

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 1

Date: 28 June 2016 at 14:06:09 BST

The only obvious site for a village hall would be on the golf course and we know the golf club have tried to get a new club house. Who would maintain it and I am not very impressed at the way the present building has been looked after? Also there is the running costs etc. It would not be a suitable area for young children to play outside so near the fairways.

It could be used for a gardening club Historical society book club seniors club whatever the parish wishes. It would be ideal for small social events solely for the use of the parish. We would need some written clause in the agreement between the school and trust in the event of change of ownership of the former.

Another alternative would be to contact the charity commission for change of use of the fund and set up a charity to which people could apply for a grant not necessarily education helping people in need.

I would hope enough people will be interested and that we could hold a public meeting at Sherston Village hall .Only £8 an hour in the small room, large hall £9. Shipton Moyne hall will be under going refurbishment in August.

Jack Wedels wife former Miss Huntley owns the Reading room in the street at Leighterton that is ripe for refurbishment Village hall.

I would like to put the money into Sherston village hall with proviso for us to use it. They are hoping to raise £250,000 !!!

Hope you get response good idea to put it on green paper

Response 2

Date: 28 June 2016 at 13:08:27 BST

Hi Geoff

Further to your letter regarding the Village Hall Fund. Our opinion is that there is no need for a new village hall for all the reasons you know about. Furthermore it would have to be huge to enable the village to use it for harvest supper and spring drinks – both of which we already have venues for. It would likely have to be hired out to make ends meet which would be disruptive for all (I expect xxxx or xxxx have told you about the Tetbury ‘jobs’ who apparently used to frequent the old hall?)

xxxx suggests a scholarship scheme for parishioners – obviously only open to Parishioners with children of the right age so may not accord with the Terms.

I wondered about an annual financial deal with the Arb and School for a special ‘Parishioners Membership’ of both so for the School, parishioners would need to be CRB checked and carry ID when in the grounds? This may be popular given the latest correspondence from the School and should accord with the Terms.

Or how about buying a racehorse and naming it ‘Westonbirt with Lasborough’ then everyone could enjoy going to watch it race!!

Best regards,

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 3

Date: 1 July 2016 at 00:28:02 BST

Dear Geoff,

I hope you get a few brilliant ideas along with this mundane one.

The old hall was sold and made way for the houses at the end of the street nearest to the school because there wasn't sufficient interest in raising the funds to repair it. We arrived in 1977 and I can't recall going into it once. Any village activity there was took place in somebody's property.

The village is much more of a community now and has probably doubled in number although I doubt we have many more permanent residents and even fewer children. As a result it seems to me that it would be better to aim at something that is interesting to people who are middle aged or older and not likely to want to use the place daily, unless it is attached to another existing and continuing activity.

I don't think that the village owns any land and as a result the land cost of any building would probably be more than the existing fund. In my own mind I cut out any ideas of leveraging the fund, and I'm not a trustee, the trustees would be very brave to take on borrowing. It seems to me that if anything is to be built it should be on shared, loaned or donated land. It also seems unlikely it would be used frequently if it were exclusively for the villagers use. I'd go so far as to say that it would be silly to build another unused village hall which doesn't generate enough funds to maintain itself, even if the villagers were prepared to attempt to run a business or rent it out. In any event we have the choice of several excellent venues which are generally freely lent.

What I do think possible is to work with the school, school's golf club or perhaps a land owner to contribute to a building on terms which satisfy our identified needs eg use on two Saturdays a year and four evenings a year providing the building was maintained by the land owner. I understand that there are legal hurdles to surmount to satisfy trust law however I believe that these can be satisfied with careful thought and maybe a bit of flexibility from the land owner.

Best wishes

Response 4

Date: 2 July 2016 at 20:37:32 BST

Hi Geoff

Many thanks for collating the ideas regarding the village hall fund!

I attach my submission! Obviously, I am in a biased position as I am a member of the golf club but I hope the trustees and the rest of the parish will see that it could be a win, win, win situation for the hall fund, school and golf club!

Love (Submission Win Win Win on next page)

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Win win win

1. The school give the plot of land to the village hall trust where existing pavilion is freehold or on a 99 year lease.
2. Create a new trust in conjunction with the Charities commission with representatives from the school, village and golf club
3. The new Trust creates a 3 in 1 facility ** to ensure regular income for upkeep - village hall/school pavilion/golf club
4. The Golf club provide funds towards any special features required - wall/roof space to mount honour boards, foot bath, benches for ladies and gents facilities
5. Income from hire to golf club and small village events and meetings is used for upkeep and cleaning organised by the new Trust.

