

**Westhorpe Village Hall Committee**  
Report for the Annual Parish Meeting May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016

This has been an extremely busy year for the Village Hall Committee, focussed especially on the detailed design of a new Village Hall and fund raising for it.

A great deal of time and effort went into the submission of the highly involved Stage 3 Big Lottery application in June 2015. In November we were delighted to be able to announce that we had been successful.

We had several very popular and enjoyable fund raising events in the Village, in particular a Promises auction and two concerts by Nutz and Boltz.

Westhorpe Trust pledged a sizeable sum of money to the new build project. We received a Locality budget allocation from County Councillor Jane Storey and also, more recently, from our District Councillor Roy Barker. We have been successful in a grant application to the Suffolk Empowering Communities Fund and also in an application to Mid Suffolk District Council.

All these things combined with donations from village residents and fund raising activities such as raffles at various village events mean that we have achieved our goal of raising sufficient funding to build a new Village Hall.

As soon as we were able to publicise the award of a grant from the Big Lottery we advertised in the regional press for expressions of interest in tendering for the work. A panel of committee members analysed the applications we received and four contractors were invited to tender. Due to the ground conditions of the village hall site it has been necessary to carry out an additional, deeper borehole investigation than the one done last year before a more reliable price could be provided by any contractor. This has delayed proceedings somewhat but we hope to be in a position to enter into a contract and start work on site shortly.

Another major achievement this year has been the development of a fantastic new website. It began as a village hall website but grew into something much more comprehensive with great potential for the whole village.

The Village Hall Committee is extremely grateful for all the support given to them by the village community and especially to the many people who are not committee members but have given up much time and energy to running events and designing aspects of the new village hall. As Chairman I would like to record my admiration and thanks to all those who have served on the Committee this year too. They have myriad skills and have given unstintingly of their time and effort. The work and commitment of the Committee was recognised recently by a Community Achievement Award from Mid Suffolk District Council.

I sincerely hope that the next Annual Parish Meeting will be held in the new hall!

Sue Hull