

Village Hall Update

The Trustees would like to give a very big **thank you** to the many people who turned out on Bank Holiday Monday to visit the new hall and to help move the straw bales into it. The event was a great success with over 170 people, including many children, coming through the gates to join in the fun. Approximately 350 bales that were harvested locally last summer were unloaded from trailers and then moved by trolleys, pulled by youngsters and adults alike, into the building. Much of the floor space was covered in a 6-high stack of bales by the end. The EDP ran a lovely article and photos of the event on Tuesday 14th April and we even received a mention in the Editor's Opinion column, although I'm not sure that we can truly be compared to the Amish community as portrayed in the film 'Witness'! In true journalistic fashion not everything written was 100% correct but it did successfully convey the community spirit that underpins the new hall project.

A big thank you must also go to local farmers Nick Deane, Roger Lamb and Louis Baugh for providing the straw and helping to store and transport it, to the WISE ladies who kindly helped with the refreshments on the day, to Brian Thompson and Mark Pell and their trusty helpers for cooking the BBQ food so well, to Roger Human of **Tavern Tasty Meats** for very generously providing the sausages and burgers for the event, and to John Youngs Ltd. (the building contractor) who co-operated brilliantly with the project team to allow the event to happen in spite of all the Health and safety and Insurance restrictions that we have to comply with in these modern times.

Following on from the straw bale moving event two public meetings were held, on Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th April, to allow people to hear the case for each of the proposed names for the new hall and to express their own views. About 90 people in total attended these meetings, with the second being slightly livelier than the first! Everyone eligible in the villages was encouraged to consider the options and vote for their preferred choice of name. Voting forms were distributed in a special Newsletter and the ballot was open from Thursday 16th until noon on Sunday 19th April (postal votes were also allowed). The sealed ballot boxes were opened in the presence of representatives from both sides of the debate and the votes were counted on Sunday 19th April by Barbara McGoun, our local NNDC councillor. A total of 372 votes were cast, which is probably a better turn-out than most general elections, and the result was (with the indicative name preferences in brackets):

Victory **240 votes** (New Victory Hall 160; Victory Hall 58, no preference 22)

Swallowtail **132 votes** (Swallowtail Hall 89; Swallowtail Centre 40, no preference 3)

The names of all those who had voted were checked (after numbering each vote and separating the vote from the name, to maintain confidentiality) to ensure that all votes received were from eligible voters. The Trustees are satisfied that the outcome is a fair one and the voting slips have since been destroyed.

The Trustees met on Tuesday 21st April to debate the outcome of the ballot and agreed to adopt the name **New Victory Hall** for the new building, in accordance with the majority vote. The turnout for the vote was excellent and the Trustees would like to thank everyone who participated in it, especially Barbara McGoun and the other helpers who assisted with the arrangements. It is hoped that those of you who didn't get the name of your choice will graciously accept the democratic result and continue to support the project which is, after all, about enhancing the services and amenities within our community to the benefit of everyone.

Forthcoming events to look out for include a flower arranging demonstration in the Victory Hall at 7pm on April 29th, a quiz night on May 22nd, the Barn Dance on June 20th and a two week community participation event starting in late June, when people will be given an opportunity to help build and render the straw bale circular meeting room for the New Victory Hall. There will also be a coffee morning soon to discuss the wording for the plaque that is to be located on the outside of the Victory Hall when it is sold. More details about all these events will be published as they become available.