Westonbirt & Lasborough Village Hall

- provide a hall as intended by the trust for use by the parishioners
- *xxx (who has gone through the same process with xxxxxx village) says that a structure can be achieved within and below the amount in the fund see www.passmore.co.uk
- creates a meeting place for village groups,
- creates a meeting place for Parish council meetings and Village Hall Trust
- golf club and Westonbirt Leisure (percentage of pay & play course members (160 people at £260 per head) provide regular income for upkeep.

Westonbirt School

- Are enabled to demolish the current delapidated pavilion which is in danger of health and safety regs.
- Do not have to provide funds, just a plot of land - there is planning permission in existence which may be able to be modified but it is for a substantially (unnecessarily) larger building.
- "Acquire" a building for use by "pay and play" golfers and pupils and visiting junior teams- terms to be agreed.

Westonbirt Golf Club

- get a safe meeting facility.
- pay a regular rental for the use of the building for club competition days, matches and meetings.

*xxxx achieved the same 3 in 1 idea at xxxxxx - cricket pavilion, school hall and village hall

**The 3 in 1 idea negates the old problems of village halls and the danger of lack of income whereby the structure is not just a hall it provides other facilities e.g. the church at Horsley is now the church, village hall and school hall - £180,000 was spent on removing pews and creating a kitchen in one corner and toilets in another, an underfloor heated wooden floor which the school use as the dining room and sports hall.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 5

Date: 4 July 2016 at 14:46:54 BST

Subject: Future of the Westonbirt Village Hall Fund.

As the funds can only be used for the erection of a replacement hall ,I suggest that a somewhat smaller hall be built together with the golf club which is in need of a new club house. There seems to be a need for a meeting place for the whole of the village and if we joined with the school/golf club this might be a good solution.

The hall would be used constantly by the golfers and then by the villagers in the evenings for whatever activities it would needed for. eg.book club,committee meetings,Pilates sessions,gardening club, iPad instructions INfact any interest could be catered for . It would be wonderful to have a place where we could meet regularly. There would be no problem with trying to get regular bookings because the golfers...Continued

The current use of the new hall/ golf club would be constant.the golfers would have the use of it during the day time,for matches etc. Whilst the villagers ,the rest.There would be no problem trying to make the hall viable as the arrangement with the golf club for the up keep could continue with the Leisure centre/school

The School, the leisure Centre, the Village Hall Fund , and the Golf club together could make this a feasible project

Perhaps an open meeting for the whole of the village could be arranged ---- the golf club marquee?

Response 6

Date: 5 July 2016 at 17:15:15 BST

Hi Geoff

We think that a village hall that can also be used by the Westonbirt school's golf club would be ideal and solve two issues. One being that the current golf hut is dilapidated and tired, therefore not giving an appropriate impression of the course and its facilities and the other giving the residents of Westonbirt a place to meet and socialise. Various clubs could be established depending on the interest of all our neighbours.

Initially a new village hall that can suit all need not be as expensive as the original plans that were devised for the golf clubhouse.

xxxx has spoken to Passmore who supply sports pavilions etc. and feels that the project could be undertaken within budget.

The link to Passmore is <http://www.passmores.co.uk/category/club-range>

If the school contributed the land then the money currently in trust could be used for the purpose intended. This would help everyone.

There is ample parking by the golf course and it is far enough away from residents to avoid any noise interruptions. As it would be used by residents of the parish there should not be any considerable excess traffic.

There would need to be a charge for its use and this could cover any expenses within reason.

It makes sense to use the money for the benefit of all and a village hall can bring a community together more. It makes no sense in just keeping it in trust for another 20 years as this benefits no one.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 7

Date: 5 July 2016 at 12:57:08 BST

Dear Geoff

As a long time resident of Westonbirt I am pleased to hear of current plans to reactivate the Village Hall Fund with a view to a new hall being considered in the car park adjacent to the golf club. I am sure there are a number of uses for which the new village hall could be used and would support the erection of the timber frame building which comes within budget and could prove an excellent facility for residents of Westonbirt parish. A number of uses spring to mind; apart from parishioner celebrations and parties, regular use for a variety of clubs such as fun drawing classes, book club, local history projects, photography, bridge or whist drives etc, could be considered. I am sure many residents have a variety of hobbies and interests which could be shared with their neighbors, subject to some local organization by various residents. It is good to see a mix of ages in the village and hopefully volunteers could provide useful input. Other suggestions may include a tea at three, or regular monthly meetings of residents to exchange news and views. With such a lively group of residents, including new arrivals, I am sure the village hall suggestion should be wholly supported and I look forward to details of the public meeting to discuss further.

