

# The History of Kempshott Village Hall

1930s – 1990s

**The history of Kempshott Village Hall is almost as long as the history of Kempshott as a community.**

### **Phase 1**

In the inter-war period, when the community grew out of the redevelopment of the Down Grange and Crossways farm land, the 'focus' of the community, such as there was, lay in Pack Lane where the first shops, post office and telephone were located. In the later 30s the need for somewhere to gather was agreed and a small wooden building was adapted to that use.

### **Phase 2**

The Second World War put any further plans on hold – but after 1945 a Village Centre was even more needed as the community continued to grow. The second structure inaugurated in 1949 is a story of local initiative and ingenuity.

### **Phase 3**

The expansion of Basingstoke in the 60s brought large scale planned development to Kempshott, and in consequence a planned redevelopment and expansion of the village hall.

Since 1980 Kempshott has continued to add houses and residents - there are now over 6000 residents in over 2800 households in the ward and the village hall has responded to the greater and different challenges to this day.

## **In the beginning ....was the chicken shed!**

**In the 1920s the only meeting place for Kempshott residents was the old Wesleyan chapel – the ‘tin tabernacle’ which is preserved as part of the Methodist Church on Kempshott Lane and dates from 1912.**

**The 1930s maps show a series of chicken sheds along Buckskin Lane and Pack Lane and 2 other small buildings which are assumed to be the incubator sheds located behind what was to become the present Pack Lane shops.**

**An ex-incubator shed was used for small gatherings - lit, it is understood, by candles and heated by oil.**

**A youth club was formed and it is thought the Boy Scouts met there.**

**Did Mr Green show his films there before the war?**

**But better things were needed, it was agreed, and just before the outbreak of war in 1939 a scheme for a new village hall was proposed with Mr Sidney Lawes as first Treasurer and Mrs Baggs and Mrs Smith organising fundraising with many whist drives and events and a 1shilling per week donation scheme.**

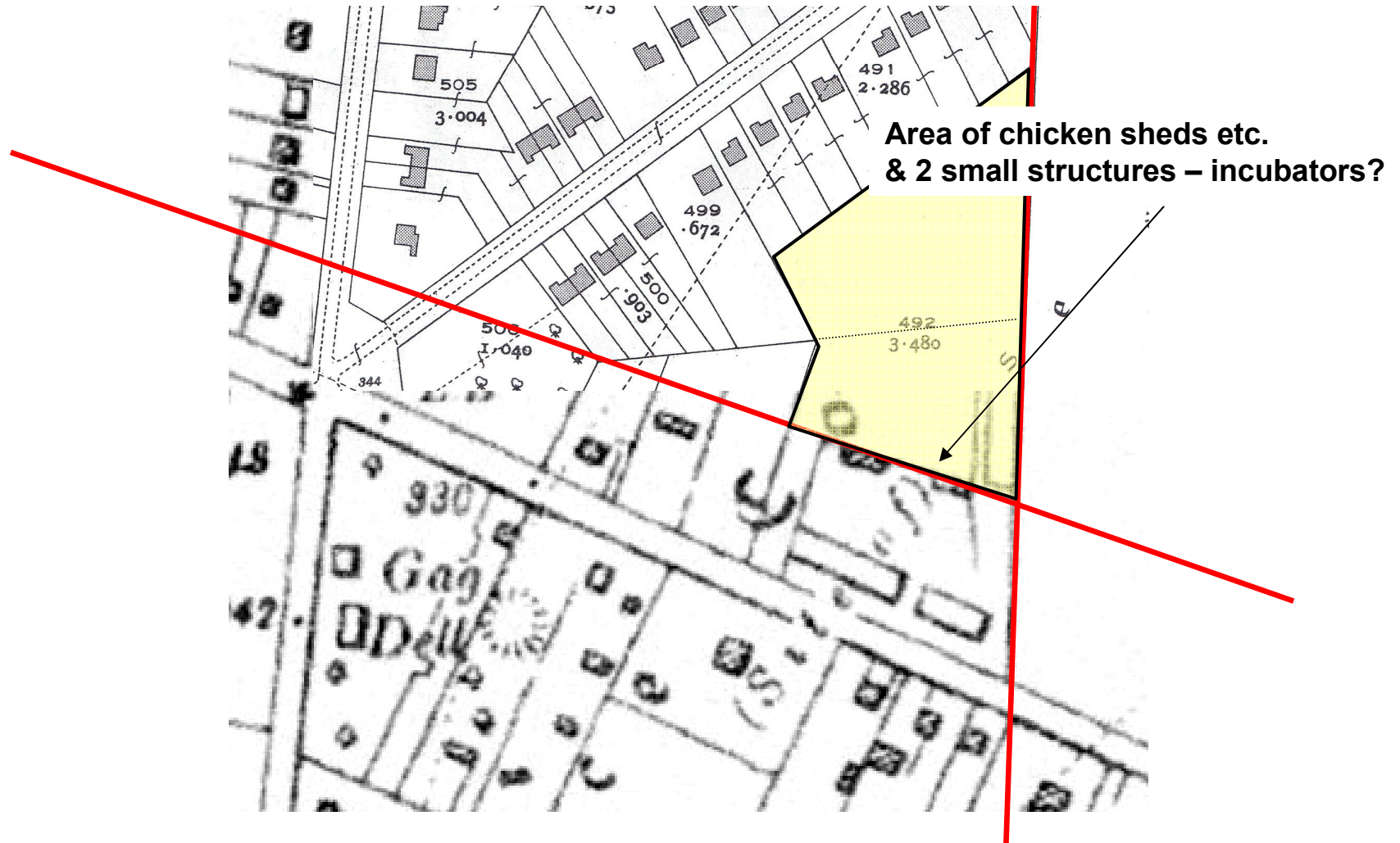
**Mr Atwood tells us that £150 was raised before war interrupted proceedings.**

**During the war years the existing building was reinforced and used as an Air Raid Shelter and Fire Watcher’s Post.**

*We have no picture of this old shed unfortunately.*

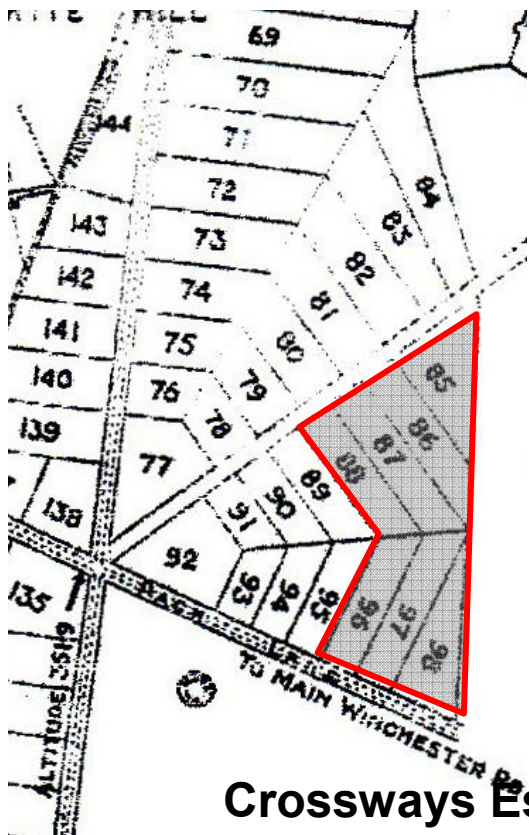
Site of first village hall from composite of 1930s and 1940s maps  
- showing the 1930s chicken sheds which by the 1940s had given way to bungalows.

