



The Rifle Hall Trust, Halesworth

Annual Report – October 2015

Governance

1. The Trust inherited by the new group of Trustees in 2014 was an unincorporated charity, which leaves individual Trustees legally liable. Trustees therefore decided to incorporate the charity. Traditionally this has been achieved by also registering charities as companies limited by guarantee. But in the last few years a new legal form has come into being – the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This has the advantage that only one set of annual returns is required, rather than one to the Charity Commission and another to Companies House.
2. There are two types of CIO – the Foundation model and the Association model. The Foundation CIO is appropriate for charities run by a board of Trustees on behalf of the beneficiaries – the residents of Halesworth in this case. The Association CIO is appropriate for charities that are membership organisations and are run by the members. At this point in time the charity is not a membership organisation and The Rifle Hall, Halesworth was registered as a Foundation CIO in [month] 2014.
3. The Trust is launching a new Friends group in October 2015. Depending on the success of this initiative, it could lay the foundations for changing to an Association CIO.

Finance

4. There is a separate report on The Trust's finances.

Short Term Improvements

5. Proposals for the major renovation of the hall are still being developed (see below). In the meantime Trustees are working through a program of short-term improvements designed to make the hall more useable and more pleasant in order to attract and retain users.
6. The improvements this year have been funded by grants from The Adnams Charity, Community Action Suffolk, Halesworth Town Council and Viridor Credits Ltd, as well as support in Kind from Ridgeons builders merchants. We are very grateful to all these organisations. The works completed this year are outlined below.
7. We have insulated above the suspended ceiling in the main hall, using blown-in cellulose, to a depth of 30cm. This should reduce heat loss from the hall considerably, helping to keep the hall much warmer in winter.
8. The old gas blow heaters have now been replaced with infrared wall heaters. These are much more efficient and, unlike the old gas heaters, they do not put moisture into the atmosphere, which should help reduce the damp problems in the hall. The new heaters are also silent, which should make it much easier for people to hear at spoken word events.
9. We have had the main hall and foyer floors sanded and resealed. Many people have already commented on the positive difference this has made to the look and the feel of the place.
10. Finally, we have been able to replace the very old floor coverings in the kitchen & bar areas and in the WCs and cloakrooms.

11. The one item on our original list of short-term improvements that we have not yet been able to fund is the lowering of the soil level at the rear of the hall. This will remain a priority for spending of any funds we manage to raise.

Renovations

12. Trustees have been working on the basis of renovation plans submitted in 2012 and approved by Waveney District Council. However, that consent has now lapsed and the Trust will need to submit a new planning application.

13. In March this year, we established that the cost of renovations - based on the recommendations of the 2014 structural survey and the 2012 plans - would be in the region of £750,000 to £800,000. The cost estimate was very kindly carried out *pro bono* for The Trust by a local retired Quantity Surveyor, to whom we are very grateful.

14. Trustees reluctantly decided that this sum represented an unreasonable fundraising target to aim for. Firstly, the main Lottery fund that we are planning to apply for has a maximum grant level of £500,000. Secondly, the main organisation we were looking to for secondary funding – Viridor Credits Ltd – is no longer available due to the closure of Wangford landfill site. Thirdly, we doubted that any funding organisation would view this as good value for money, when compared with funding new build projects.

15. The Trust has now taken the decision to scale back the renovation plans so as to keep the cost below £500,000. We are now awaiting revised plans and cost estimates to consider.

Communications and Publicity

16. This year saw the launch of the Rifle Hall's new web site – www.theriflehallhalesworth.onesuffolk.net It was designed and built for us, *pro bono*, by a local volunteer, to whom the Trust is very grateful. We try very hard to keep the site's calendar up to date, so that members of the public can easily find out if the hall will be available at a time they want to book.
17. This year we also launched a new Facebook page - www.facebook.com/HalesworthRifleHall This too is being managed for us by a volunteer.
18. March found the Rifle Hall hosting and participating in the very successful 'Halesworth Rising'. This event provided the opportunity for members of the public and interested groups to see and discuss the major development plans of several local organisations. These included – Halesworth Campus, Halesworth Health, St. Mary's Church, Grandparents and Parents Play Association, The Cut, Halesworth Dementia Carers Fund, The Rifle Hall and Halesworth Community Nursing Care Fund.

Thanks

19. The Trust would like to express its grateful thanks to the many people who have offered their time and expertise on a voluntary basis to help us this year. We would not have been able to achieve so much without that help.
20. We would also like to express our thanks to the organisations and individuals who have helped The Trust financially, through grants and donations. We hope they will be happy with the resulting improvements.

Cllr. Tony Goldson, Chairman
21st October 2015

On behalf of The Trustees:

- Daniel Baggott
- Tony Goldson
- Bud Simpkin
- Teresa Utting
- Kevin Vail
- Simon Weeks