

News

Village halls win major cash grants

By PAM JENNER

TWO village hall improvements schemes have been granted more than £350,000 between them from the National Lottery Charities Board.

Widdington Village Hall is to receive £251,764 and Hempstead is to get £100,954.

Widdington, with a population of just 450, has managed to raise £26,000 in the last two years to rebuild its hall.

The existing one is a wood-and-corrugated-iron hut which was donated secondhand to the village in 1905.

In 1978, a clubroom, kitchen and toilets were built next to the hall.

The grant will enable the Village Hall Committee to build a main hall with seating for 200, a portable stage, toilets for disabled people, and other upgraded facilities.

Duncan Gunn, vice-chairman of the committee, said: "We are over the moon to get the grant."

"The new hall will be a focal point for the village and provide a much-needed modern facility."

The village of Hempstead, with a population of 400, has raised £34,000 in the last two years towards refurbishing and extending the village hall.

The hall was built as a village school in 1826 and taken over by the local community in 1958.

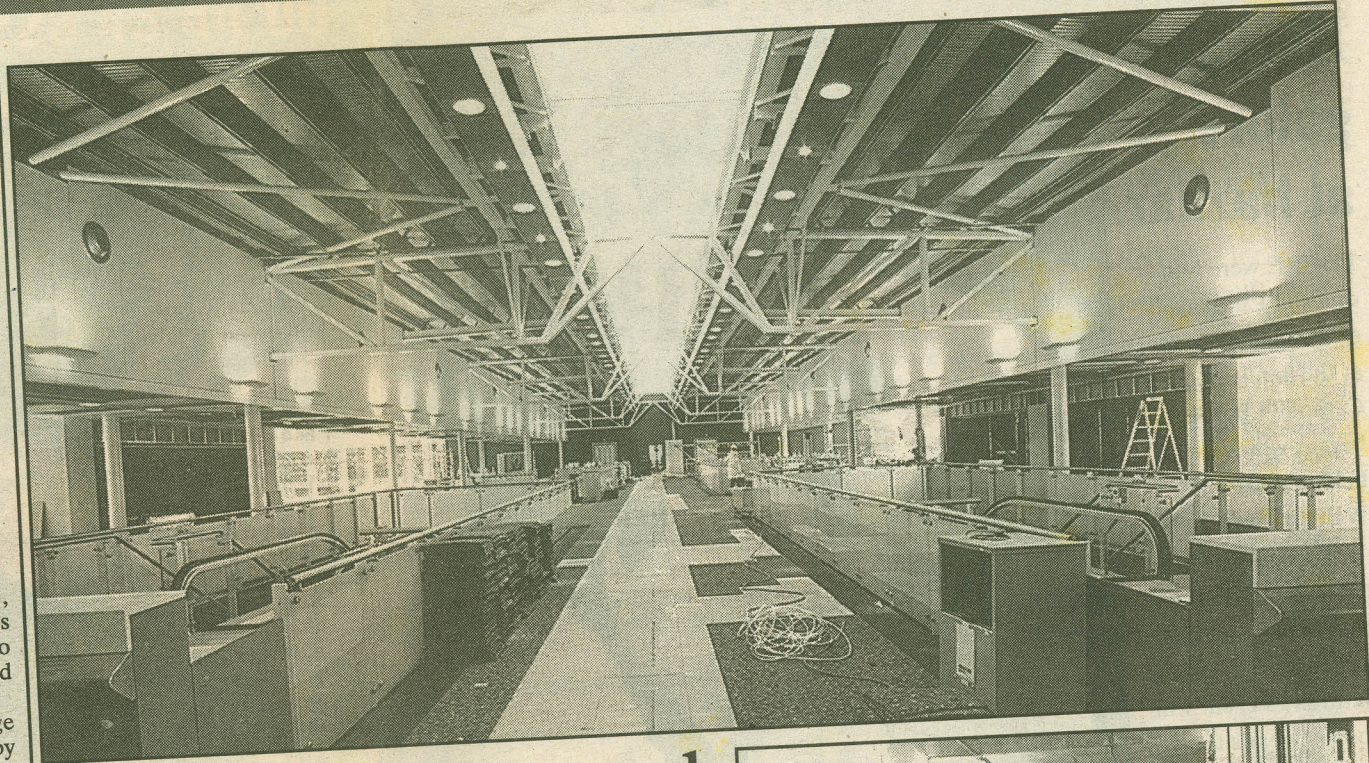
The Lottery grant will enable the Village Hall Management Committee to renovate the roof, install a new heating system, build a stage and extend the hall to add a committee room.

There will also be facilities for disabled people, including a loop system for the hard-of-hearing.

Margaret Grimster, the parish clerk, said: "We are absolutely ecstatic about the grant."

"Our success is mainly due to the villagers who have raised so much money so far."

