

This leaflet is from Repton Village Hall committee. It explains why the current hall faces closure and how a feasible long term replacement is within reach - if you want it.

Each household will soon receive a voting slip and information from the parish council to see if there is support for making a large grant to this project through an increase in our local tax. Our leaflet here contains background information on the hall's issues, the work done over the last ten years to develop a new one and shows where more detail can be found. If you agree that the proposal is worth paying a bit more local tax for, as we hope you will, the hall could be replaced in a year or so. Please look after the voting slip as no replacements can be issued.

<p>Votes need to be cast between October 16th and 12pm on November 15th in boxes located at Post Office, Mulberry, Samara's in Repton and the Swan in Milton who have kindly agreed to act as voting sites where you can post the slip delivered to your house.</p>
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The village hall in Repton will not last more than another few years. The wood is rotting and the hall is now beyond its predicted 40 year life and viable repair (see pictures on the website and facebook pages). This leaflet is a short summary of the many issues we face in securing its future. **Each household will be asked to vote for or against a way of funding a new hall through a grant as indicated in the leaflet from the parish council.**

There will be an open afternoon / question time at the hall on Saturday 4th November from 2 to 5pm with a display of the proposed new hall plans and latest figures. Please read on....

There is a proposal to build a new hall. A full report explaining the need for a grant was submitted to the parish council and is available on the village hall website.

These are the sort of questions we are being asked

Is a village hall needed in Repton?

At present it is used almost every day - often several times. It is the only publicly available building of its size in the community and many aspects of our community life will be stunted if it has to close. The village hall is an independent charity and not a branch or asset of the parish council as many believe. Closure could mean the village loses the site for good if it ceases to function. Surely Repton and Milton need a decent sized hub that will last 100years or more, not 40?

Is a new village hall financially viable?

Since it was built in 1973 the present hall has paid its way and built up a small reserve to cover general repairs and contingencies. But it has become outdated and worn-out and is no longer as attractive as it once was for many social functions. The approved plan for a new hall is slightly larger and in a similar position on the site. Such a new building will cost less to heat, light and maintain, be more appealing and attract a wider range of users to the main hall. Additionally, with better use of space (e.g. no dedicated stage) we will have

- (i) a room that can be let separately from the main hall for use as committee room in evenings and in the day time for others such as public service users.
- (ii) a "community room" linked to the kitchen for informal individual users.
- (iii) an office for the parish council has been requested too

But I don't use the hall...

But lots of people do, both for recreation, meeting friends and many other society and village events. It is a designated emergency centre in South Derbyshire and is our polling station. It is already well used but the new hall should be used by many more with its improved facilities and extra usable spaces. The old hall has made possible many important and memorable events; its closure would be a great loss to the future life of our community. Other attractive village halls in the area are used to capacity.

What have the Repton Village Hall Committee been doing?

The village hall committee has been working for many years on this issue and have submitted a design that has received planning permission. The present design has been developed in consultation with users since 2005. We have currently access to £318,000 (probably an underestimate as £24,000 more section 106 money has been identified and more may come from local building development and bids) but we may need up to £705,000 in total as a worst case— all figures are approximate until we can get tenders and can review what is affordable. For example, the scenario includes a costly total car park rebuild rather than simple relaying, which is an example of what we may have to review. The current plan for the proposed hall have been approved by SDDC planning department and are shown on the SDDC planning website, ref [9/2014/0773](#).

Why does it cost so much?

The costs are similar to other halls recently built but we are working on a worst case scenario for now and will try to minimise what we are asking you to pay. Our estimates have been professionally prepared and will be reviewed again to get the best value. Time is ticking, building costs are rising, the money we have is declining in value. Interest rates for public borrowing are at an amazingly low level for now. We can only go to tender with complete finance package behind us then we can 'cut our cloth'. Step one in this process is showing we have community support. A joint committee with members of the parish council was formed to look at how you should be consulted.

Why can't you get a lottery grant?

A detailed but unsuccessful lottery application was made in 2007. We have kept their schemes under review but for their main village hall scheme there was a simple "postcode" cut off test and quite simply we lack the social deprivation necessary to qualify. Many other grant sources have been investigated and applications made – and some grants have been received: your parish council has already granted £80,000 in funds restricted for this purpose only; SDDC are holding for us considerable monies from developers and the sale of the former Repton Depot to Zytec; the fundraising committee whom you have generously supported have organised many well attended events for a wide range of people -raising over £68,000, and they continue to do so. As a result, we are close to half of the amount that we need for a worst case build cost.

Why not rebuild in phases like Willington?....or just patch it up to keep it going for a while ?

Phased or "patch and mend" approaches were looked at but would be uneconomic and a poor use of public money. The original "Hallam" style building was a system design with a limited life (it has already had a problematic modification) and this makes either rebuilding in phases or "patch and mend" expensive options. VAT alone on this would be £100,000 but a new build is VAT free.

Disability and Building regulations which require that no significant work can be carried out without bringing the whole hall up to current standards for disability - and once started on this track it would take a very and unpredictably large sum to meet. The disruption and fundraising would go on for years and years.

