

7 Sparrows Close, Highwood, Chelmsford, CM1 3RQ

Mr. R Lewis
Chairman
Village Hall Committee
Bramwoods Farm
Edney Common
Highwood
Chelmsford

Dear Mr Lewis,

re: The Welcome Club's use of the Village Hall

Thank you for keeping the Welcome Club Committee informed of your progress towards securing a new village hall for Highwood.

As you know, the Highwood Welcome Club is a club for the senior citizens of our village which arranges monthly coach trips and various social gatherings for its members. In the past we have relied on the village hall to provide a venue for the various activities listed below:

Bridge, Whist and Chess afternoons
Tea and chat afternoons
Quiz and Bingo evenings
Olde Tyme Dancing
'Computers for the Elderly' (keeping in touch) classes
The Welcome Club Christmas Party
Fish and Chip Suppers

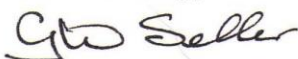
Obviously the numbers attending vary but I can confirm we regularly fill a 55 seater coach for our monthly outings and normally cater for around 60 for our Christmas party.

It is difficult to hold events without a village hall and we have to temporarily rely on a neighbouring village to provide their hall which means loss of revenue as senior citizens need a local venue where they can meet. They don't all have their own transport and our local bus service is quite poor.

We fully support your committee's efforts to build a new village hall. Will you please keep in mind that the Welcome Club would like the opportunity to use the hall for our various activities at least once each week throughout the year.

Please let us know if we can help in any way.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Seller
Chairman
Highwood Welcome Club

BUNNIES PRE-SCHOOL

To whom it may concern

Dear Sirs

Highwood Village Hall

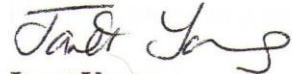
I am the Chairperson of the above pre-school group formed in the village 1 year ago. This group was formed by a group of concerned parents with the full co-operation and backing of our village school. Highwood had a pre school group until December 1999 when it was forced to close because of falling numbers, due mainly to the state of our existing village hall in which it was held. The hall itself has since been forced to close.

We are a small rural community with limited resources for our residents. In particular our young (0 to 17) and our senior citizens are the worst affected. We have a primary school with less than 50 on the roll. It is vital we have a pre-school facility from which the school numbers can increase. Without this our school numbers will drop maybe to the level at which the Government will close it. We currently hold our pre school in a room at the school but we are limited to the number of children we can have (10 maximum) and the number of sessions we can offer. It is anticipated that should a new village hall be available we could increase our sessions and increase our roll to 20. We have the full backing of the school and parents regarding this.

In addition to offering an extended pre-school facility it is envisaged that the school age children would be catered for in the new hall with various clubs and activities offered to them. At present all children have to be taken to surrounding villages or to Chelmsford to enjoy such activities.

In conclusion, it is vital to our village to have increased facilities for the youngest and the only way we can achieve this is to have somewhere safe and secure for activities and groups to be held.

Yours faithfully,



Janet Young

AWES FARM, INGATESTONE ROAD, HIGHWOOD, CHELMSFORD, ESSEX CM1 3QS,

Highwood Primary School

Loves Green, Highwood, Chelmsford. CM1 3QH

Head teacher Louise Hourihan MSc

Telephone no 01245 248200

Dear Sir,

I am writing in support of the bid for funding of the rebuilding of Highwood Village Hall.

The village of Highwood has lost, over the years, a number of key facilities to the detriment of its community. This included post office, shop, curtailed bus service and village hall. Our school is now the only community based facility left in the village – this impacts on the number of children who are admitted into the school and the opportunities of pre school education that our children have within the village. As a result of the closure of the village hall the local playgroup was forced to cease its operation and children in the village had nowhere locally to meet and enjoy pre school provision. Last year school made a small part of its premises available for a mother and toddlers group to meet for two mornings a week, 9.00 – 11.00am. This group is beginning to grow and a number of parents are keen to have the facilities on other days and times of the week. Unfortunately this is not possible at present. A new village hall would enable the pre school group to be run for the benefit of all and not be dependent on other institutions.

The children, parents and staff at school also miss having the availability of a local village hall – it was the ideal location for the presentation of school plays and concerts for the enjoyment of the wider local community. The hall was also used as a larger venue for school fairs, bazaars and physical education activities. The children now no longer have the opportunity to be involved in helping members of their local community, such as the elderly, as the clubs that were run in the village hall are either no longer in existence or are held in different venues, well away from the village.

In conclusion, the rebuilding of the village hall would give a huge boost to the local community. It would give back to the village a centre in which the different parts of Highwood could come together and play an interdependent role, enhancing the feeling of belonging to a thriving community rather than a dying country village.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs L. J. Hourihan.
Head teacher.