

Glangrwyney Village Hall

Serving the Community of Llangenny and Glangrwyney

Summary, Analysis, and Main Findings of the Consultation Process

[Conducted over the period May 2016 – December 2017]



The Trustees of the Village Hall Glangrwyney.

Registered Charity No.: 523 659

The Village Hall situated in the village of Glangrwyney was built in 1965 and the legal objects, set up at the time [lease dated 01/04/1965] specified that the property, “shall be held upon trust for the purposes of a Village Hall for use of the inhabitants of the Village of Glangrwyney in and including the Parish of Llangenny and the neighbourhood [the area of benefit] without distinction of sex or of political, religious or other opinions and in particular for use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.”

Since that time, the Trustees [those elected at each formal Annual General Meeting] have managed and operated the property in line with those legal objects, and as a registered charity [Charity Number 523 659], within the legal framework required by the relevant legislation.

When the Hall was built, the Trustees technically operated as owners of the building only. They did not own the land it was built on and they did not own the surrounding area of car park and land immediately outside the Hall. Indeed, in the early days there was also an old Mission Hall adjacent to the main Hall, which was owned by the Church in Wales. [This fell in to disrepair, and was demolished about 25 years ago.]

In 2014, the area of land that the Hall sits on and a portion of land immediately outside the building, including the car-park areas, were gifted to the community, by the landowners. A number of legal processes then had to follow and new governance documents were also drawn up.

These documents updated the definition of the specified area of benefit as: “the combined geographical area covered by the electoral wards of Glangrwyney and Llangenny”, but the Trustees’ requirement to provide a facility for the continued use of the community has been maintained, with the Community Council agreeing to take on a custodian trustee role.

The facilities at the Hall now include:

- a main entrance lobby with toilets off, for male, female and disabled use;
- a single main hall with solid wood flooring of area 75 sq. m., with a fixed stage area of 11 sq. m. in area;
- a galley kitchen 17 sq. m. in area with store room off [7 sq. m.]
- and an attached changing room area with disconnected showers and no connected heating, of some 50 sq. m. area, now used for additional storage only.

The building [external area approximately 218 sq. m.] now sits within a fenced off area of land, approximately 1,555 sq. m. in size. This plot also contains:

- some existing tar-mac areas for parking;
- some additional gravel areas which can also be used for parking;
- an area of shrubbery;
- and two areas of grass to the east and west.

The main Hall can be used for a variety of activities [some examples in the Appendices] and can be used by up to 120 people depending on the nature of the activity and the table and seating requirements. There are 19 folding tables and 120 stacking chairs available to users. The small kitchen area is equipped with: a fridge; domestic cooker; microwave oven; sink; work surfaces and is stocked with a variety of crockery and cutlery.

The Hall has always been maintained effectively and kept in good order in line with health and safety and fire regulations and has been used for the benefit of the community in a number of different ways, as evidenced in the Appendices referenced above. However, the Hall can only be used for one activity at a time and the large Hall itself, is not always

appropriate for some activities and small group usage. [For example, mother and toddler groups and small group meetings for the elderly.]

Over the years, whilst essential works have been carried out in order to maintain a safe environment [for example: upgrades to the electrical wiring and gas boiler systems; maintenance of the wooden floor area; and kitchen upgrades and refurbishments] very little additional work has been done to the rest of the building, since it was built in 1965.

In the early 1990s, a small extension was added to the Hall to provide changing and showering facilities for a local cricket team that played on private land adjacent to the Hall. This cricket team has since left the village and the field, which is still in private ownership, has reverted to rough agricultural use. The changing rooms and shower facilities, which have been disconnected, are therefore no longer in use, but are still within the overall footprint of the Hall and are still the responsibility of the Trustees.

From 2014, the Trustees have had additional responsibilities for the Hall building and the surrounding area of land. During this time, with parts of the Hall no longer fit for purpose [especially with the changing rooms no longer in use] the Trustees have been exploring options for developing the facilities which would more appropriately meet the needs of the community.

