

Last year was a busy one for the halls, complicated by the fact that income in the last few weeks has been severely curtailed. This reduction in income will continue for the first few months of the 2020/21 year and we will have to reduce expenditure as much as possible in order to keep the subsidy at a reasonable level.

The Memorial Hall continues to be popular for smaller events and classes. There was a major maintenance problem when the area below the stage became flooded; it transpired that the down pipe from the guttering was not connected to the main drainage system. Unfortunately it took some time for this to be discovered so, once it was fixed by relocating the down pipe, it has taken some time to dry out. The cost was met from the Halls Reserve Account.

The Library continues to go from strength to strength under the guidance of Nikki with the support of the local volunteers. The number of users and issues rose again which is not the case in other Milton Keynes libraries. There were also a number of successful events in the Institute although it is disappointing to report that the Wednesday Senior Friends Club has ceased due to the lack of an organiser. With the help of Section 106 funds we were able to install a new ramp, door and windows at the rear of the building which improved the access for deliveries and the disabled. We plan to replace the front windows later this year provided there are adequate s106 funds.

The Summerlin Centre remains very popular and we are grateful to Mike Smith for all his caretaking duties. A problem with the flat roof emerged during the heavy rainstorms early this year and this is now in the process of being fixed.

We were able to extend the Old Fire Station with the help of Section 106 funds; the car park has also extended and renovated. The main room in the Old Fire Station is used by the After School Club who now has an improved kitchen while the smaller room which has been created is used for small classes. The WCs can be accessed from the Recreation Ground when an appropriate event is being held there.

There is now a new facility available for hire to local residents – as part of the Greens development a community room has been created which is run jointly by the Town Council and the Greens Residents Association. Meetings of up to 40 people can be held there and the room is booked through the Council office.

Two new facilities are about to come to fruition. Construction has started on the Sports Hall adjacent to the Summerlin Centre. This will provide space for a basketball court, two badminton courts, and indoor football. It will also be used by the Table Tennis Club. Completion was scheduled for September but this may be delayed by the current suspension of work by Taylor Wimpey.

Secondly we have been able to secure about £200,000 from Section 106 sources to improve the facilities on the Recreation Ground. Following consultation with Swallowfield pupils we are drawing up a scheme which we will publish for comment later this year. We hope to

include a larger climbing frame, a zip wire, and a small cycling circuit. The skate board facility will be removed. The work will take place over the next couple of years.

These last two projects are likely to be the final major steps in the improvement of the recreational facilities in the town since there will be limited additional Section 106 funds in the next few years. Woburn Sands now boasts some of the best facilities in the area and the Town Council is committed to maintaining these in the best possible way but we would ask for the support of residents in order to achieve this ambition. As part of this programme we have commissioned a comprehensive Risk Analysis and Review of Safety Precautions in all the halls and these reports will guide our maintenance programme over the next few years.

Mike Geddes
Chair, Halls Committee