The highlighted area is the 3 a. field which was to become the Village Hall and Playing field site. The land to the east was still farmland until the 1960s.



## Who owned the land on which the village hall was built?

The land west of the red line on the map was part of the Crossways development and had originally been owned by Pembroke College, Oxford, had been purchased by Homesteads Ltd (who were the developers of the new Kempshott Village scheme after WW1) including the Crossways Estate and had been purchased, we think, with a mortgage by Mr Wm T J Culver in 1925.



The land which finally made up the KVH plot was a combination of several pieces of land from the original plots 96-98 and 85 - 89

**Crossways Estate Development plan 1925-27**

## **Post war ... the phoenix rises ...**

**On VE Day 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 the Village Hall scheme was resurrected ( Kempshott residents didn't let the grass grow under their feet), and fund raising began again.**

**It was decided to hold a children's fete that very Whit Monday May 21<sup>st</sup>, with a procession from Five Ways to the field by the Methodist church, and a tidy sum was collected.**

**Plans to build a village hall proceeded but by early 1947 were suspended as the cost was considered prohibitive.**

**However, Mr. George Smith of Battle Down Farm, who was chairman of the Village Hall Committee at that point, was not to be defeated.**

**He suggested that the old Oakley Church Hall ( or Reading Room) could be purchased and moved to Kempshott. Mrs Baggs has said that the Oakley Hall was 60 years old at that point and was to serve Kempshott for a further 20 years.**

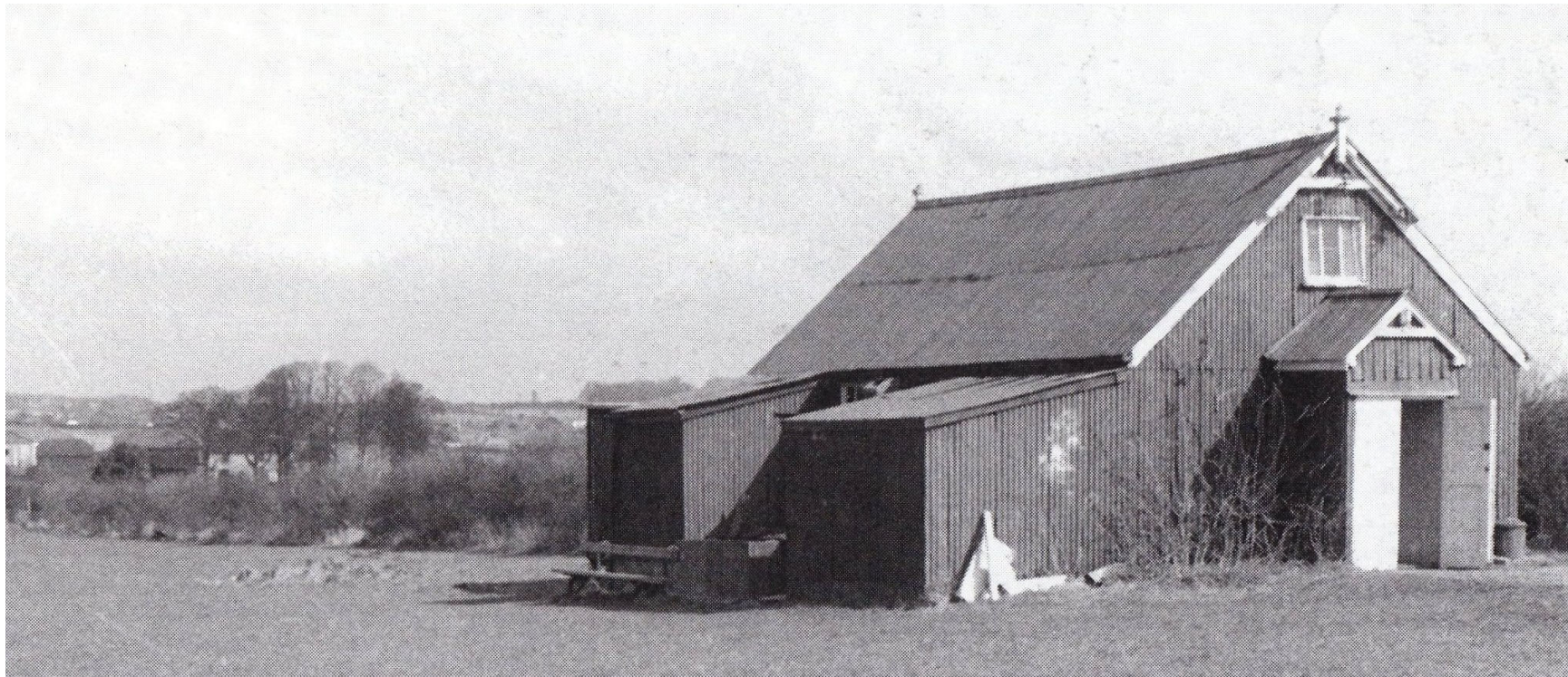
**The building was purchased and re-erected under the direction of Mr Felgate the architect for £361 with Mr Smith's tractor and trailer doing much of the moving of sections of the building to the new site. Work started in summer 1947 after the land had been purchased for £278 by the village hall trustees from Mr C E Cobb. and a further £90 was to be spent on furniture.**

**The village raised in total £730 – the equivalent of £ 27,000 today.**

**That princely sum of £278 purchased 3 acres of land which is still held in trust for the community of Kempshott – the Village Hall and Playing Field.**

**The list of original trustees exists and includes Messrs Cobb, Culver, Garrett and E Beavers. Stratton Park was still the arable fields of Buckskin farm in the 1950s.**

