

# Annual Report of Meole Brace Peace Memorial Hall Charity Reg no. 1170090 January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2021



**Address:** Meole Brace Peace Memorial Hall, Upper Rd, Shrewsbury SY3 9JP  
**Trustees:** Peter Dunhill (Chair), Jane Williams (Treasurer), Andrew Hulme (Website/Facebook), Anne Davies, Barbie Holden (Booking Secretary - resigned November 2021), Frankie Crane (Minutes Secretary)  
**Management Meeting Attender:** Ruth Jones (Nobold WI Rep)  
**Contact for bookings:** Peter Dunhill 07944 673648, email [meolepeacehall@gmail.com](mailto:meolepeacehall@gmail.com)  
**Banking:** Nat West, Telford Town Centre, Telford  
**Insurance cover:** Village Guard (Allied Westminster) – Property Damage, Employers Liability, Public Liability, Legal Expenses, Trustee Indemnity  
**Local authority areas:** Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council  
**Facebook page:** <https://en-gb.facebook.com/pg/Meole-Brace-Peace-Memorial-Hall-538869346237711/about/>  
**Website:** <https://sites.google.com/site/meolebracememorialhall/home>

## Our facilities

The main hall (12.5 x 6m + Stage: 4.8 x 6m) is equipped for a variety of uses including meetings slide/powerpoint shows, dance, drama, parties, lunches and indoor recreation

- Stage with lighting and curtains.
- Side dressing/green room
- Adequate supplies of tables and chairs.
- Maximum Capacity: 100 people standing, 90 seated
- Wide door and wheel chair access
- Heating

An entrance lobby

A meeting room (4 x 5.7m) that is suitable for committee meetings or refreshments - a partition wall can be opened onto the side of the main hall,

A modern fitted kitchen with

- Hot water boiler for drinks
- Fridge
- Electric Cooker
- Microwave

Toilets (male, female, accessible for people with disabilities) and cloakroom area

Plenty of storage space

Off road parking for 7 vehicles + on road parking – we are located in a built up area

## Chairman's Foreword

Inevitably Covid 19 and its associated variants and concerns continued to affect the Peace Memorial Hall during 2021 though for the most part we were open. Wiping down, hand sanitising, physical distancing, air circulation and test and trace continued to be requirements for user groups for the greater part of the year.



We were offered government/local authority compensatory grants to cover the loss of income resulting from reduced bookings and these were very welcome. These grants also helped us to progress our renovation plans.

One of the highlights of our 'Prepare to Refresh' project activity was our consultation day in September. We combined a display of our architect, Steve Hayward's plans with a photographic exhibition of Meole Brace people and places from the past. Local people responded very generously to a call for old photos which definitely encouraged members of our community to call in and have their say.

Consultation does not guarantee consensus and there were many differing views expressed. However there was marked number of people who felt strongly that the proposed 'lantern' style entrance porch was out of proportion to

the rest of the design. This view was also reflected in comments on the Meole Village Facebook page. The design has since been modified and, while still bold and modern, has been generally accepted as appropriate.

In terms of regular bookings we have said goodbye to Action for Children and the Boxing Academy but have welcomed a reformed art group, Happy Paws puppy training classes and a yoga group.

A letter from the Land Registry in March confirming our change of charitable status and technical ownership of the Hall was received with a huge sigh of relief.

At the end of the year we held a very successful and well attended Frost Fayre organised by our treasurer Jane Williams in co-operation with members of the Nobold WI and Meole Village Residents Association. This looks like becoming a regular feature on our annual calendar.



Frost Fayre stall holder

I would like to conclude by paying tribute to Barbie Holden who retired as booking secretary in December and also Anne Davies who has kept the hall equipped for many years and has now decided to take a step back.

Peter Dunhill



## History

Meole Brace Peace Memorial Hall was the product of many years' work by a committee formed to try to create a Peace Memorial in memory of the sacrifices made by local people during the First World War.

Early Committee minutes from 1920 record the failure to raise sufficient funds a very ambitious proposal –spare cash for donations was short at the time

The plan was then changed to building a hall on a piece of land opposite The Sycamores (now known as Millford Lodge) to be donated by the Bather family - Lords of the Manor for many years who had provided the vicars of Meole Brace almost continuously between 1778 and 1931. On the back of this donation it was not long before £180 had been raised.

