

# **THE CHICHESTER HALL WITLEY**



## **5 YEAR BUSINESS PLAN 2016 – 2020**

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 254965  
[www/thechichesterhall.org.uk](http://www.thechichesterhall.org.uk)  
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## Summary

The Chichester Hall was built in 1935 funded by Mrs Spencer Chichester of Enton Hall in memory of her husband, Major Chichester. On its completion in 1939, the Hall was regarded as one of the finest village halls in the south east of England, and thanks to an extensive refurbishment in 2003 is proud to remain so today.

The building is owned by Trustees to be used for the benefit of the community in accordance with the Deed of Trust. The Management Committee, must be resident in the Parish of Witley or close by, and be aged 21 or over.

The Hall is available for use everyday with the exception of Armistice night or Good Friday.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Chichester Hall Management Committee runs a charitable trust dedicated to providing outstanding village hall facilities for use by the whole community at affordable rates.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE HALL**

The Hall occupies a beautiful tranquil setting and as such is an ideal location for wedding receptions, birthday parties, christening parties, anniversaries, dances, social gatherings, public meetings or exhibitions.

The Chichester Hall can be found in the village of Witley on the A283. It is approximately 2 miles from the main A3, London to Portsmouth trunk road, 8 miles south of Guildford.

The main Hall measures 16.8m x 8.5m with a hard wood floor, is fully heated and can accommodate up to 250 people. There is stage, measuring 6.8m x 4.4m with a fully equipped lighting system. We are pleased to also have a second room which is ideal for smaller meetings (8.5m x 4.4m). There is a large kitchen and a veranda overlooking the recreation field.

The Hall is fully accessible for the disabled with a car park to one side. Tables, chairs and crockery are all available. Fees for hiring are published on the Hall's website ([www//thechichesterhall.org.uk](http://www//thechichesterhall.org.uk)) along with terms and conditions of hire and a gallery of photographs.

The Hall is licensed for entertainment but hirers are required to apply for their own temporary event notices for sale of alcohol.

## **Main Achievements and Future Plan Objectives**

### **Significant Recent Achievements:**

- Major extension of the car park area.
- Increasing the land owned by the Hall
- Replaced heating system in main hall with new radiators and fans
- Refit of referees room in conjunction and with thanks to cricket club
- Organising a variety of fund raising events for the Hall including a dog show, race evening and cabaret entertainment.
- A structural roof repair.
- Stage area was resurfaced
- Undertook a full electrical survey.
- Upgraded pathway to garden area and changing rooms
- Replaced damaged pointing
- Reviewed and updated all policies relating to use of all areas by the public in line with current legislation.

### **Significant Achievements in the last few years have been:**

- Redecorating the main Hall with a donation from the Barings family in 2003 including the purchase of an outdoor memorial clock, in memory of Mr Baring
- Funds were raised to enhance the outdoor area which included the purchase of a wooden bench in 2009, in memory of exceptional long service by Ruth Mullard, Committee member.
- Establishment of a website to publicise the Hall, built by a volunteer and the publication of a leaflet about the Hall.
- Secondary glazing throughout to reduce heating costs.
- Redecoration of the sports changing facilities in the basement area in 2010.
- Upgrade of the of the speaker system by generous donation.

## **The Future Plan**

The Committee members wish to:-

- Upgrade the kitchen which is a good size but would benefit from more work surface, a rapid dishwasher, microwave, replacement extractor fan and replacement sinks which would be more eco friendly as water could be heated just at the sink in smaller quantities.
- Upgrade fire retardant within the stage curtain
- Continue to market the Hall to ensure that income from hiring fees does not reduce and that a moderate level of reserves are maintained.
- Improve exterior porch light for a more encouraging warm feel

## History of the Chichester Hall

On May 6th 1935 the new Chichester Hall at Witley was opened. Like most other projects of this kind the decision to build had not been taken without certain misgivings.