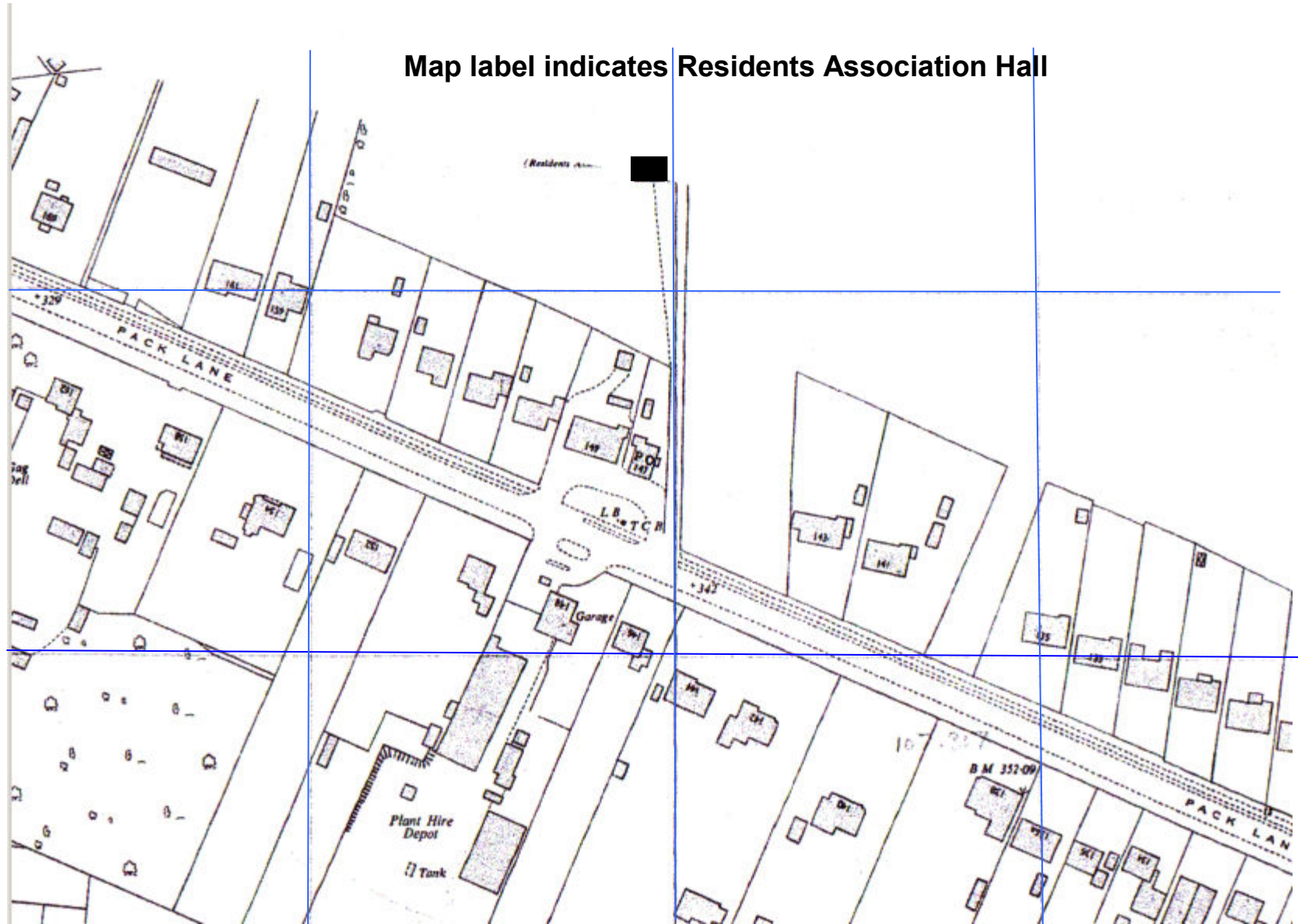
## Kempshott Village Hall 1947



Note the bench seat looking across the field towards Fiveways, the hedgerow leading down to Buckskin Lane and the farm – with farm buildings or houses in the distance. Are the extensions the toilets?

# 1967 large scale Ordnance Survey map of Kempshott

Map label indicates Residents Association Hall







**The official opening of the hall in 1949  
was by the Mayor - we think Cllr Cyril Wood  
-with Carol Downham presenting a bouquet to the  
-Lady Mayoress Mrs Wood.**



## **1950s and early 60s**

**Work on the Hall was completed for the first AGM of the Village Hall Trust to be held here on 5th April 1949**

**The hall held about 50 people.**

**A lot of local wedding receptions were held there – including that of Owen and Edna Blissett in 1955.**

**Did Ted Green, who showed films in the 1950s, also show films in the first wooden hut or only in the new village hall?**

**There were swings near the village hall – they do not appear in the photo, are they in the field beside the hedge?**

**The hall was much used, with 10 community groups regularly meeting there in the week, among them the WI.**

**Meanwhile post war Kempshott continued to grow.....as did Basingstoke!**

## Coronation Celebrations - June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1953

Clearly there were great celebrations of the coronation - which coincided with Summer Fete time – with a Carnival Queen and her attendants, there was a Fancy Dress competition and children's races among other things.



Barry Brazier & Jean Blackburn .....Carol Downham & Valerie Watmore  
Races in the field by the village hall.

*There is some confusion over the location of this event - Village Hall field or Methodist Hall field – does this look like Village Hall field?*

The **Coronation Tree** was planted - which stands in the KVH car park - *no picture of the planting ceremony unfortunately – although one is supposed to exist.*



Clearly this is the Carnival Queen, but it is not clear whether she was Kempshott Queen or Basingstoke Queen: Susan Birkett and her attendants Jean Blackburn, Sylvia Parsons, Valerie Watmore, Susan Smith.

Here are Richard and Carol Downham in the fancy dress parade.



**1957 - Kempshott's Carnival Float – on the theme of Kempshott Toy Fair**



*Can we identify any of the participants?*

## Modern times and modern designs...

By the early 1960s Kempshott was now undeniably a part of Basingstoke and about to expand hugely with the birds and flowers estates. It had outgrown its old make do and mend village hall - a brand new building – suitable for a modern suburb - was required!



Something to accommodate 180 people with a range of facilities and six times larger than the old hall was planned.

# The fund raising 60s

Just as now, raising the funds for a major development involved a relatively small number of people spending an enormous amount of time and energy organising fund raising schemes.

So who were the Village Hall committee in the early 60s?



**Mr Bond - Mr Parnell Jordy, Mr A Corey  
on the right and?**

**Three names stand out - Mr J Parnell Jordy - Chairman  
& Mr W P Bond – Treasurer and Mr A Corey - Secretary**

Early proposals in 1964 envisioned a £10,00 total cost with the village finding £3,00 of that.

While fundraising gathered pace in 1965 and '66 the total cost rose through £14,000 to £20,000.

By early 1966 the village had raised £1,000

When building began in early 1968 the village had raised £2,500, local government had contributes nearly £14,000 and there was £3,500 still to be found when the building was opened in November 1968.

In today's money values that is a cost of £325,000 of which the village raised over £40,00 in 5 years.

# **Milestones and crises along the way**

**Major fund raising events were organised each year**

**-in winter the Guy Fawkes Night bonfire and Firework Display**

from 1964 to '66 These were large and expensive events with £500 worth of fireworks used for static tableaux and spectacular displays with entrance tickets at 2s. 6p each. The Boy Scouts manned the barbeque and the WI served tea.