In 2015 an initial grant application [outline proposal dated 03/03/2015] was submitted to the Big Lottery fund, but was rejected because there was “limited consultation in relation to the project with local communities, potential beneficiaries or other organisations.” [Communication from the Big Lottery Fund dated 11/05/2015.]

The Trustees therefore set about ensuring that a full and thorough consultation process was set in motion to more fully identify the needs of the community and to give residents within the area of benefit, and other users within the surrounding neighbourhood, the fullest opportunity to have their views recorded.

This document therefore summarises the consultation process and provides a brief analysis of the main findings from the data collected. It also sets out a proposed plan of action for developing the facilities at the Hall in line with the identified needs of the community, established during the consultation process.

Throughout this document, references are made to additional and supporting documentation, which has been collected within a separate set of appendices.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS – What we did.

We ensured that we were familiar with the requirements and guidance documentation available and we attended training sessions provided by PAVO. [Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations 17/03/2016.]

We spoke with other Village Halls, which had been through the process of developing their facilities, to try to benefit from their experiences. In particular we had meetings with: Llanfoist Village Hall; Talybont Village Hall and Llangorse Village Hall.

We held a consultation launch night [May 19th 2016] and received feedback on how attendees thought the Hall might be developed in line with what the community needed.

We publicised the launch of the consultation process and received front page coverage in the local press. [Brecon and Radnor express dated: May 19th 2016]

We drew up a questionnaire and had these professionally printed. We ensured these were delivered to as many properties in the area of benefit as possible and were used as the basis for the collection of information during other events.

We set up a website so that respondents could also make returns on line, and publicised this through notices and at as many events as possible.

We spoke to all current and regular ‘hall users’ and sought their views.

We continued to use additional social events held at the Hall to canvas the opinion of users. [For example we held a Hall and Hearty event in October 2016 which received favourable press coverage.]

We took the opportunity to further publicise the consultation process during the election and referendum held in May and June 2016 when the Village Hall was being used as a polling station. We spent some time physically talking to voters as they used the polling station and spoke to others directly to ensure they were aware of the questionnaires available to make a formal response. [Additional notices and further copies of the questionnaire were distributed.]

We spoke to other community organisations within the locality and asked all committee members to engage with as many residents as possible in the area, to ensure they were aware of what we were doing and had the opportunity to register their opinions.

We took advantage of further training and support opportunities provided by PAVO [Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations] during their surgery sessions they run from time to time. [Date 19/07/17 at Hay.]

We collected data and collated the information received so far and spent some time analysing it in order to offer up some initial feedback findings during sessions in the Spring of 2017.

These early findings were condensed to create a general strategic summary for the Hall, and we drew up a schematic overview on how to achieve these outcomes in order that the community could comment on a draft proposal.

The initial findings, however, did not only cover the Hall itself, as a significant number of responses raised wider issues about facilities more generally, in the community as a whole.

The Committee therefore felt a responsibility to draw attention to these, by writing to the Community Council, as these were matters that were technically, outside the remit of the Hall Trustees themselves.

It was generally felt, at this time, that, as we were dealing with the ‘People and Places’ strand of the Big Lottery Fund, [which does allow for land acquisition] there was no reason why a broader development scheme could not be generated to address these additional issues raised, as well as those specifically pertaining to the Hall itself.

With the support of the Community Council, we wrote to the landowner to try to determine if they were prepared to sell some of the land adjacent to the Hall [which could then feature within the grant application as a whole] so that these additional community matters, could be resolved within a larger proposal.

The landowners, however, wrote back and indicated that they were not minded to sell any land, at this point in time. It became clear therefore that any grant application could only

address the identified needs of the community within resources and facilities currently held under the responsibility of the Village Hall Trustees.

During the early analysis too, it was clear that responses from younger residents within the important secondary school age range were lacking, so we then spent a number of months working with the local secondary school to ensure that all the pupils, resident in our area of benefit, attending the local school, were given the opportunity to register their views.

