intended for it by Mrs Eleanor Ramsden, the benefactor. The eight revised objectives supporting its delivery are:

- Maintaining the RVH to a high standard so that it remains fit for purpose for future generations
- Developing and refurbishing the RVH sympathetically in line with its geographical position and heritage within the village
- Utilising contemporary building practices to:
 - increase the overall footprint of the hall and the floor space within the main hall
 - increase storage space and capacity, including providing specific space for the Parish Council
 - provide a larger kitchen and develop an additional kitchenette
 - provide an additional accessible toilet, and
 - add a function room to provide options for hiring the hall
- Refurbishing existing facilities (such as toilets) whilst maintaining the character of the hall
- Updating the heating system using sustainable heating sources
- Installing a communications system including WiFi, an induction hearing loop and sound system
- Developing plans that are supported by residents, current RVH users, local communities and the Parish Council
- Ensuring any development and refurbishment provides value for money

We have taken pre-planning application soundings from ELDC which have been very informative. The archaeological discussions (along with a field walk) have been particularly interesting and may result in a renaming of the medieval pottery known as Toynton Ware to Bolingbroke -Toynton Ware.

Having these discussions has given us a sense of what we could achieve and the next step is to test the guidance by formally submitting plans for approval. To help with this, earlier in the year the Parish Council tendered for an architect to come on board and develop plans. The latest version of the plans can be found on the Parish Council website, and were on display at the recent consultation events.

Whatever we do we need funding and raising money is an ongoing activity. The Parish Council and Village Hall Committee have contributed equally to a joint fund of £12,000 and recently we've obtained a small business grant of £10,000 from ELDC. Main contributors to the RVH record surplus

last year were Rents £3205, Catering £2430, Plant Sale £1350, and Events £855. We've also had specific bequests but we need more, much more, if we are going to achieve our aim and objectives. We will continue applying for grants over the coming months and raising money through events (COVID 19 rules permitting!) and will keep you updated on our progress. All donations, big or small, are welcomed!