**-in summer the Summer Fete** with competitions, prizes, the Basingstoke Carnival Queen and Mayoral party in attendance, finished off with a 'beat band' performance.

**Meanwhile users of the hall continued to hold fundraising events - a jumble sale here, a tea party there ... every little helped.**



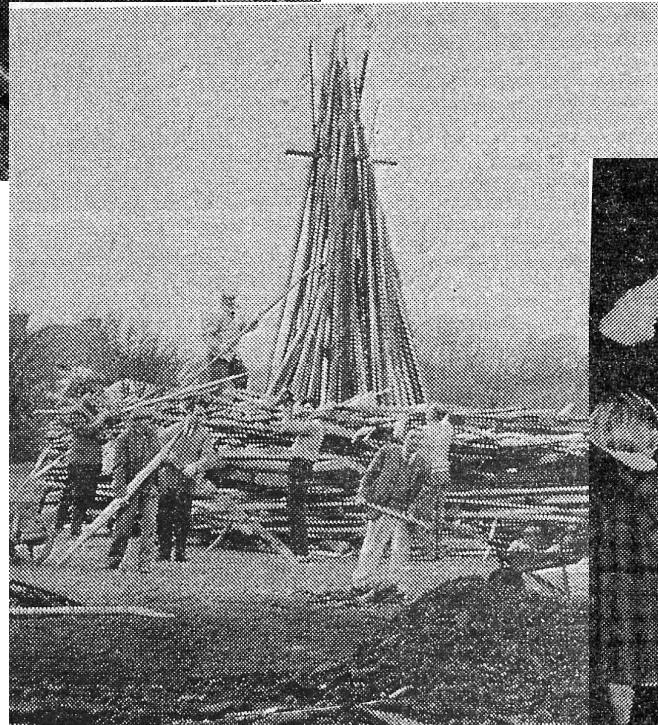
# The great bonfire calamity November 1964



On the Wednesday evening , the day before the big event, saboteurs set fire to the bonfire which, already soaked in paraffin and including old tyres went up in sheets of flame. The fire brigade could do nothing to stop it turning to a pile of ash.

But were the committee defeated – not a bit!

Calling in every contact they had the bonfire was rebuilt in 6 hours and the event went on as scheduled with the Mayor Cllr Tom Baptist and the Mayoress lighting the fire with grandchildren Lee & Lita Ford.



Quote from an angry Mr Jordy :  
'If I could get hold of the blokes responsible I would bring back the whip. But we are not finished. Another bonfire will be built in time for tonight. The whole thing will go on as planned.'  
And it did.  
£100 was raised for the Hall  
(about £1,800 In today's values).

## **In 1965 the committee had better luck ..**

**A bigger and better November event was planned with 1000 tickets available for the Guy Fawkes festivities. All went to plan with the bonfire built on the day and lit by the Mayor Cllr D J Wheale, the Lady Mayoress and the Carnival Queen Miss Rosemaria Janosciewicz. This year the event featured a 7ft image of a guy on top of the bonfire constructed by 80 year old Mr Simon Jordy; and was followed by a Christmas Fair and sessions of bingo.**

**The big draw was Miss Joan Sims who processed round the town in a Rolls Royce with the Mayoral party and lit the bonfire in War Memorial Park built by the Round Tablers.**

**Despite the 2500 attendance only about £100 was added to the Hall fund.**

**Then there was the children's Christmas tea party and the carol festival..**



The Summer Grand Fete was a major event of each year - in May, as now

**GRAND FETE**  
and all the Fun of the Fayre  
at  
**Village Hall Grounds**  
PACK LANE, KEMPSHOTT  
on  
**Saturday, 22nd May, 1965**  
2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

*To be opened by the Mayor and Mayoress at 2 p.m.*

CHILDREN'S AMUSEMENT CORNER  
Space Roundabout - Coconut Shy - Slide - Swings - Trampoline  
Hoopla - Punch and Judy - Skittles - Fancy Dress - etc.

REFRESHMENT MARQUEE - BINGO TENT - SIDESHOWS - BEAT  
GROUP (The Nomads) - VARIOUS DISPLAYS - COUNTRY DANCING  
BOYS' AND GIRLS' P.T. AND GYMNASTICS - PONY RIDES  
FLOWER DISPLAY AND ARRANGEMENT TENT  
SPORTS CAR DISPLAY - BOWLING FOR PIG - ETC.

**Car presented by Carnival Queen  
to winner of car competition**

BASINGSTOKE AND TADLEY SILVER BANDS  
(All profits to go to the Kempshott and District New Village Hall  
Building Fund)

**Admission 6d. Children 3d.**



Cllr Tom Baptist  
opened the fete  
With Carnival  
Queen Julie Hall  
giving out prizes.

**The great draw to the 1965 Fete was The Car  
Competition – the prize being a green Triumph 1200.**

2000 people attended to sample displays, refreshments  
and competitions.

Huge effort and originality went into the children's  
fancy dress competition which was comprehensively  
written up by the Gazette.

There was Punch and Judy, pony rides, smashing up  
an old banger with a sledge hammer...

Does anyone remember 'The Nomads' beat group?

## Everyone entered into the spirit of the day ....



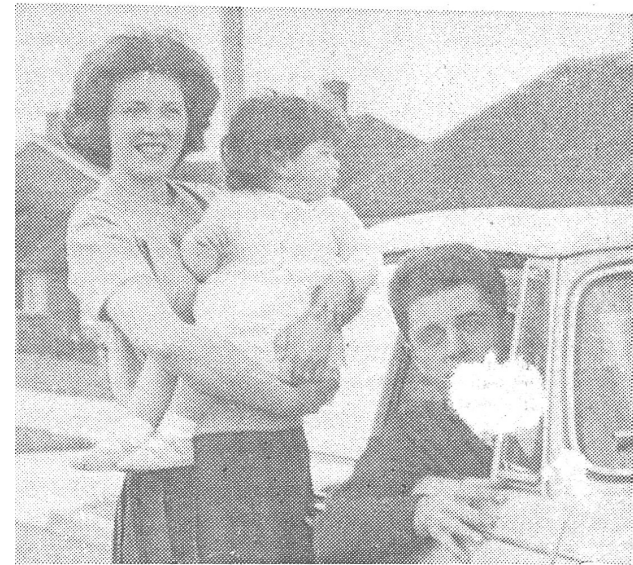
... and we can see why Tom won the knobby knees competition!

But the biggest excitement was the competition to win a new car...

### ***Who donated the car?***

'How many miles from Market Square to Land End and back?'  
Was the question - the answer was 600miles, 200 yards 8inches.

The winner was Mr A K A Moore of High Drive



*(Sorry, not a good photograph)*

The event raise just under £600 – over £10,000 in today's money values.