Response 8

Date: 5 July 2016 at 20:20:16 BST

Cheers Geoff, I didn't mention what a village hall could be used for, here are some ideas:-

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. History club | 8. I.T. Instruction/training to gain confidence | 15. Talks with guest speakers |
| 2. Table tennis | 9. Wine connoisseurs | 16. Art group |
| 3. Meeting place for coffee mornings and arranging village outings | 10. Book club | 17. Sunday school |
| 4. Gardening club | 11. Card school, bridge club or crib etc | 18. Brownies, Cubs |
| 5. Sewing club | 12. Parish council meetings | There are numerous possibilities that could be of interest to all |
| 6. Pilates | 13. Village meetings | |
| 7. Yoga | 14. Craft club | |

Response 9

Date: 5 July 2016 at 20:23:49 BST

Hello Geoff,

Although a relative newcomer to the village, I can see the benefits a new village hall/golf club house would be to us all. There is already interest in a History Group, Book Club or book exchange, Gardening Club (maybe with a view to open gardens sometime) Pilates, Kneeler kits for the Church, and fundraising for upkeep costs.

PS The Summer Party was very enjoyable, thanks to all who organised this and worked so hard!

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 10

Date: 4 July 2016 at 20:16:31 BST

Hi Geoff

We think we ought to comment on the proposal to use The Village Hall Fund (TVHF) to build a new village hall for Westonbirt/Lasborough.

Our concerns:

1. given the funds available, the building that will be constructed will be small – more a village hut! It wouldn't be big enough to hold any function for the village apart from small meetings.
2. the management and maintenance of any building would be a major concern – another layer of bureaucracy in a village of just over 100 inhabitants. What happens when the funds run out? Given the returns on cash currently available it is likely capital would have to be used for maintenance.
3. We cannot see that any building would get widespread use – we believe that a few people would end up receiving all the benefit and the majority of residents would rarely if ever use the hut.
4. We understand that a shared building with the golf club is a possibility. Again this is fraught with danger – what happens if the golf club closes? What happens if the school sells the golf club? What happens if the golf club wants to expand? Too many uncertainties for funds that need to provide a long-term benefit to residents.
5. The geographical spread of the village means that the hut would not be local to most residents.
6. Who is going to own the land on which the hall is built?

Other options:

The objective of TVHF is to benefit all residents of the village for all time – not a few or some current residents for the next 10 years. A small village hut does not achieve this in any way.

A much more sensible use of the money would be to approach the Arboretum and seek an arrangement where:

1. The money is donated to the Forestry Commission;
2. All local residents in perpetuity are granted free access to the Arboretum – this has a zero cost to the FC but a benefit to all of the village. It may even add some value to people's properties!!
3. The FC agree to let village meetings to be held in one of their rooms free of charge – say four/six times per year.

The Arboretum is a nationally renowned facility on our doorstep. If we could strike some kind of deal of the sort outlined above this would cement the position of the Arboretum within the local community and bring the community closer to the Arboretum.

This option has to be better than creating a small hut of benefit to the few that will, in 20 years, need replacing with no money available.

The village hut option is a waste of TVHF.

If anyone has any questions feel free to ask.

Regards

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 11

Sent: 05 July 2016 23:12

Hi Geoff,

As I have always had concerns about the building of a Village Hall, xxxx has brought the email below to my attention. xxxx and xxxx have raised some excellent points here that I believe merit careful consideration with regards to a Village Hall and I would like to add further comment to their ideas. Such as;

A) the cost consideration (is this necessarily "value for money")

I am told that some of the local village halls surrounding Westonbirt are struggling and can be rented out for as little as £8 at a time which is nothing compared to the cost of building a Hall.

If we built a Hall at the Golf Club, most of the Villagers, with the exception of those who live in 'The Street' would have to get in their car and drive to the Hall anyway as walking through the school is no longer an option due to the health and safety concerns the school has recently outlined. So driving to Sherston, Leighterton or Shipton Moyne Village Halls are not much further.

B) the Benefit to "All" the residents.