The hall was to be located on part of the recreation ground, and at one time it was believed that the local branch of the British Legion would be provided with an annex for their use with facilities for the sale of liquor. This did not go down well with the members of the Parish Council at the time as it was "considered by them to be most undesirable". The matter must have been settled, fairly amicably, however, because the Hall was then built, by local firm F Milton and Sons - on land purchased from The Chandler Trust, with money provided by Mrs Spencer Chichester of Enton Hall in memory of Major Chichester. It was to seat 250 people, with basement accommodation for the cricket and football clubs and a veranda overlooking the adjoining pitch. Expert advice was sought on the acoustics and the luxury of an up-to-date electric gramophone with two amplifiers installed. According to the newspaper report Mrs Chichester and her family took the "closest interest in the scheme, making frequent inspections during the construction and equipment of the building"

The formal handing over to the Trustees representing the village was followed by the entertainment by The Play Makers of London to those inhabitants of 18 years and over, of the ecclesiastical boundary of Witley. A certain number of seats being for those contributing 2s 6d and a silver collection taken on behalf of the Witley Nursing Association.

1935 was the Silver Jubilee of George V and Queen Mary. A tea party was laid in the Hall for all the children of Witley. There was a terrific thunderstorm, all the lights went out and there was no hot water for the washing up. When war was declared in September 1939, everyone became busy filling sandbags and making blackout curtains. The local Red Cross ladies scrubbed the Hall to make it ready for use as a casualty station. The Head Warden, Mr Edwards, had his headquarters in the stokehold (boiler room) at the Hall, and each night he slept there in order to be ready for an emergency. At this time the Hall was not being used, but then the Canadians arrived. Dances were held in the Hall and continued throughout the war, the local residents becoming accustomed to the "drunk truck" coming along at the end of the evening to pick up the "casualties".

Among the strictures laid down by the original Deed of Trust is the responsibility laid on the Management Committee to preserve the letting of the Hall from any 'secretary or body promoting sentiments or propaganda of a disloyal, unpatriotic or seditious character' and to uphold the wishes of Mrs Chichester that no dance should be held on 'Armistice night nor Good Friday'. Despite these restrictions the Chichester Hall, regarded when it was opened, as one of the finest village halls in the South East of England, continues nevertheless, to provide a home to many village events, including the now,

yearly, pantomime. The gratitude and affection still felt by many of the people of Witley for the Chichester Hall is a tribute to the remarkable generosity of Mrs Chichester and her family. Fittingly the Committee continues to meet in the 'Swallow' Room, named after a local headmaster, the very first secretary and treasurer.

## The Committee

The building is owned by Trustees to be used for the benefit of the community in accordance with the Deed of Trust. The Management Committee, must be resident in the Parish of Witley, or nearby, and be aged 21 or over. There are 8 current voluntary members of the Committee and one paid part time member of staff – the cleaner/caretaker. The deed of trust states that the Committee is responsible for

- Engagement of staff as required
- The maintenance of the good conduct of the Hall
- The provision, management and repair and upkeep of the Hall, furniture and effects.

The main way we achieve these objectives is through hiring the Hall. The Committee members come from a wide range of backgrounds allowing access to much expertise. Each has a specified area of interest to ensure the smooth running of the Hall. These areas cover secretariat, booking, financial, fund raising and Chairmanship functions. Further volunteers also are available to assist with fundraising or maintenance. The Committee meet every other month with additional fundraising meetings when required.

## Financial resources

### Revenue

The Committee has made significant efforts to increase the revenue of the Hall in the last few years. Letting income has recovered to levels before 2012 where we lost a major Hall user. . This has arisen from a progressive pricing policy of rent increase. Grants are given to fund specific maintenance projects so vary from year to year. The table shows that in 2013 the Hall received a major donation of £5k from the Lawn Tennis Association and in 2015 a grant from Witley Parish Council of £5.5k. These were used to largely fund the major extension of the car park. However, the Table below also shows that, letting income still represents the bulk of income.

TOTAL INCOME	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%	£k	%
Letting income	17.6	85	18.9	68	20.1	94	19.8	76
Grants	0.3	1			0.7	4	5.5	21
Donations	0.6	3	5.8	21	0.3	1	0.5	2
Other	2.3	11	2.9	11	0.3	1	0.4	1
	20.8	100	27.6	100	21.4	100	26.2	100

## Fundraising

Fundraising is an important element of the Committees role to enable it to meet its responsible to preserve the Hall. Witley Parish Council are consistently generous with grant payments to assist the Hall. Each year residents of the local parish are generous in their donations.

The Committee has also made efforts to raise income from fundraising activities.

<b>FUND RAISING</b>	<b>2012 £k</b>	<b>2013 £k</b>	<b>2014 £k</b>	<b>2015 £k</b>
Revenue	2.2	2.8	0.3	0.3
Cost	0.2	1.0		
Net	2.0	1.8	0.3	0.3

The Table above shows that net proceeds from fundraising were averaging around £2k pa until 2013. . These activities range from Shows, to running stalls and teas at the Witley Fair. All are organised and “staffed” by members of the Committee and their partners. In the last two years the Committee membership has been reduced which has reduced resources for fundraising.