## 7<sup>th</sup> May 1966 Summer Fete

Again opened by the Mayor , Cllr D J Wheale, this year's Fete included a display by the newly formed Pegasus Judo Club.



**Admission by programme 6d ( 1/- on the day) ..  
Children 6d ..Infants Free**

While the image of the Hall is going strong ... the car seems to be a fading memory....

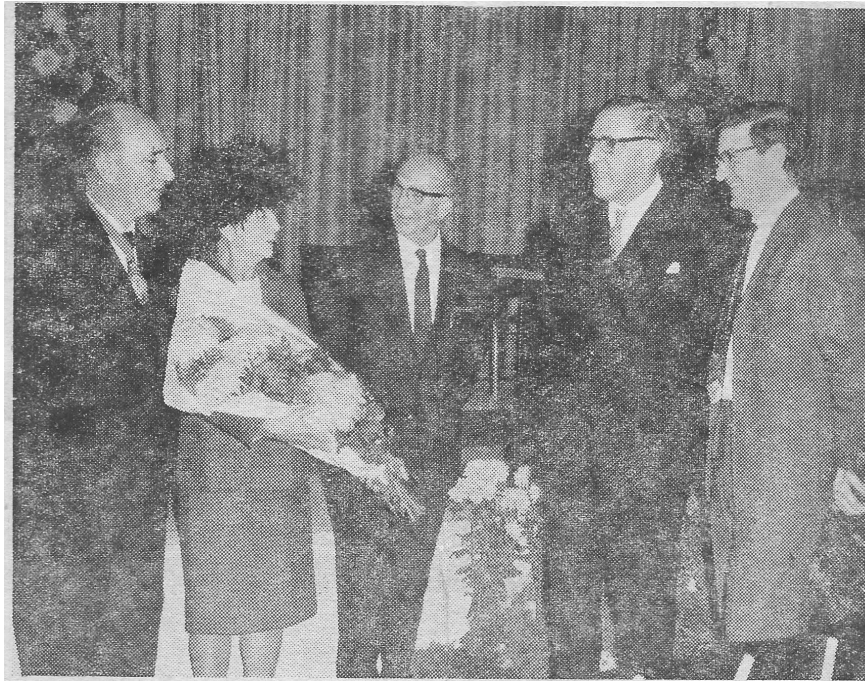


Junior Carnival Queen Janet Padwick ( riding) and her 5attendants



Kempshott's float in the annual carnival parade - 1966 or 1967?

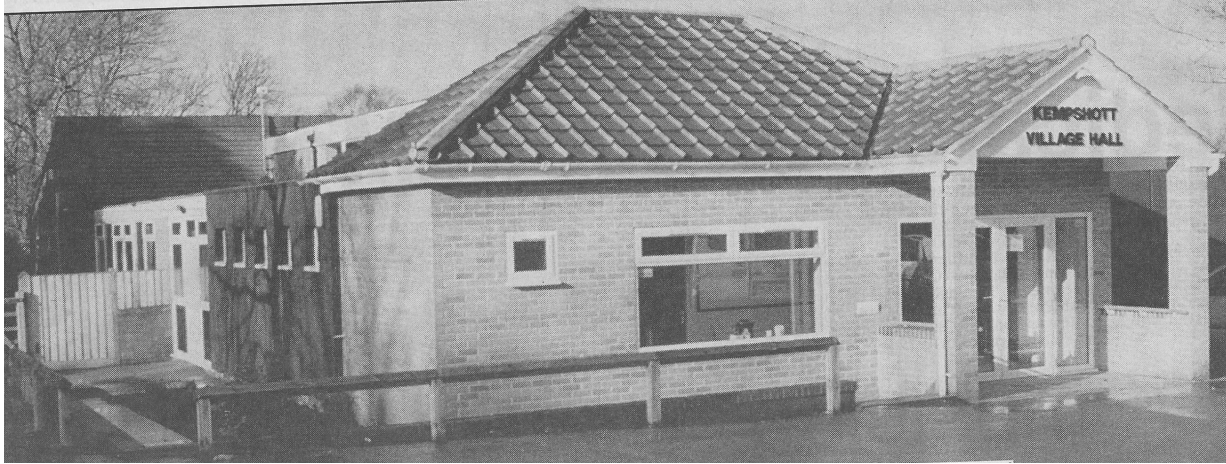
Finally, building started in March 1968 and was completed on schedule by the November - for the official opening in December 1968 by the Mayor & Mayoress Cllr & Mrs J Spalding



*Pictured in the new village hall at Kempshott after the official opening on Saturday, Basingstoke Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs. J. Spalding (left) with (from the right) Mr. D. Millard, Mr. F. Cory and Mr. P. Jordy, chairman.*  
—Photo: Graham, Basingstoke.

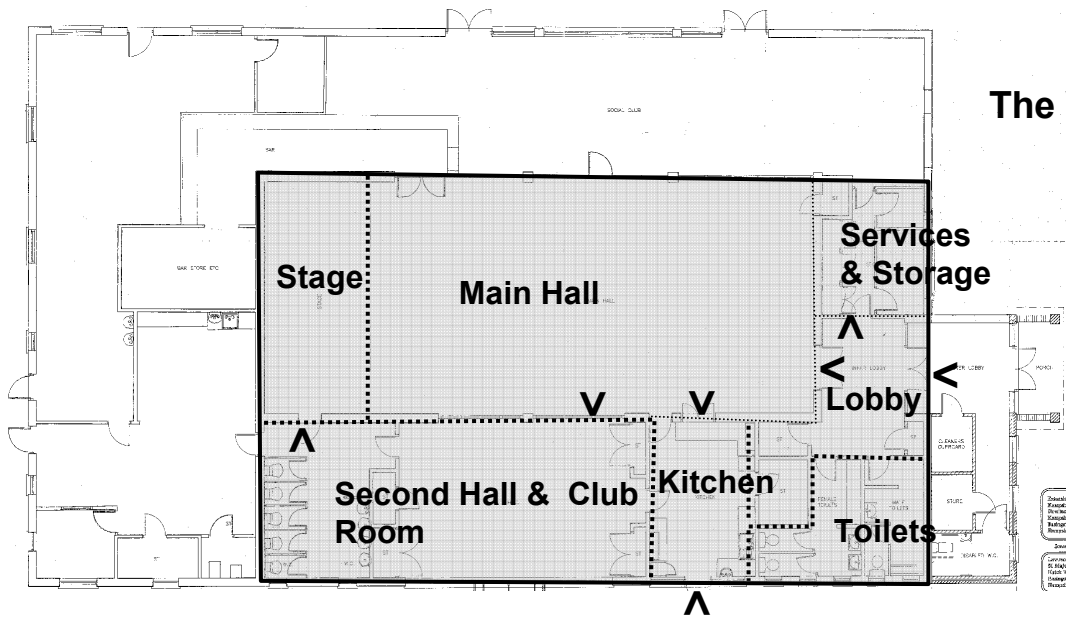
... seen here congratulating Messrs Panell Jordy, Cory and Millard, the committee who had seen it through to completion.