We then finalised the collection, collation and analysis of the consultation data. The analysis reaffirmed the key strategic direction for the way in which the identified needs of the community, might be met, by developing the current Hall facilities into a more flexible, vibrant and more accessible community resource.

We then spent time considering how the Hall might be adapted, modified and/or developed to meet the identified community needs and what additional resources might be necessary. We also set about identifying a range of projected costs in order to inform a decision on what level of grant should be applied for, as well as trying to identify additional sources of support to sit along side our own funding resources which have been set aside for development purposes.

SUMMARY of DATA COLLECTED

The detail in the questionnaire responses, were transferred to a spreadsheet to aid analysis.

132 returns were finally received. Most of these were returned as hard copy questionnaires but a small proportion were recorded via the website and a number were transcribed during conversations when people were canvassed directly. [Mostly during elections or during the user group meetings.]

With 132 returns and the 'best estimate'* of the current population in our defined 'area of benefit' being around 500, a return rate of 26% therefore was established and felt to be reasonably accurate.

*[*The best estimate was derived from consultation with the statistics officers at Powys County Council, as our defined area of benefit forms only a proportion of the statistical population census area, for which figures are available.]*

The questionnaire followed a simple format with 4 specific questions with some initial ideas to respond to, and 3 additional open-ended questions for respondents to list their own ideas.

Question 1 and 2. These asked for some brief personal details [which were optional with some respondents preferring to remain anonymous] but we did request that they listed an age range and which of the two main villages covered by our area of benefit, they were resident in.

Responses:

- 57% of respondents were from Glangrwyney; [the bigger of the two population areas]
- 12% of respondents were from Llangenny;
- 17% of respondents were youngsters in 12-18 range but their residential details were not disclosed;
- 14% of respondents were undisclosed.

Age Range of Respondents:

- 1.5% were defined as Under 12;
- 20.5% were defined as within the 13-19 age range;
- 10.6% were defined as within the 20-39 age range;
- 25% were defined as within the 40-59 age range;

- 22.7 were defined as within the over 60 age range;
- 19.7% were unspecified.

Whilst the response rate from the 'under 12' group was relatively low, we felt that their views would be most likely to be presented within the views of their parents and a significant number of respondents from other age ranges, made reference to issues that would affect this group, such as:

- developing activities for children and families;
- mother and toddler groups;
- developing childrens' play areas;
- drop in centre for parents/carers;
- development of nursery / play groups.

During the early stages of the consultation process when we were preparing to provide some initial feedback in the spring of 2017, we noticed that we had very few respondents from the 13-19 age group – only 4% in fact.

We then decided that whilst some of their views might also have been presented through other family members, this was a much more important group whose views were not fully evident.

We then spent some time working with Crickhowell High School and managed to ensure that all the pupils that attended that school and were resident within our area of benefit, were directly given the opportunity to express an opinion on the matters covered by the questionnaire.

Whilst it is clear that some pupils within this age range might be attending schools other than Crickhowell High, we were able to move the response rate in the age range from 4% to a much healthier 20.5%.

Question 3. This was a simple yes/no response to the question: "Are you in favour of the Village Hall Committee seeking to develop and upgrade the facilities at the Hall?"

131 out of 132 respondents answered yes to this question, which gave the Trustees a resounding sense that the Hall desperately needed to be moved forward in some way and respondents gave us plenty of ideas about how this might be achieved.

Question 4. The Trustees felt that, in designing a questionnaire, there should be some ideas listed that people could respond too as well as some blank spaces for new ideas to be listed. This proved to be a good move, as a large majority of people, were happy to respond to question 4 compared to fewer responses on questions 5,6 and 7.

There were seven ideas outlined as 'possibilities' in Question 4, derived from general internal discussions but also from ideas that were known to operate across other village halls, locally.