"We have had tremendous support from societies and individuals."



Boost for Stansted

A NEW £16.8 million facility opening at Stansted Airport next month will be able to cater for more than two million passengers a year.

Work has nearly finished on building the airport's second satellite. It includes a new rail system from the terminal, international link bridges and gates, passenger lounges, duty and tax-free shopping areas and catering facilities.

International and domestic passengers will have separate facilities. KLM and its partner airlines, including Eurowing and Air Excel, will take control of the

international section.

The new track system is costing £3 million and two additional trains are being added to the current service at a cost of £1.1 million each.

A total of 580 metres of track is being added to the system and will run through a 300-metre new section of tunnel.

A spokesman for the airport said: "Much of the groundwork for the second satellite was completed when the airport was built."

"The new satellite will give provision for more than two million passengers a year."



Almost complete . . . the new terminal building, top, and above, workmen put the finishing touches to the track system.

Pictures: Daniel Jones 88929825 and 8892987

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Cash stolen from pub

Newdales in George

NEWS

Telephone: 01799 525100 Fax: 01799 513382

Lottery windfall for village halls

By LUCY CROFTS

TWO village halls in the Saffron Walden area have received National Lottery grants totalling more than £350,000.

The Widdington Village Hall Management Committee has been awarded £251,764 from the charities board which will enable the older part of the building to be replaced.

Andrew Gardner, chairman of the committee said: "This award means that the village

can look forward to a new hall which can serve the community for many years to come, greatly improving the facilities available to the many groups who regularly meet in the hall.

"We already have planning permission for the new building and work can start immediately.

Confident

"I am confident that with the continued support of everyone involved we will not only be celebrating a new millennium in the year 2000

but also the opening of a replacement hall."

The main part of Widdington's hall was built around the turn of the century and despite part of the hall being replaced in 1978, it has been in desperate need of attention for several years.

Mr Gardner added: "There is much work ahead of us now as we must complete the building work in one year."

The village began its efforts to replace the hut nearly two years ago and has managed to raise more than £25,000 from events.

In Hempstead, a grant of £100,954 will go towards a new roof, a kitchen, and building an extension and storage area.

Pledged

Villagers have raised £14,000 in two years and the parish, district and county council's have pledged money to put towards the £150,000 scheme.

The building, formerly the village school, was built in 1826 and has very high ceilings making it difficult and expensive to heat.

Hempstead parish clerk, Margaret Grimster said the building was "damp and cold and falling to bits" and that a total refurbishment was needed.

This was the council's fourth attempt at securing a lottery grant.

"We are going to do a lot of the work ourselves, so hopefully that will cut costs.

"I didn't believe it when I heard we had the grant, I had to see it in writing. It's terrific for the village, the people here have worked so hard," she said.

LITTLE MONSTERS LIGHT UP CELEBRATIONS



Charity cash boost

A CHARITY serving the Uttlesford area has been awarded a grant of £49,345 in the latest round of National Lottery grants.

Uttlesford's MIND group helps people with mental health problems and their families.

Organiser Lesley Cox, said: "For the past three years we have been able to run a minibus service to our drop-in centres but the funding for this ran out in April of this year. Now we can continue to fund our service."

Briefing

FAYRE RETURN: Saffron Walden's Michaelmas fayre raised £876 this year and with late donations and the interest, organiser Anne Barnes is able to distribute £1,000 to local charities and deserving causes.

The fayre's tenth birthday will be on September 25 next year.

LOST AND FOUND: A vehicle stolen in Thaxted overnight on Tuesday, has been found close to Gaces Fruit Farm in Wimbish on the B184. Anyone who saw the green Renault Clio, registration number P973 MNO, should contact Saffron Walden Police on 01799 513232.

DIESEL STOLEN: Diesel was stolen from a tank at an address in Clavering between 5pm on Friday and 9am on Saturday.

The thieves then left the tap running, causing 700 gallons of deisel to leak out.

Anyone with information should contact Saffron Walden Police on 01799 513232.

HISTORIC MEETING: The Saffron Walden Historical Society will be holding a meeting on Monday, November 23, at 7.45pm in the Friends' Meeting House in the High Street.

The talk will be given by Peter Cott on the subject of Seeing Beneath the Soil - Recent Discoveries in East Anglia.

HOSPICE TALK: Newport WI met a representative of the recently merged children's hospice in South Norfolk at their last meeting.

The former Milton and Quidenham Hospice is now called the East Anglia Children's Hospices. Slides were shown of patients using the hydrotherapy pool, games room and painting facilities.

CLOTHES SALE: Sawston babies and toddlers group is to hold a clothes sale in St Mary's Church hall on Saturday and is appealing for equipment, toys or clothes for babies and children that is no longer needed.

Items should be labelled with the name of the donor.