

History of Studley Village Hall

The Old Building

For many, many years the Needle Industry dominated Studley employing most of the villagers. Recreation took place in the Company's Social Hall and at its Sports Club. But by the 1950's the population began to increase as more families moved into Studley.

Times were changing. The Social Hall was sold for redevelopment. However, public spirited inhabitants led fund raising for a Village Hall.

The original village hall was built in the early 1960's. It was a prefabricated building with two meeting rooms, a hall that in the early days could be split into two, and a stage. A kitchen served both meeting room one and the main hall. Due to its construction the old building was noisy, cold and uncomfortable, the accommodation never being quite the right size, either too big or too small.

Failure

After the failure of a bid to the millennium commission that would have involved rebuilding most of the civic buildings in the middle of the village, the management committee decided to investigate ways for improving the hall. A survey by Stratford district council in 1977 identified over £200,000 needed to be spent to bring the building up to a reasonable standard and this did not include facilities for the disabled. This spurred the committee to bid for funds to rebuild the complete hall.

Failed again

After discussions with Stratford district council a commitment was given to assist with the rebuilding costs, so with an estimated £700,000 a sub-committee was set up to oversee fund raising after many months work an application was made to the community fund for half of the construction cost-£350,000.

Success

A tense time followed and after 5 long months we were disappointed to learn our bid had been refused. However some of the comments and response gave us hope so we set to again and reworked our application, which the second time around, was approved. With the funds in place the committee began the long process of tendering that involved creating a team of experts to guide them on their way.

Contract awarded

After a lengthy process the firm of Greswolde Construction was chosen to build the hall negotiations began in Feb 2002 and a start date of April 2002 was agreed, with completion due November 2002.

Delays

Shortly after demolition had started we were advised that due to delays with the steel work and discovery of buried telephone cable crossing the site additional time would be required.

Sadly this meant that the hall would not be opened for Christmas but as insufficient funds were available to furnish the building to a high standard this was not a major problem.

Additional funding

With alterations to the design and additional costs incurred by stringent building control requirements an application to the parish council for additional funding was looked upon favourably and a grant was awarded for the completion of the construction work. Whilst construction was still underway the committee set about securing funds for fixtures and fittings.

Bids were made to numerous agencies, the largest one being West Midlands Arts, for seating, lighting and sound equipment.

This bid was finally approved in Nov 2002 enabling orders to be placed.

More delays

Another delay occurred when the delivery of both the gas and electric metres was held up – consequently the services could not be connected. This had a knock on effect meaning completion was delayed until early Jan 2003.

The new Studley Village Hall was officially opened in June 2003