Over the years, I have observed that the Westonbirt Arboretum is a central part of our village life. The idea of engaging with the FC and coming to an arrangement on Membership for all Residents and the possible use of their Hall (with the existing amenities, such as toilets, catering and parking facilities etc...) I believe would have much broader appeal for the whole village, (from the toddlers who enjoy the adventure playgrounds to the elderly who enjoy a leisurely stroll through the woods) not to mention much better value for our money.

Kind Regards

Response 12

Date: 8 July 2016 at 09:24:50 BST

Hi Geoff,

I am responding to the request for comments about the future of the VH Fund.

The village already has access to a number of very workable venues and to build another would seem to be creating the problem that the original sale was attempting to solve. In any event the amount of money required for something useful would far exceed the funds available let alone the additional burden that maintenance and admin would place on a small community. Joining up with the Golf Club is unlikely to be a satisfactory solution even if it were viable and additionally there would always be a question mark over longevity of such an arrangement.

I met yesterday with xxxx to review some of the Arboretum's longer term plans and during that discussion mentioned the village's dilemma regarding the future use of its funds. While we did not attempt to discuss this in any depth it was clear that the Arboretum could be interested in developing closer ties with the local community if we thought that this is something the village would wish to explore further.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of your deliberations.....

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 13

Date: 8 July 2016 at 10:03:21 BST

Dear Geoff,

We discussed this a bit with xxxx when he brought the Newsletters. It certainly does see a shame that the village doesn't have a communal building any longer, but it is clear that the amount of money we have would do no more than make a dent in this requirement by the time running costs are factored in. For the money to benefit everyone it will be necessary to either to significantly add to the fund, to join forces with someone else, or to use the cash in a completely different way.

1. Adding to the fund.

I believe it would be possible to fundraise, but realistically not likely to raise more than say £20,000? In other words not a significant amount.

2. Join forces with someone else.

The golf club would seem an obvious candidate, but given that it is very near the village, and not likely to be able to provide matched funding, the resulting development would be more likely to benefit a small number of village dwellers rather than the entire parish.

3. Use the cash a different way.

A) I wondered whether the Arboretum would be a more suitable partner. It has various plans for further development, including accommodation, and perhaps could use the fund to benefit both these and the parish, with the proviso perhaps that a building be named 'The Village Pavilion' or some such! Maybe an arrangement could be made, in exchange for the donation, to accommodate the whole parish, or small groups of it, from time to time, (with the possible addition of free membership for parishioners?) The upkeep problem would then not apply! As you will see from xxxx's email, he has already had a few words with xxxx, so I believe this is certainly worth pursuing.

B) Another possibility is to spend the money on a non-related thing, like a small commercial unit, or even the stock market, simply to generate more cash. After all there are already plenty of places for us to meet, but the extra cash (£3200?) would make these occasions less expensive - even free. And in fact that might lead to greater community interaction, and cohesiveness (I.e benefit!) than anything else.

All the best

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 14

Date: 6 July 2016 at 16:25:14 BST

Dear Geoff

If there is no majority support for a new village hall or similar facilities , I suggest that the fund be used to purchase defibrillators for those parts of the village that have expressed the wish to have one nearby (regardless of those available only during working hours on School property).

The remaining funds could then be donated to Tetbury Hospital for the purchase of essential equipment. A well-equipped local hospital is surely something that would benefit the whole community.

Best wishes

Response 15

Date: 8 July 2016 at 16:21:24 BST

Dear Geoff

xxxx and I both feel very strongly that the invested money should be spent on a new village hall sited at the Westonbirt Golf Course. As the money was given to the village for this purpose

It should also be noted that the hall would have 2good tenants in the School and the Golf Club. Most villages would be very envious that we had two good users when they are all struggling to get them used. Income could then be spent on maintenance etc.

We very much approve of xxxx's suggestions (Win win win)

We also feel a public meeting should be called

Kind regards

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 16

Date: 10 July 2016 at 14:52:39 BST

Dear Geoff,

as requested here are my thoughts on the possible building of a new village hall. My thoughts I set out here are based on the experience of my parents who have had the misfortune of living next to their village hall for the last 25 years!

Similar to the layout of the Westonbirt Street, they also live down a dead end lane and their house is the last dwelling before the village hall.

Sadly for my parents their Village Hall has been an ever increasing headache, my father realised early on that he had to become an active member of the Hall committee in order to have an input into its ever developing usage.

Initially their Village Hall was under used. There were no funds to pay the Council Tax, Insurance (always a big headache), maintenance, etc and so they had to rent it out to groups outside their village to bring in enough money to cover their costs.