## Kempshott Village Hall - the third generation ...



This picture shows the hall as it is now – after several extensions in the 70s,80s, and 90s.

*Can we find any pictures of the original core building?*



The Village Hall – Mark 1 1960s



## Kempshott Village Hall - the third generation ...

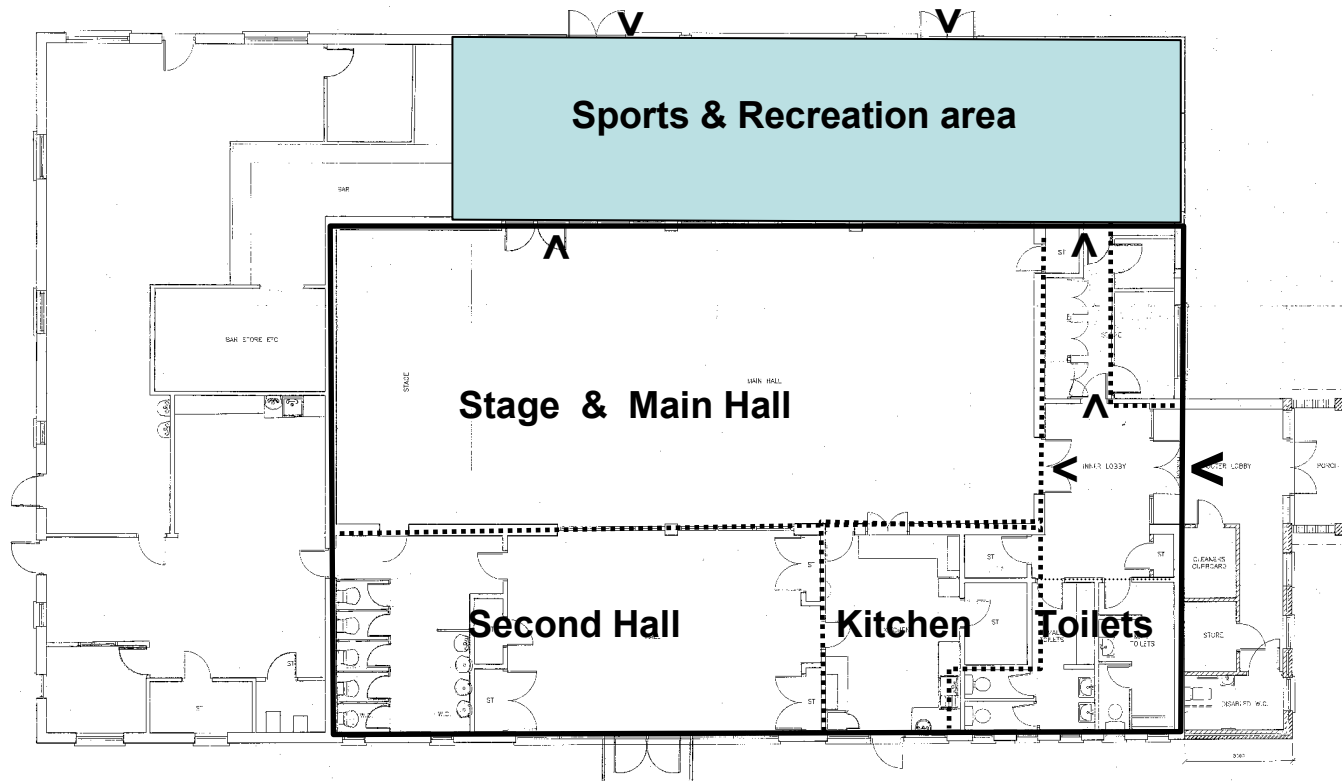


**With its opening in 1968 the village hall did not stand still – it has been expanded and internally reorganised every decade since then.**

**Each time that meant more fund raising initiatives.**

## The Village Hall – Mark 2 the 1970s

The 1970s extension of the Hall , planned, funded and executed 1975-78 saw the north wing added which was operated as a bar by the Village Hall committee before the Social Club was formed. The south wing was slightly remodelled and continued as the second hall.



## **Continued expansion of the hall and its facilities in the 80s ...**

**In the early 1980s the Village Hall published an occasional newsletter and the tried and tested fundraising projects of Firework Displays and Summer Fetes were in full swing for a major expansion of the Hall complex which was completed by 1987.**

**Councillor Harold Allerston was the driving force as chair of the Village Hall committee at this time.**

**The Village Hall Trust took out a £40k loan which financed part of the expansion.**

1982

# Kempshott Village Hall

(Telephone No. 24314)

# SPECTACULAR

Lucky Number

(Draw 6.55 p.m. See inside for prizes)

# FAMILY FIREWORK EVENING

Hot Drinks - Hot Dogs Stall - Guy Competition  
(Judging 6.45 pm)

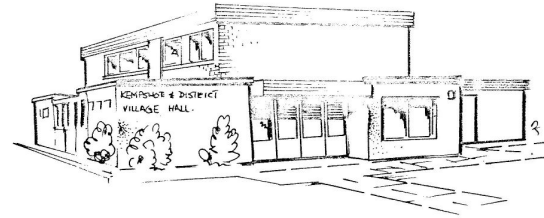
Saturday, 6th Nov., 6.30 for a 7 pm Lift Off

THIS PROGRAMME ADMITS A FAMILY OF FOUR

Without programme - 50p per person on the night



KEMPSHOTT  
LEISURE & SOCIAL CLUB



YOUR LOCAL FAMILY CLUB

## Kempshott Village Hall Newsletter

Welcome again to the Hall's 1982 Firework Display and traditional Bonfire. We have again spent £500 to give you a spectacular evening and have included a lucky number programme this year. We very much hope you and your children thoroughly enjoy yourselves.

The Hall and grounds are here for the use of the community and presently they are hired to the local groups and organisations listed on the facing page. They would give you a big welcome if you wished to join them.

When not already in use by regular hirers, the whole or parts of the Halls can be hired by other organisations or individuals. Bookings can be made by calling at the Hall when the Social Club is open (except Wednesdays) or by phoning 'Pop' Badham on Basingstoke 23037.

The Hall is registered as a charity. It receives no local or central Government money to maintain it, so all the outgoings have to be met, either from the hiring fees or by fund raising events, such as tonight's pyrotechnics display. This has been put on by volunteers who, like the Hall management committee can never get too much help. So if you have a little spare time we would all be delighted if you could spend it helping in one of the many jobs a prosperous and well ordered village hall demands.

We will be having our usual pre-Christmas Craft and Charity Markets and Summer Fayre in June 83, so please make a special note to support us again then. Meantime enjoy the show tonight and for safety's sake please keep out of the roped off area.

