

DRINKSTONE WAR MEMORIAL INSTITUTE
STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 27th JUNE 2011

We have had a year of action interspersed with frustratingly slow progress as regards our new hall project. This time last year Dave Woodward and I were working with our solicitor to agree terms for the payment of a share of the proceeds of sale of the Cherry Tree land (approximately 13% of the whole sale price), to Mid Suffolk District Council for our use in building a new community hall. With all the parties involved and various planning complications, this was a very slow process but all was finally agreed in February this year and the long-awaited planning approval was issued, so that the land could at last be advertised for sale in March.

Tenders for the land were received, at a much lower value than would have been anticipated a few years ago when the land was expected to be sold, and a developer has been selected who is now carrying out all the required tests and reports on the land before exchanging contracts. We are told that contracts will be exchanged very soon now and at that time we shall have confirmed the exact amount that will be available to us for our project and the date we can expect this to be available. We believe the figure will be in the region of £130,000.

This £130,000, together with the insurance fund of £52,000 that Sue will tell you about later and the £50,000 that we are holding for the project in our own and the Parish Council's accounts, gives us £232,000 as a substantial base for the new hall build. Our aim is to obtain grants for the balance of £100,000 that we need to build and furnish the hall and landscape the site. Dave Woodward is in charge of this and is all set to proceed with final applications as soon as we have the written information we need from the Cherry Tree sale.

We have received firm quotes from three builders and the steering committee will be discussing these in detail and appointing a building company as soon as possible. We are very much aware that as there is no longer a hall available to the village, this new build is even more urgent than it was a year ago.

Chris Wright and I have been involved with this project for many years now. Sadly for us, the delays created by other parties mean that it is likely that we shall both be leaving Drinkstone before a new hall can be completed. We are standing down from the main committee tonight but are both willing to continue to be involved with the new build plans and to stay on as advisors to the steering committee for as long as we are in the village. It is, however, time for those who will remain, to take this project forward to a successful completion. And we wish you well with all our hearts.