In the beginning they started with one small play group, which grew and grew in popularity, now there are two play group sessions a day , which means 30 family sized cars rushing up and down the lane dropping off and collecting kids 4 times a day, parking becomes an issue with parents parking across driveways etc. Then came the Brownie/Guides/ Cubs/ yoga/ band practise etc etc and finally the 18ths and 21st parties, which seem to be most weekends bringing with them loud music and drunk teenagers causing havoc!

Most people who use my parent's Village Hall do not live in the village and yet it is the villagers who are left with a lot of administration and hassle for a space they rarely use themselves.

I believe we may find the same situation developing here, there will be a lot of administration and overseeing and I'm not sure to what end?

As a village we are incredibly lucky to have such wonderful venues for our village get togethers. I think we all enjoy the auspicious setting of the Beaufort Polo Club for our spring drinks and likewise how lucky we are to be able to use the grand rooms of the School for the Harvest Festival and the School chapel for our carol service. I think we are incredibly privileged to have the use of these great venues, including Lasborough for the summer walk and wonder why we would want to give all that up to gather in a small pre-fab type hall in the car park of the golf course?

As far as I'm aware the only village activity that requires a village hall at present, is the pilates group which is now established at Shipton Moyne and I believe we are all happy with this arrangement.

And so what do I think could be done with the monies to benefit everyone in the parish?

1) The School has plans to develop the old gym into a 250 seat theatre, with staging and a bar, however they need to raise funds to do this. It is a venue which could benefit those in the parish. I suggest we donate our village hall fund money to the building of this theatre and maybe in return villagers could have the choice of free membership to the sports centre or golf course.

Other ideas, but ones I am less keen on would be:

2) to donate the funds to the Arboretum in return for free membership.

3) Split all monies evenly between every household as a one off payment.

And finally if it doesn't have to benefit the village then we could donate it all to local charities, like Tetbury hospital and/or the local Hospiceor we could do nothing at all and carry on as we have done - having an annual party paid for from the fund interest!

Best regards

xxxx is also in agreement with the above.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 17

Date: 10 July 2016 at 12:57:16 BST

Sent from my iPad

Subject: The village Hall fund

Good Morning,

It is clear to me that the fund governed by the charity commission was in principle set up for the primary purpose of replacing the old village hall.

It is also clear to me a good number of villagers wish for a new hall etc.

I support such wishes. I also believe that the trustees under their fiduciary responsibilities must make their best efforts to deliver the primary purpose.

This perhaps would mean fund raising ,careful investment to gain the best return for the fund (this is a legal fiduciary responsibility of all trustees past and present),and ensuring that fund grows to accomplish the charities primary responsibility.

This is a legal obligation of the trustees,this I have personal experience of when sat on the board of a Royal charity as a trustee.

In summary, the charity to fulfil its obligations as outlined in the trust deed and in doing so delivers on its fiduciary responsibility.

Regards

Response 18

Sent by letter dated 30 June 2016

You have, perhaps unwisely, asked the population for proposals for the utilisation of "The Village Hall Fund" (TVHF). I say unwisely after what happened when the Prime Minister asked the country for its view on membership of European Union! I set out below my proposals for the utilisation of TVHF.

Provision of a New Village Hall

I am sure that you are aware of the proposal for the construction of a combined village hall and golf clubhouse. This is based on the proposal for the school to agree to grant a long lease of a site around the current position of the existing club shed, at a peppercorn.

The school has planning consent for the construction of a clubhouse.

I was a member of the steering group that was set up by the school to promote the project and I can report that the school, at that time, was prepared to commit £30,000 to the project and the members of the golf club proposed a £10,000 contribution. Such a building could be built for a sum in the region of £200,000. This is the estimated cost of the proposed clubhouse building for which planning consent exists.

The design could be revised in size and specification reduced with an commensurate reduction in construction estimated cost. With a contribution from the TVHF this would be a viable project.

In order for negotiations with the school to begin in earnest, a commitment from TVHF to supply funds in principle will be required. The idea has been informally put forward to Westonbirt Leisure Ltd., the operators of the golf course. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the school Governors were in favour of the principle of a new clubhouse when last discussed: the priorities for school funds to be used for educational matters prevailed.

