

# Canada Hall – Redevelopment

## We need your support

### 1. Where are we now?

In May 2007 the Canada Hall Implementation Group (CHIG) circulated a leaflet explaining our then current proposal to demolish the existing Canada Hall facility and rebuild a new Community Centre on the site at an estimated cost of around £740k. Planning permission for this scheme was granted in January 2007 and fundraising began.

However, fundamental to raising the £740k was securing around half of that sum from the National Lottery. Despite the large amount of work that went into the bid, we were informed in September 2007 that our bid for Lottery Funding had unfortunately been unsuccessful.

The Lottery advised us that the Community Buildings programme was heavily over-subscribed, receiving in excess of 2,000 applications for funding totalling nearly £600m. The Lottery budget for this programme was £50m so the competition for funding was incredibly stiff and the assessment of applications extremely rigorous.

### 2. Re-assessing the need

It became clear that without Lottery funding raising such a large sum of money for the new build scheme was unachievable. Whilst this was a huge disappointment, simply accepting the situation was not an option. We therefore had to think again and reappraise the project from first principles.

At a well attended public meeting including local Councillors held at All Saints Church on 13 January 2007 it was agreed that we should

re-asses the requirement for the facility by means of a questionnaire to users and potential users. This would identify both the areas where the existing facility was felt to be deficient and whether the necessary improvements should be met via complete new build or whether, subject to a satisfactory structural report, we should look to refurbish and extend the existing building.

The outcome of the questionnaire was overwhelmingly in favour of the latter approach . that is to refurbish and extend the existing Canada Hall. A structural report of the existing facility showed that it was sufficiently sound for this to be done.

### 3. A revised scheme

This provided CHIG with the required mandate to draw up a scheme to provide users with the improved facilities requested by means of refurbishing and extending the existing Canada Hall . a solution that also allowed us to retain a building of significant historical importance within the local community.

After much consideration and local consultation, CHIG produced a revised scheme which will provide:-

- Greater usable space in the existing hall and an additional meeting room
- A link between the Church and the Hall with a common entrance
- A larger, more modern and better equipped kitchen
- New toilet facilities
- Greater circulation and display space with improved disabled access throughout

The current estimated cost of the new build element is £290k. In addition there will be the cost of refurbishment to the existing hall. This will include the installation of new windows, upgrading of the electrics and work to the floor, roofing and doors.

- By making a personal donation to the fund . nothing would be too small . remembering to Gift Aid donations wherever possible to maximise tax efficiency.
- If you are a business, donations, grants, interest-free loans, or assistance in any way with construction would be greatly appreciated.

## 8. Where did all this start?

On 19 April 1941 a parachute mine landed close to the original Victorian Church. The resulting explosion killed five local people and destroyed the church, the vicarage and the old hall. Thanks to a mixture of Christian generosity and a genuine feeling for the community an Anglican priest, George Hedley Wolfendale, serving with Canadian forces stationed nearby, inspired the building of a temporary replacement church. The Royal Canadian Engineers carried out the task in an incredible five weeks enabling the new church to be dedicated on Easter Day 1943. Prior to the completion of the current church in April 1950, some 69 weddings had taken place in the temporary church.

Following the completion of the current church next door, the temporary church became known as Canada Hall and so began its current role as a church hall - one which it has been serving with distinction for well over 50 years.

Canada Hall is the major community facility in South Merstham. It consists of effectively just one room (12 by 7 metres approx). Usage has broadened widely since its initial role as purely a church hall and it is now a regular home to a wide variety of organisations serving both church and community . e.g. Brownies, Guides, Mothers & Toddlers, WI. The Hall now needs a major update to cope with current demand.

## 6. Fundraising

Fundraising for the redevelopment of the Hall has been ongoing since the original scheme, involving the demolition of the existing structure and complete rebuild, was under consideration. To date there have been over thirty different fundraising activities which have included three performances of Gilbert & Sullivan operettas, a Murder Mystery evening, representation in two marathons, a Merstham Horticultural Society plant sale and an Open Garden event to mention just a few. A complete list of all the events to date is available in Canada Hall, in church and on our website at [www.allsaintsmerstham.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsmerstham.org.uk). In addition there have been many personal donations and we are most grateful to all those who have contributed, in whatever way, to date.

Further fundraising activities are planned for the coming year and these will be publicised widely locally and posted on the website.

## 7. How you can help?

As mentioned above we will be running a series of fundraising events to help us raise the £370k needed for this project and this is how you might be able to help:-

- By supporting the events as generously as you can
- By volunteering to organise and run some of the events
- By sharing with CHIG expertise you may have from similar fundraising initiatives
- If you know that your employer is supportive of local community projects or is prepared to offer sponsorship in any way please do bring this to the attention of CHIG so that we can draw on this source of funding.

The current estimated cost for the whole project is £370K at present day prices and building control requirements.

#### **4. Planning approval**

The drawings, having first been approved by the Parochial Church Council in June 2008, were submitted to the Reigate and Banstead Planning Committee and the necessary planning approval was granted on 3 September 2008.

The drawings are available to view in hard copy at the back of All Saints Church or alternatively can be accessed via the All Saints website at [www.allsaintsmerstham.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsmerstham.org.uk). In addition extracts from the main drawings are included in the centre of this brochure.

#### **5. What happens next?**

CHIG is now busy working up more detailed plans and firming up design details and the cost estimates.

Construction is expected to take around 9 to 10 months but of course the start date is contingent upon raising the necessary funds.

There is therefore a desperate need for more flexible accommodation to meet the wider needs of the community and to enable different types of group to use the Hall at the same time.

#### **9. Whom do you contact to help?**

CHIG has been set up to manage the project under the Chairmanship of Derek Hammersley.

Specific responsibility for fundraising within that Committee falls to All Saints Treasurer, Ron Jones. If you are able to help in any way in respect of the bullet points above, or indeed have any other suggested sources of potential funding, please do contact Ron on 01737 645199 or by post at 20 Tilers Close, Merstham, Surrey RH1 3HS.

Alternatively by all means contact Communications Officer Peter Loosley on 01737 642848, or by post at 12 Manor Road, Merstham, Surrey RH1 3LT.

Either Ron or Peter would be absolutely delighted to hear from you and answer any further questions you might have.

Although not as ambitious as the original new-build project, without your local support this project will not be achievable and a golden opportunity to improve the facilities available to the community of South Merstham will be lost. Please help us to provide the improved facilities that the community so badly needs.

***Canada Hall Implementation Group  
April 2009***