COUNCILLOR HAROLD ALLERSTON  
*Chairman*

### LUCKY NUMBER PROGRAMME PRIZES

FIRST PRIZE - Raleigh Fun Bike "Poppet" or "Bullet"

SECOND PRIZE - Camera

THIRD PRIZE - Box of Chocolates

The **1982 Firework Display** seems to have been a spectacular event involving 6 sets of static and rotating montages and 3 aerial displays

*further investigation might find some pictorial records and notes on the cost and funds raised.*

The Hall was designed with a stage right from the beginning and has seen many amateur theatrical performances and concerts.

**The Kempshott Womens Institute** presented **Cinderella** for example, an entertainment devised and produced by Sylvia J Phillis with piano accompaniment by Elizabeth Foulser and Georgina Palmer and the Dances devised and taught by Sheila Smith.

*Can we identify any of the cast listed on the programme?*

# CINDERELLA



## THE CAST

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

BROKERS MEN (Bill) .. .. . Audrey Service  
(Ben) .. .. . Catherine Collins  
CINDERELLA .. .. . Sylvia Phillis  
DANDENI .. .. . Sheila Smith  
UGLY SISTERS (Charminga) .. .. . Grace Stockley  
(Glorianna) .. .. . Constance Shilling  
BARON BUCKSKIN .. .. . Jean Dewey  
BUTTONS .. .. . Peggy Dodd  
FAIRY GODMOTHER .. .. . Gladys Grove  
PRINCE POMPADORE .. .. . Joy Seal

FAIRY ROSE .. .. . Susan Dodd  
FAIRY FUSCHIA .. .. . Dianne Vardy

### CHORUS OF GYPSIES AND COURTIERS

C. Collins      Y. Jones      M. North      A. Service  
                  V. Sutton      I. Vardy

### CHORUS OF FAIRIES

#### FLOWERS

Christine Barton    Patricia Bone    Patricia Dodd    Linda Goddard

#### STARS

Shirley Chivers    Christine Meeks    Susan Meeks    Denise Phillis  
                  Sandra Smith    Christine Shute

## ACT ONE

SCENE 1    THE KITCHEN AT BUCKSKIN COURT

SCENE 2    A BLUEBELL WOOD

SCENE 3    LATER AT BUCKSKIN COURT

★

INTERVAL

★

## ACT TWO

SCENE 1    BALLROOM AT KEMPSHOTT CASTLE

SCENE 2    THE BLUEBELL WOOD

SCENE 3    THE KITCHEN AT BUCKSKIN COURT

SCENE 4    BALLROOM AT KEMPSHOTT CASTLE

FINALE

So what went on in the Village Hall?

Apart from the **Social Club** with its licensed bar , which operated Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday evenings and from noon on Saturdays and Sundays

And the **Morning and Afternoon Play Groups** virtually every weekday

And the **Child Health Clinic** on Tuesday mornings and Friday afternoons there were at least 13 other weekly activities –

**Over 60s Club**

**Soccer Team**

**Women's Institute**

**Ladies Evening Club**

**Badminton Club**

**Modelling Club**

**Country Dancing**

**Mums & Toddlers**

**Twins Club**

**Kempshott Kestrel Majorettes**

**Ladies Keep Fit**

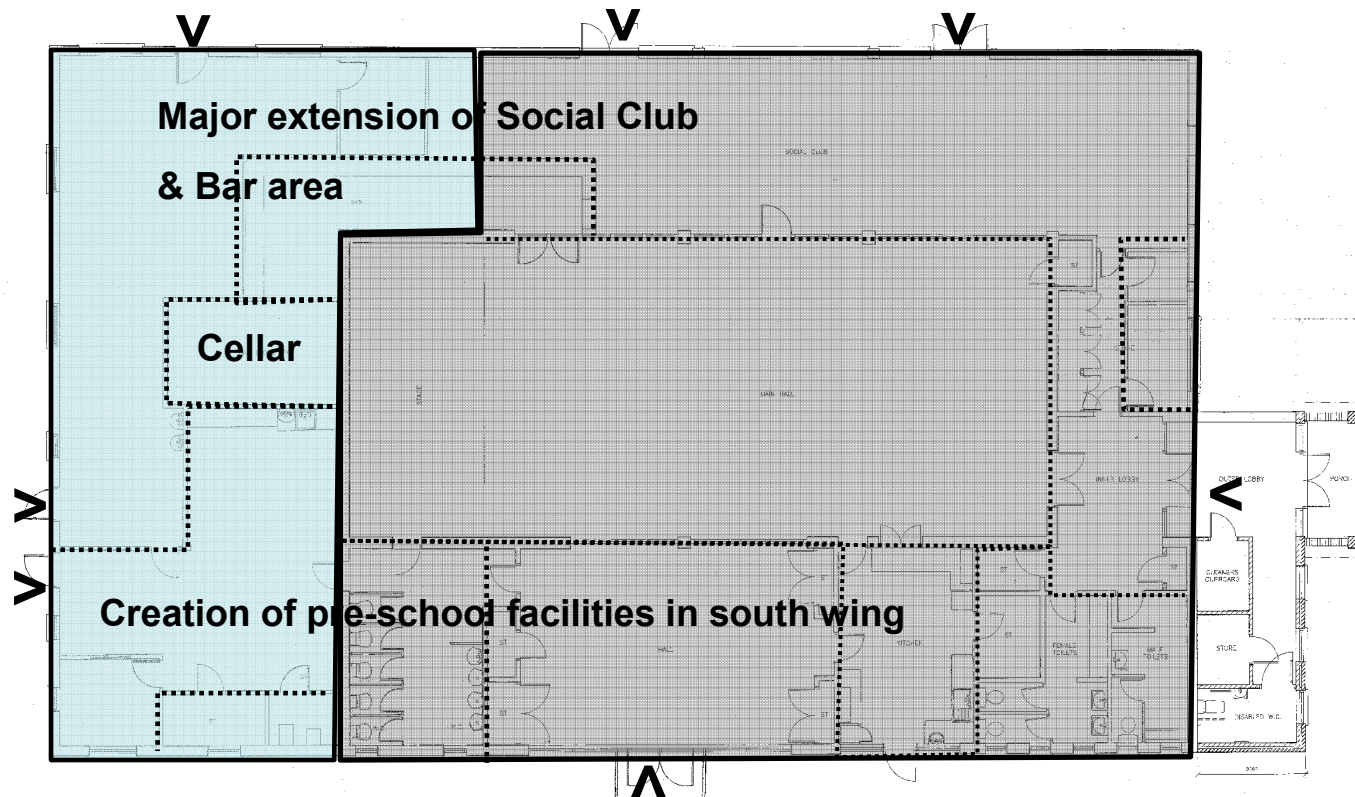
**Diana School of Dancing**

**Hall School of Dancing**

## Village Hall – Mark 3 1980s

This major extension of the Social Club facilities included creation of a cellar as the ground level naturally slopes down to the west.

