

Tomlin Hall 2020/21

This has been a fallow period for Tomlin Hall. There has been little activity apart from Sunday services (The Bickington Christian Fellowship), and a bit of pop-up shop activity. Steps were taken to make the Hall COVID-19 secure, and to establish written COVID-19 agreements with hirers. However, there was little activity in the summer. The management committee, usually populated by regular hirers is down to the two trustees, Graham Prosser, and Marc Binns.

The purpose of leaving fields to lie fallow in medieval crop rotation was to increase future productivity. In that spirit this report will focus on the future. The funding from the NDDC for upgrading elements of the Hall remains in place until the 31st of March 2022. The sum of £20,449.70 was focussed primarily on the kitchen. However, in February, 2020, conversations and a site visit including NDDC Officers, and councillors were exploring the possibility of a more comprehensive refurbishment. We plan to revive this conversation.

The Hall lies on the boundary of a development represented by the agreed planning application 56351 and a proposed amendment 72685. There are a number of implications for the Hall:

- The plan proposes a small number of additional parking spaces for the Hall, to the north of the current parking area. An additional access to the parking area is proposed.
- North Lane is at its narrowest point by the Hall. The management of this narrow space with traffic related to increased housing, and the intensification of farm traffic might inhibit access to the Hall.

Over the years there has been a supposition that the Hall would maintain the Open Space part of phase 1 of 56351 referred to as a Village Green. The Hall does have an interest in maintaining the quality of the environment, and in particular supporting spaces and activities that reflect the local demography. This is heavily skewed towards the older age groups, and we are aware of alternative developments locally for younger people. However, activities such as maintenance of land implies a budget that the hall does not have. We are therefore looking for potential partners in this work.

The formal situation has been clarified by the S106 officer “Clause 4 of schedule 4 (of the S106 agreement) states maintenance of the phase 1 On-Site Public Open Space may be undertaken by Tomlin Hall on behalf of the owners. This could be by agreeing a rate with the developer to maintain this site, but equally Tomlin Hall are not obligated to undertake this work so it can remain with the management company. “

The Hall has an interest in its surrounding environment. Our challenge is to engage in the relevant processes in a way which is feasible.

Marc Binns

Chair Tomlin Hall