

OUTLINE PROPOSAL FOR THE THEATRE REFURBISHMENT

This is an old building, which has been transformed into a theatre by the membership. Whilst it still is a valuable asset for a village of our size, it has grown tired and in need of a refurbishment for it to carry on into the future. The seats are uncomfortable and fast approaching the end of their life. There is also the problem of the two support pillars, which cause sight-line issues especially for the Film Club.

The committee has therefore undertaken the task of looking into a refurbishment. John Porter, who has a wealth of experience in dealing with large projects, has been recruited as project manager. Ray Wicks, a respected retired architect was brought in as an advisor and has come up with a number of interesting ideas.

The main roof is not solely supported by the front gable end. The proposal is to remove the tile cladding revealing the brick wall beneath, allowing it to be removed and replaced by a much lighter timber frame. The tiles will then be replaced. We have ascertained that planning permission will not be required. Now that the weight has been greatly reduced, the large beam and its supporting pillars can be removed along with the existing dry wall cladding. New dry wall cladding incorporating 100mm of insulation will be fitted, helping to create a warmer auditorium. New flooring, carpet and seats will be fitted. The realignment of the seating and the removal of the pillars allows an additional 5 seats to be added with no lack of leg room. New concealed lighting, heating system and redecoration of both the auditorium and front kiosk complete the refurbishment.

We have employed Structural Engineers to advise on the viability of our proposal and a Quantity Surveyor so that a budget (see attached) can be put together. This includes a large contingency sum as this is an old building and we can never be too sure what will be uncovered once building commences. As the budget requires a huge fund-raising effort by the players the Committee felt that a professional fund-raiser, Hannah Scott, be employed. She is willing to work at reduced rates and has already identified where some grant money maybe obtained.

Once we are satisfied that we will be able to raise funding we will compile a list of suitable contractors who will be asked to tender. Although this seems a lot of work, we envisage that it should take no longer than 2-3 months. With a little tinkering with our production schedule we should be able to start work at the beginning of June and be finished in time for the Hurst Festival. What year depends on when the funds are available.