To save VAT and rising maintenance/building costs is there any way to rebuild - right now -in “one go” - and then spread remainder of the cost over 25 to 50 years so that future residents of the parish share the cost?

Yes – the Repton Parish Council has the statutory power to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and then to make a further grant to the village hall. The loan could then be repaid to PWLB by Repton Parish Council over anything up to 50 years. (Historically, fixed interest rates are currently at a remarkably low level for this type of loan –under 3% for fixed interest over 25- 30 years) Permission for such a loan requires the prior approval of the Department for Communities and Local Government who check the project over.

What if I don't like your plans?

We have put in over 10 years of effort, consulting with users and professionals, making numerous revisions and have spent £20,000 over the years to get planning permission for the design we have. The important thing is that the hall is well designed for the job it needs to do for 100 years or more. Quite a few local professionals have worked on this project for either no fee or a reduced fee and we must thank them. We have listened to other radical suggestions but still think something close to the current plan is the best way forward in the longer term.

Where would Repton Parish Council get the money to repay such a loan?

It would mean increasing the parish precept (a local tax) that already forms a small part of the Council Tax - currently £14.98 a year on a mid range (band D) house – less for lower band houses and more for higher bands. (Band D is usually used as an average for comparison). We have the sixth lowest precept in the SDDC area, surrounding villages that pay a lot more.

What are the risks?

In terms of the risk of paying back the loan itself this is an obligation solely of the Parish Council. As with all such local authority spending this is ultimately dependent on Repton Parish Council's ability to charge Council Tax. Funding this project by means of a long term loan from Public Works Loan Board would mean raising the Repton Parish Council council tax precept to a level that would be in the mid range of parish council tax precepts in South Derbyshire. So the government assesses the reason for the loan and the ability of the parish council to repay the loan through a raised precept collected in each house's council tax. It also wants proof of the community's support, that is why each household is being asked to vote.

Will funding this project put at risk other worthwhile Parish Council projects?

Your Parish Councillors feel that retaining the Repton Village Hall is worthwhile project. However, it could mean that any other future very large major capital project(s) would be harder to fund but this project is exceptional in its' scale and is a unique 100 year venture.

Is there a risk that the cost of the loan repayments would go up if interest rates go up?

Councils may take out either fixed or variable interest rate loans. The intention would be to take out a fixed interest rate loan. Loan payments would then be fixed for the duration of the loan. This type of loan is a normal mechanism of public finance but a parish council cannot raise such a loan without suitable prior consultation which is why you have been sent neutral information from the parish council directly, this is in line with good practice in public administration..

What do I have to do to express my opinion the future of the Repton village hall?

Vote! It will be first past the post on a 'Yes or No' vote.

As each household pays council tax, it has been agreed that each household gets one vote, each is randomly number and will not be replaced if lost! You can also email the parish council with views (see below).

If you believe it is sensible to build now and spread the cost over the first 25 years of the life of a modernised village hall then please support this proposal. Vote No if you disagree. Unless there is demonstrable public support for the project and the proposed increase in total Council Tax then Repton Parish Council will not be granted permission by the Department of Communities and Local Government to take out a loan. The scenario presented is a worst case one as we agreed with the parish council that it was the fairest way to do this, but we do hope it will be cheaper.

What can you buy for £15 – £20?

The parish precept on a band D rated house this year is £14.98. The increase that we would be triggering will sound huge in parish precept percentage terms (100+%) because our parish precept is relatively low - but it could boil down to between £16 to £20 extra a year for a band D house currently paying an annual Council Tax charge of £1635.99 for band D. That is based on figures we have at the moment so there may be some variation. What else can you buy for £1.50/£2.00 a month or 40p/50p a week and see the fruits on your doorstep for generations?

Before you vote, read this again, discuss it and then decide. Use the links below to see the full report submitted to the Parish Council by the hall committee. **There is an open afternoon in the village hall on Saturday November 4th from 2 – 5pm** where you can quiz the village hall committee.

Thank you for your interest and for taking the time to read this.

Kyran Farrell. Chair of Repton Village Hall

More information, comments and queries:

About the hall itself: rvhchair1@gmail.com

Ask the parish council: reptoncouncil@btinternet.com

Useful websites:

<http://www.reptonvillagehall.org.uk/Home.htm> re hall itself

<http://www.reptonvillagehall.org.uk/index.htm> re the appeal fund

http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/Images/Council%20Tax%20Guide%202016-2017_tcm21-279009.pdf) for queries about the precept issue

Village Hall on Facebook <https://en-gb.facebook.com/villagehallrepton/>

VOTE NOW

TO SAVE YOUR LOCAL VILLAGE HALL!

USE

IT...

DON'T

LOSE

IT!

Please answer both questions

Are you in favour of this project going ahead?			
YES	X	NO	
Do you support Repton Parish Council increasing the local precept (part of your council tax) for a Band D house by up to £20.84 pa for the duration of the loan to complete the funding required for a new village hall?			
YES	X	NO	



Use your ballot-paper to rebuild our village hall.
See www.reptonvillagehall.org.uk for more details.



REPTON
VILLAGE HALL