The structure of a deal is apparent. A commitment of funds in principle to the project by TVHF would be the catalyst needed to start the process for negotiation. The result would be beneficial to the parishioners by providing village hall facilities, to school by way of enhanced facilities for golf course and to the golf club members.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 19

Date: 11 July 2016 at 16:15:05 BST

Geoff

I was always under the impression that the capital value of the fund was almost sacrosanct unless it was used to build a new village hall. The management committee at the time the old village hall was sold took the view that the construction of a new hall would be unlikely as the fund would be unable to amass sufficient capital to finance the land purchase and construction of a new building and as you pointed out in your note, the majority of the people living in the village at that time would not have wanted a replacement hall.

You will have seen the final allocation of costs associated with the disposal of the old hall and noticed the exorbitant sum the school helped themselves too for the continuance of the water supply which was plumbed into the hall and had been in use since about 1930. After disposal, the village was left with a capital sum, from memory, of about £85000 which was invested in the Charities Commission's own funds, split between capital growth and interest bearing which over the years led to an increase in the value of the fund to £100,000, which was the target the management committee had set themselves before any disposal of income was considered, this was undertaken to replace the money the school had "charged" the village for the continuance of the existing water supply.

It was always felt that the Village Hall Fund belonged to the village as a whole and that the respective members of the subsequent management committees were only caretakers of the money on behalf of the inhabitants of the village of Westonbirt with Lasborough. The duties of maintaining and administering the fund are not onerous, I looked after the task with the aid of John James in the years after disposal and with the assistance of one or two other villagers up to the time I handed over to Geraldine Shepherd.

By the way I haven't seen a copy of any accounts for the fund from the time I handed over to the present day!!

Why do people want to dispose of the Fund?

There have been reasonable times in the past - hopefully the economy will improve at some time in the future and the fund will be allowed to grow and interest will be received and available for disposal with the capital value of the fund being maintained for posterity. I would not support any alteration to the existing terms and conditions of the fund to enable the capital to be diluted and/or spent and certainly not to join with any other organisation and risk the loss of the Village Fund.

Westonbirt has a Fund, whilst its terms are onerous to those who might wish to dispose of the fund, the Fund is probably still in existence because it is reasonably well protected by those terms set up by The Charity Commissioners at the outset.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Responses not received until after the meeting and could not be not discussed.

Response 20

Date: 11 Jul 2016, at 23:23 BST

Dear Geoff,

Would it be possible to use the Village Hall Fund money to ask BT or another provider to supply a 'superfast' /up to date Broadband service to the parishioners of Westonbirt and Larsborough; this would be of great benefit to young and old and without exception to everyone in the parish.

I don't fully understand internet connection / speeds so forgive me if this is a non sence of a suggestion but thought it worth airing as comparatively our available broadband speeds are almost medieval; the situation is aggravated by getting junk mail from BT talking about 'Superfast' broadband speeds; but when pursued the response is Oh sorry! not to GL8.

Thank you to the village hall fund management committee for supporting the recent very enjoyable summer party.

Regards

Response 21

Date: 12/07/2016 at 14:32 BST

Sorry not to have sent you comments on the village hall sooner, I've been in Cheshire and only found your message last night. Suspect that Lasborough and Bowldown see the village hall as a Westonbirt matter since they would be unlikely to use one - so my first comment is what is the purpose of having a village hall? Would it be used for events/activities which can't be held elsewhere eg on school premises or in St Mary's Lasborough or St Catherine's Chapel or a private house? What would these activities be? Probably worth finding out, if this hasn't been done already, exactly what takes place in neighbouring village halls such as Shipton Moyne, Didmarton, Sopworth.

Secondly, even if it's likely that a village hall would be used, what about the financial side? Insurance, maintenance, heating, cleaning, care taking etc all cost, and while it's likely that volunteers might clean/caretake etc for the first few years or months, couldn't rely on volunteers long term. It's essential for there to be enough revenue to cover costs so the question of how much it would be used, and what could be charged for use, needs to be considered from the beginning. Don't see the point of having a village hall if it becomes a burden on the village.

Doing something in partnership with the Golf Club could make sense, but it would be essential to have a legal agreement whereby if the Golf Club closed, or wanted to dispose of its premises, the amount which the village had put into the building (plus extra if property prices had gone up) was paid back.

In summary - I don't object in principle to a village hall, but essential that it should have regular use, based on local comparisons, and be financially viable.

Responses to Westonbirt Village Hall (Fund) Note with June 2016 Newsletter

Response 22

Date: 12 Jul 2016, at 21:15 BST

We would rather see the money donated to a charity, maybe Tetbury Hospital, or Westonbirt Arboretum !

If any additional responses are received they will be added here at the end.