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Freehold issue: We want to know what you think



Chairman's report

WE HAVE now received a reply from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and unfortunately they have once again refused to negotiate the freehold of the hall, even though they admit they have no use for the facility except for three token services a year, and will not fund its upkeep.

I have been talking to people in the area and the feeling is that the 'Church' (as the PCC are generally referred to) has more interest in the financial value of the property than it does for its people and that this is perhaps a reason

for diminishing congregations. This is pretty strong stuff. As a straw poll, it may not be the views of the majority. To get a broader picture, we are enclosing a questionnaire with this edition to canvass your opinions so that the Trustees can accurately reflect the wishes of the community.

The only offer on the table is a 99-year lease. This would be granted on the understanding that we replace the existing building with a new one, which will leave the building still in the ownership of the PCC. This would leave the community paying for everything and owning nothing.

To take this negotiation further the Trustees need a mandate from you, the community, to enable them to vigorously pursue the right course of action - so please take the time to fill in the questionnaire.

Remember whatever the PCC say, it's your village hall.

Magazine milestone

TEN YEARS of *Hilltop News* is quite a milestone and has been mentioned elsewhere in this edition, so I will not repeat what has already been said except to say it has grown into a true community magazine. The Community speaking to, and for, the Community.

Thanks to the kitchen crew

RETURNING to the village hall, the kitchen has now been fully refurbished, which was the last piece in our building programme. This work was led by Terry Cogger and supported by Robbie Oulton, Dave and Marion Sackett. Thanks and well done to all.

Action after the accident

FOLLOWING the fatality in Hollow Lane, we wrote to the KCC Roads Department requesting it became restricted to 30mph. This has been rejected on the grounds that it is typical of a rural lane in Kent. I understand the Police and Canterbury City Council support the concept of a 30mph limit, so this may not be the end of the matter. If you feel strongly about this, please write to the KCC, as the more they are pressed the more likely they are to change their minds. We all know by the volume of traffic along here that it is not a typical country lane.

See you on the 24th

THANKS for all your support and I look forward to seeing you all at the Family Festival at the hall on the 24 June. With regards to the questionnaire, we would also appreciate any comments or advice on how you would like to see Hilltop community develop in the future.

COLIN SMITH