The committee agreed to purchase a hall built of concrete from a Mr Edwards at a cost of £650. It would contain a room 60ft x 20ft wide, a 20ft x 20ft square club room adjoining, a kitchen equipped with a boiler, and ladies' and gentlemen's cloakrooms with lavatory accommodation.



Bell ringers in Meole Brace c 1920

The building was soon erected and an opening concert arranged for Thursday

October 20<sup>th</sup> 1921 followed by a whist drive and dance on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October. Invitations were sent out to all householders and ex-servicemen who had lived in the area.

There was a dispute with Mr Edwards about a significant disparity between the original estimate and the final cost. Eventually the matter was resolved amicably through negotiation.

The list of committee members over the years includes the surnames of many well known Meole Brace families: Aris, Ashton, Bather, Burd, Chambers, Cox, Edwards, Evans, Griffiths, Harris, Jones, Massie, Purslow and Tanner

This is an A-Z of just some of the groups and functions that the Hall has hosted over the years:

Alexandra Players - Art Classes - Arts Alive - Auction Sales - Boy Scouts - Bridge Club - Child Welfare Clinic - Choirs - Coronation parties for children - Dancing Classes - Gardening Club - General and Local Elections - Girl Guides - Jazz Band - Martial Arts - Men's Institute - Play Groups - Rummage Sales - Salinka Stars - The Women's Institute - Whist Drives

In 2002 many of the Hall Trustees had lost heart and it seemed as though the Hall might close. Even though there were plenty of bookings this was not matched by any enthusiasm to contribute to the running of the Hall. However a public meeting resulted in the election of a new committee and a great number of improvements were made especially to the entrance and cloakroom areas which had a new concrete floor and also to the heating system.

## Hall usage

### Regular Users from July 2021

*Meole Brace Garden & Allotment Club* –

Club talks and Committee meetings

*Nobold Womens Institute* – Normally 11 evening meetings a year

*Salinka Stars* (young and teenage dance troupe) – Normally 4.00-9.00 pm every week

*Puddles Playgroup* –one morning (Friday) every week

*Shropshire Musical Singers* –one evening per week (Friday)

*Art Group* – Normally every Monday

*Action for Children after school club* - Tuesdays

*Boxing Academy* – Thursdays

*Zumba* – Tuesday evenings

*Keep Fit* – Friday afternoons

*Puppy Clases* –Saturdays/Sundays

*Yoga* – Wednesday mornings



1940s Dance Night Demonstration

### Occasional Users

The hall is used as a *polling station* for local and general elections

*Severn Hospice* events

*Childrens Parties*

*1940s Dance Nights*

*Arts Alive Shows* (subsidised touring entertainment)

*Frost Fayre* featuring *Shropshire Musical Singers*

### Closure

While the Hall was closed we complied with our Insurer's requirements by undertaking weekly inspections.

### Booking rates in 2021 (*increases in 2022 in brackets*):

Groups: £ 7 (£9) per hour, £21 (£27) for half day /evening session

Parties, events depending on time: £28 (£35), £50 (£60)



Meole Brace Garden and Allotment Club Annual Show to be reinstated in 2022



Hall decked out for the Frost Fayre

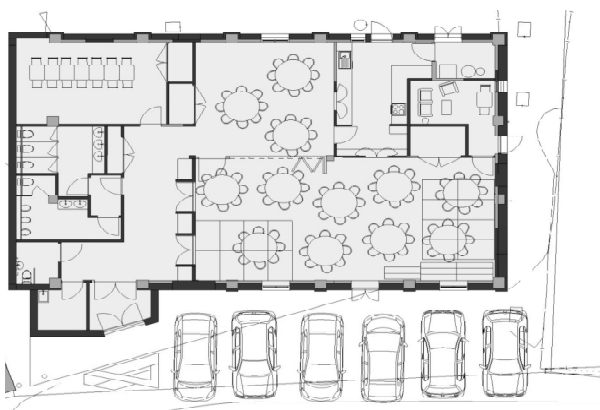
## Maintenance + Cleaning

Over the course of the year repairs and maintenance work have been undertaken on, the sliding doors, the toilets and drains, the emergency exits, the heating and the kitchen. Peter Williams (husband of our Treasurer Jane Williams) has made a particularly active contribution this year in sorting out the external lights, and cleaning out the gutter between the two pitched roofs. Thanks must also go to local resident Wendy Taylor who scraped up barrow loads of moss from the car parking area and down the sides of the Hall. Rumour has it that the Chairman occasionally turns his hand to miscellaneous repairs.