The south wing was significantly altered with the creation of the facilities for a Pre-school nursery which also uses the second hall during nursery hours. This western extension has a pitched roof – unlike most of the hall building.





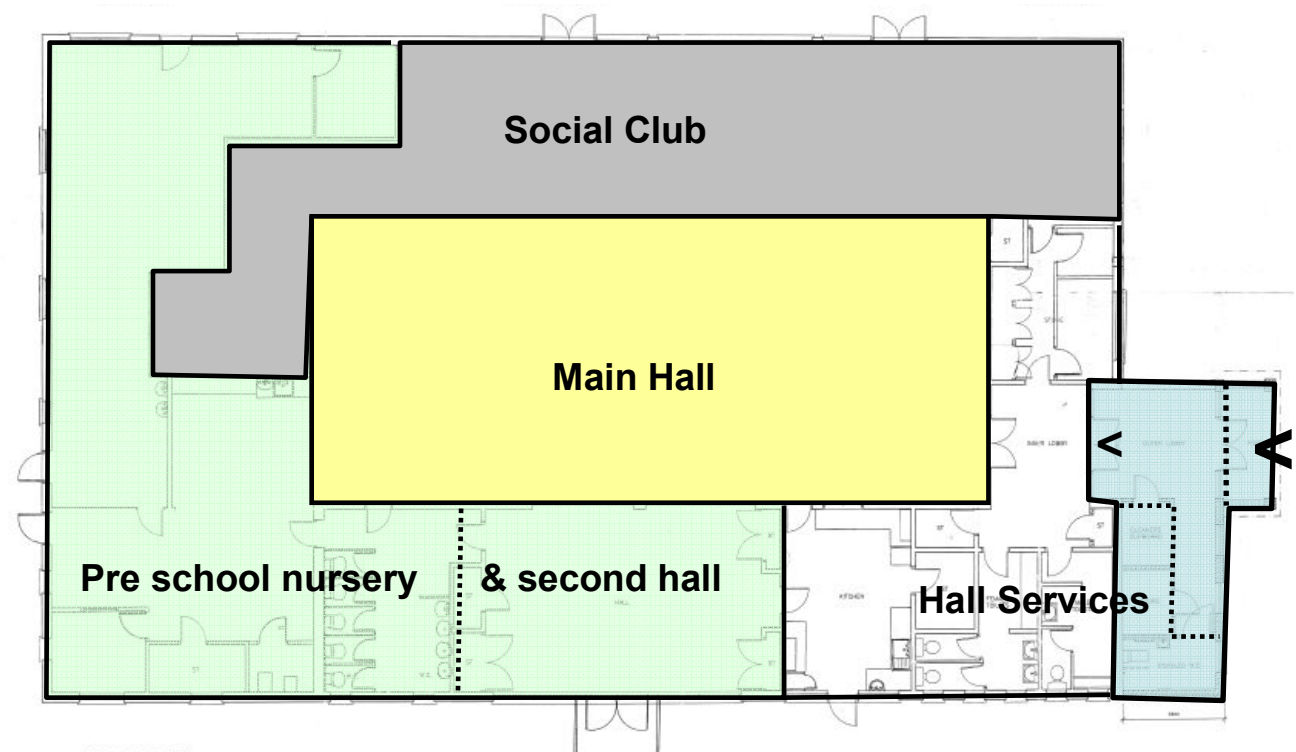
## Village Hall Mark 4 – 1990s

The 1999 extension was less dramatic, with remodelling of the east side of the hall under a pitched roof, the porch over the entrance and the disabled toilets.

Again this involved the Hall committee finding 25% of the cost and the borough /central government providing the remainder.

It was in the publicity for this enlargement of the Hall that Mr Arthur Atwood wrote a splendid article in the Basingstoke Gazette outlining the long history of the Kempshott area from Iron Age to Modern Age.

You will recall Mrs Baggs was a major contributor to the post war development of the Hall. In 1999 Mrs Baggs did the honours of opening the latest upgrade to the building - the front porch – at the glorious age of 103!



**Chris Parker was the prime mover in this upgrade including presenting the bid for funding to the borough council.**

**Chris receives a grant award certificate from Mayor Derek Mirfin, on completion of the project with a just as youthful looking June Balcombe looking on...**



● **PICTURED** - ABOVE: Christopher Parker, representing Kempshott Village Hall, receives his grant from Basingstoke mayor Derick Mirfin and leisure officer June Balcombe. TOP RIGHT: The mayor and Mrs Balcombe present a grant to John and Vi Palmer of Woolton Hill Church Hall. BOTTOM RIGHT: A group shot of all the award recipients.

## High quality facilities

**VILLAGE** halls and community centres across the Basingstoke area are celebrating - thanks to generous council grants.

The cash was awarded to 14 local organisations to help build extensions and maintain and restore buildings that are used to provide a service to the public.

Among those to benefit were Chineham

Park Primary School, Kingsclere Village Club, Kempshott Village Hall and the Beddington Centre in Old Basing.

To commemorate the completion of the improvement works carried out in the halls and centres, the Mayor of Basingstoke, councillor Derick Mirfin, presented certificates at a special ceremony.

A spokeswoman for Basingstoke council said: "The Community Centre and Village Hall Grants Scheme funds a wide range of repairs and improvements to ensure residents of the borough can enjoy high quality local facilities.

"The certificates presented by the mayor will now be displayed in each building."

## **What goes on at the Village Hall in the 2010s?**

Apart from **Noah's Ark pre-school** Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm and the **Social Club** on Thursdays to Sundays There is something going on every day and evening of the week.

**Kempshott WI      Basingstoke Horticultural Society      Baby Sensory**

**Weight Watchers UK      Kaderosi Art Club      Country Dancers**

**Pilates      2<sup>nd</sup> Kempshott Guides      Puppy & Dog Training**

**Keep Fit for Senior Citizens      2by2 Mums & Toddlers Group**

**TC Xercise      Hampshire Assoc for Care of the Blind      Martial Arts**

**Society for All Artists      Kempshott Christian Fellowship**

and the occasional users such as ... the **Catfish Society**, **The Crysanth & Dahlia Club**, **The Chess Club** etc.

**And of course yours truly...Kempshott History Society.**

**And finally ....**

**What of the future?**

**One thing is guaranteed ... the hall will keep changing and adapting to circumstances and community demands.**

- the expansion of the pre-school nursery,**
- the contraction of the social club,**
- finding new uses for the playing field – such as the development of the Inspero kids gardening and growing scheme**
- changes to operations in response to cost pressures and climate change with the installation of solar panels on the pitched roof**

Researching this story has raised as many questions as it has uncovered answers, particularly a dearth of photographic material which is surely out there ...

This is an appeal for photographic material to put colour and personal touches to the story of the village hall - carnival pictures, firework displays, pictures from the groups using the hall ....

Thank You!