## Operating costs

The budgeted annual running cost for the Hall is around £20k pa. Most of this can be accounted for through wages, utility bills and repairs, maintenance and insurance.

<b>OPERATING COSTS</b>	<b>2012</b>		<b>2013</b>		<b>2014</b>		<b>2015</b>	
	<b>£k</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>%</b>
Wages	3.8	26	4.0	19	4.0	20	4.8	14
Utilities	5.3	36	7.6	37	5.9	30	7.2	21
Maintenance	2.0	13	4.8	23	5.3	27	18.1	51
Insurance	2.1	14	2.0	10	2.4	12	2.7	8
Other	1.7	11	2.2	11	2.2	11	2.0	6
	14.9	100	20.6	100	19.8	100	34.8	100

The Table above shows that the Committee has managed to contain operating costs. The exception is utilities which have been affected by recent sharp changes in commodity prices. Maintenance costs are partially funded by grants so the level of annual expenditure varies with the level of grants received. In 2015 the Committee completed a car park extension at a cost of £13.3k

## Reserves

The Committee have been aware that there is a potentially significant increase in improvement/maintenance expenditure in the next few years. Therefore, it has established a conservative reserving policy to increase its reserves to contribute towards this potential expenditure. Since 2010 reserves



have increased from £7.4k to £24.7k. Around £8k of these will be required to fund replacement of the heating system in the main hall.

A full set of Financial Statements are presented at each Committee meeting and lead by the Treasurer, the Committee is fully apprised of the current financial position.

### Financial challenges

To maintain, and increase, the level of rental income that sustains the Hall, it is necessary to maintain its decorative standards and to make improvements to meet the increasing requirements of hirers. This means that the improvements incorporated in the Table below will have to be completed.

Initial views of the costs of the programme outlined above are in the order of £36,500 [this will need revising when the table below changes] The five year programme of expenditure is shown in the Table below.

	2016 £k	2017 £k	2018 £k	2019 £k	2020 £k
Upgrade the kitchen, replace cooker etc,		10.0	15.0		
Functioning CCTV					
Upgrade fire retardant in stage curtain					
Upgrade garden area		1.5			
<b>TOTAL</b>					

This expenditure is at a much higher level than the Hall can generate from its own income. Therefore, the Committee will be working very hard to attract grants from appropriate funders.

We continue to apply elsewhere for grants and have taken advice from Surrey Voluntary Action on how best to succeed.

## The Service the Village Hall Provides

The Service the village hall provides is by providing a location for community events either private or through regular or long term hire.

Type of Use	Used by
Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Weddings</li><li>• Parties</li><li>• Christmas Tree ceremony</li><li>• Meetings</li><li>• Football Club</li><li>• Cricket Club</li><li>• Barn dance</li><li>• Public Enquiries</li><li>• Garden Association</li><li>• Circuit training</li><li>• Pantomime</li><li>• Polling Station</li></ul>

## Continuing Development

We wish to understand the needs of the Community around us so we will consider how best to approach a marketing strategy which may included a survey of local people in the coming year. This will work towards ensuring that the Hall remains supported and continue to meet the aims of the Hall's first benefactor, Mrs Chichester, which we still work towards today within the Deed of Trust requirements.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiastic Committee,</li> <li>• Large main Hall,</li> <li>• Excellent position with out door space and veranda,</li> <li>• Second room for hire for smaller meetings,</li> <li>• Base of regular Customers,</li> <li>• Reliable trades folk to assist,</li> <li>• Fully accessible for the whole community,</li> <li>• Large Kitchen,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership structure means that <i>funding cannot be guaranteed</i></li> <li>• Not cosy,</li> <li>• ,</li> <li>• Location – slightly out of town,</li> <li>• 80 years old so constant maintenance needed,</li> <li>• All work done or arranged by small committee and their partners,</li> </ul>
Opportunity	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlist more volunteers who might help with fundraising events,</li> <li>• Aim to make any new projects or repairs as energy efficient as possible,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants becoming more difficult to access in the current economic climate,</li> <li>• Lack of funds for a major financial crisis,</li> <li>• Competition from other local venues</li> </ul>