Anne Davies has now taken a step back from her stalwart role in overseeing the supply and distribution of cleaning, refuse and hygiene materials. We thank her for her dedication over the years.

## Plans for Hall improvements

During the year we focussed our attention on a major refurbishment/rebuilding project designed to ensure the structural stability of the building, improved energy efficiency and comfort and in general creating a modern and welcoming ambience while retaining the traditional feel of a village hall.



Our architect, Steve Hayward, produced outline drawings, both internal and external, for consideration. This led to a very well attended consultation event in September. A wide range of positive views were expressed with a number of practical suggestions. People recognised the spatial benefits of using a demountable staging system instead of a permanent stage as we have at present. However the proposal for a large rectangular lantern over the newly styled porch drew some significant opposition. This has since been toned down to a more acceptable, yet still bold, smaller triangular lantern.

We have received a positive response to a pre planning application submission and undertaken both a Heritage Assessment and an Environmental Assessment which were both supportive. The next stage will be a full planning application. A conservative estimate of around £250,000 has been suggested as a likely funding target.

**From this.....**



**.....to perhaps this**



**Come and have your say  
about plans for the renovation  
of Meole Brace Peace  
Memorial Hall, Upper Rd on  
Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September  
12-4 pm**





Consultation event Sept 2021

## Land Registry

Having completed the labyrinthine paperwork to transfer the Land Registry registration from the old unincorporated charity trustees to the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation, we eventually secured the new registration in March 2021. The imposition on the Hall of the formal status of an 'Asset of Community Value' required a period of six weeks in which local community members could express an interest in taking over the running of the Hall. No-one came forward and this enabled the provision of the necessary Conveyancer's certificate.

## Summary of Annual Accounts

Receipts	2020	2020
	£	£
Hire of Hall	4546	3604
Donations	31	10
Interest	1	7
Fundraising	635	370
Electricity meter	0	35
Grants/other	16097	11500
<b>Total income</b>	<b>21309</b>	<b>15526</b>
Current account b/f	13549	5202
Reserve account b/f	7584	7577
<b>Total brought forward</b>	<b>21133</b>	<b>12779</b>
Cash in hand b/f	264	130
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>42706</b>	<b>28531</b>

Payments	2021	2020
	£	£
Electricity	324	818
Gas	583	1774
Water	796	414
Insurance	796	762
Licences/Subs	116	189
Maintenance/Repairs	495	138
Renovation costs	2012	1540
Cleaning	643	790
Fundraising costs	224	161
Consumables	219	
Printing/Banners	272	548
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>6479</b>	<b>7134</b>
Current account c/f	13505	13549
Reserve account c/f	22585	7584
<b>Total carried forward</b>	<b>36090</b>	<b>21133</b>
Cash in hand c/f	19	264
Stock held	118	-
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>42706</b>	<b>28531</b>

We are grateful for the expertise of our volunteer inspector of accounts – Gary Howorth. The full inspected accounts are available as a separate document and can be viewed on request.

Income from Hall hire continued to be lower than normal a result of the COVID 19 restrictions that were in place until July. The impact of this was alleviated by grants from the government via Shropshire Council.

Our Gas and Electricity is now supplied on a fixed rate deal rather than the variable rate that applied during 2019.

Water costs were higher because of a lost cheque that was eventually processed along with its replacement. The situation has been rectified and the Hall now has a credit with Severn Trent.

*and some pictures to end on.....*



Ava - 1940s Night singer



Frost Fayre stall holder



Shropshire Musical Singers Farewell Concert



1940s Best dressed competition