The responses received showed that there was:

- 73% support to create an additional room;
- 32% support for better shower/changing facilities;
- 80% support for a drop-in centre and a community café;
- 61% support for a drop-in centre where IT and Internet access is available;
- 49% support for solar panels to be installed to generate an 'income' to benefit the community;
- 27% support for an 'electric car scheme';
- 48% support for better parking facilities at the Hall.

Questions 5, 6 & 7. These open-ended questions gave respondents the opportunity to list ideas of their own. The wording used was as follows:

- Please list any other developments or facilities you would like to see at the Hall;
- Please list the sort of activities and events you would like to see more of, at the Hall;
- Is there anything else you feel the Village Hall Committee could be doing to create a better environment for the residents of the area?

It was mostly under question 7 where a significant number of respondents drew attention to wider issues within the community, particularly in Glangrwyney, related to:

- Lack of a outside green spaces and play areas;
- Loss of the children's play ground;
- Continued issues with parking in the village, as a whole.

As indicated earlier, the Trustees brought these issues to the attention of the Community Council and explored the possibility of broadening the bid, but without success.

Under questions 5, 6 and 7, and specifically, in relation to the Hall itself, and how it might function more as a community resource, there was a wide and varied spectrum of ideas put forward. Clearly, many would be reliant on the Hall being altered and developed in a number of different ways but it was clear that the Hall could and would be used far more frequently if the facilities were modified, adapted and perhaps extended slightly to create a more practical and flexible environment.

From the responses received and using these as a basis for discussions in the feedback sessions that we held, in order to meet the needs of the community more appropriately, the following summary encapsulates what people were saying about the Hall and how they would like to use it in the future. There was:

- Almost unanimous support to see the Hall developed and improved and operated in a more flexible manner with facilities created that allow for multiple usage;
- A high level of support to create a drop-in facility for casual use in order to reduce the sense of rural isolation especially for older residents;
- A high level of support to see a much wider range of activities at the Hall which can help to improve the wellbeing of residents across the community;
- [To achieve the above] A high level of support to see a broader range of facilities at the Hall which would allow for multiple use and therefore higher levels of uptake with improved access for a wider range of the community with use from more families and youngsters in particular;
- A high level of consensus that the current design of the Hall is poor in relation to: toilets; kitchen facilities; storage; fuel economy; and outside spaces; and is not entirely accessible and user friendly to all sections of the community;
- High level of agreement that the Hall is currently 'low tech' and dated with no computer, ICT / projection facilities or on-line facilities and generally needs to be brought up to date for use in the 21st Century.

Following this initial analysis, some thought was given as to how these identified community needs might be met, and what the Hall might need to look like in order for them to be achieved. A plan was developed to include some additional facilities and some internal modification, which was used as a basis for continued discussion across user groups and residents.

Generally speaking, whilst there was some discussion about the actual detail, the overview was very warmly received across all groups and during the formal feedback sessions held.

In order to address these main findings and in terms of moving developments forward the following strategic plan has been adopted:

- Develop drawings and provisional plans further to ensure it is feasible and viable to remodel and extend the hall so that the main aims, above, can be addressed;
- Create, as far as possible, some detailed costings in order to arrive at a desired level of capital grant sought [i.e. what will it cost to physically create this environment?];
- Take on any professional advice [preplanning consultation etc., i.e. is it likely to meet with approval?];
- Consider any revenue implications to enable this project to function successfully [for example, are there any staffing requirements to ensure the facilities are managed and used effectively, especially in the early period of development?].

Next steps:

- Circulate the summary document to all interested parties for their information and to give them an opportunity to comment further;
- Collect and collate relevant cost estimates;
- Completion of bid forms and checking that all supporting documentation required, is in place;
- Meeting with Planning Authority to ensure all preplanning advice is in place;
- Consultation with partners who are offering direct support or support in kind alongside the Trustees' own resources as part of the bid process;
- Final surgery sessions with PAVO, Powys County Council, and Grwyney Fawr Community Council;
- Submit bid for grant assistance to the Big Lottery Fund, Wales.