

Village Hall

- 1 what is the potential scale of income and who are the competition;
Initially we would expect very little change in income as village residents and the local community are the biggest users and in that respect we have no real competition.
As trustees we are tasked to run the Hall for their benefit so that it remains an affordable and well maintained building.
- 2 what are the risks, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses of the Village Hall within this market;
The only weakness at present is the lack of more suitable kitchen facilities and storage space. The Halls strength is in the people who use it and appreciate the fact that it is run purely on a voluntary basis and offers affordability.
The opportunities for future use can only be increased by better facilities.
- 3 how will this investment beat the competition and gain real return through increased revenues
We cannot guarantee increased revenue, we can guarantee happier users as we offer reasonable prices.
- 4 What is the target level of income with the enlarged kitchen facility;
We have no target income but with the increasing size of the parish and affordable prices we would expect some increase of income.
- 5 what level of income is required to replace the kitchen in the future;
If we are unable to increase the size of the kitchen we do not foresee a need to replace the existing kitchen for some time but storage will continue to be a problem.
- 6 what level of business is at jeopardy from the changes to the church (i.e. what are the risks to this investment as above)
We are reliably informed by our PCC representative that the changes to the Church will in no way affect the use of the Hall. It can be said that the Church development will have no impact on the business potential of the Hall and the Church will continue to use the facilities as at present.
We have in the past and will continue in the future to work together to accommodate everyone's needs.
- 7 The expressions of support for the project received by the council are from **existing** users – how will the investment make the hall more attractive to **new** users?
The modest amount of s106 money that the extension project will need provides a value for money improvement by enhancing the existing facilities and therefore offering a more user-friendly environment in which to prepare for and run an event
- 8 Evidence is required of support from other potential **new** users who would do so if the kitchen/toilet were enhanced rather than because of other factors such as lack of parking and restriction of music hours etc
We have no evidence from potential new users but we do have evidence from local organisations (and individuals, by word of mouth), which have used the Hall that the improvements we want to put it place will be beneficial to the parish as well as the surrounding district.

- 9 Have all the Village Hall Trustees considered reconfiguration of the existing kitchen and bar space by moving the bar forward or removing it completely to providing more kitchen area and a staff toilet? This could achieve the objective for a much lower cost without extensive building works. Please provide a high-level estimate for this alternative solution.

The objective is to improve the facilities and make the Hall more appealing to more people. The trustees feel that the removal or reconfiguration of the bar would be detrimental and in fact income could be lost as the bar/committee room and storage areas have proved to be useful and popular assets. The addition of a 'staff' toilet can only enhance those assets. Surely to take an asset away will make the Hall less attractive.

- 10 Have all the trustees looked at, and compared, the kitchen arrangements at Durweston and Stourpaine halls who are competitors for the wedding market and neither have a dedicated bar space or staff toilet and where recent local potential hirers have used rather than the Okeford hall? If so, what were the Trustees conclusions?

The trustees have not looked specifically at Durweston and Stourpaine Halls but we refer you to the previous question and reiterate that our aim is to improve and give future trustees the opportunity and scope to move forward.

- 11 The village hall balance sheet relies heavily on Fund raising and donations which accounts for around half of its total annual receipts, what evidence is available to show how this investment will make it more viable, without the dependence on these fund raising events in the event of loss of the considerable voluntary effort being available to raise these funds?

We have no evidence that the investment will make the Hall more viable but it will make it a more comfortable and modern place to work where more people can be involved. The fund raising events we carry out do in themselves help to bring the community together, the Hall is the heart of the community and there has never been a time that volunteers haven't come forward when needed.