

## **Introduction:**

### **End of First Year Report relating to our Schedule of Works Development Plan**

On behalf of Hilton Hall Community Association, I am pleased to be able to report that we have managed to carry out all of the 'Planned Work' - as per our official 'Five Year Business & Development Plan' - on the Upper Floor Level (The Main Hall, Kitchen & Toilet Areas) at Hilton Hall of Lanesfield.

Following a successful visit by the City Council's Property Management Officer and Building Regulations Inspector, who signed off the work he inspected and we have now opened up the Main Hall once more to the local community and to the groups & clubs who regularly used Hilton Hall as their Community Base before it was closed down in October 2008.

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2010 The Main Hall was 'Officially Opened' by the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Wolverhampton – Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett who opened our Community Centre with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and unveiled a Brass Plaque commemorating this important moment.

All of this began when the Hall was closed down in October 2008. This followed many exploratory meetings and community consultations before the City Council agreed to issue a Service Level Agreement / Lease for Hilton Hall and in preparation for the Lease being signed we formed a Company Limited by Guarantee – with no Share Capital – in March 2009, to manage the programme and administer the affairs and business of Hilton Hall Community Association. The Lease was eventually signed on 4<sup>th</sup> June when we officially started the work on the Hall.

I am pleased to announce that three of the original Groups (who were regular Hirers of the Hall prior to its closure) have now returned to continue their activities once more at Hilton Hall. We have also managed to attract new hirers to the Hall and now hire out the facilities to various City Council Committees and other community groups for their regular monthly meetings. Together with Weekend Lettings for private functions and regular use of the outdoor areas (booked for Football matches) we have managed to generate the expected income that will provide the 'Sustainability' aspect of our project – to secure our tenure at Hilton Hall for future years.

We have managed to meet our 'Objectives' (based upon our structured 'Five Year Business & Development Plan / Scheme of Work') by closely following our original schedule of work, which was outlined in our 'Rescue Plan' in great detail within estimated timescale and 'job-by-job' costing.

The whole programme of work was 'Project Managed' by the Three Directors of Hilton Hall Community Association; Debbie Cox, Heather Manser and Keith Jones, who worked as unpaid Volunteers throughout the process. This included Ten Months of Meetings and Negotiations prior to The Lease for Hilton Hall being signed.

At this early negotiation stage there was a Forth Director – Richard Lord, the Warlords Rugby League Football Club Manager – but later resigned his Directorship of HHCA in Mid-July 2009 due to a conflict of interests and pressure of work. The remaining Directors continued raising community and corporate awareness for this project and set about further fund-raising to commence the repair and refurbishment programme.

Through their total commitment and determination, the three remaining Directors continued working at the Hall which progressed according to their 'Schedule of Work'. They also managed to obtain sponsorship from several Local & National Companies who provided parts, materials and fittings, plus their highly qualified / experience trades people who carried out the more technical / specialist areas of work at the Hall.

An amazing amount of work has been completed by the kind generosity of community spirited Companies enabling over £80,000 worth of building work to be carried out at a fraction of the cost to HHCA. This indicates the tenacity and focus that the Directors and Volunteers of Hilton Hall have invested in this project and shows that local and national companies do care about local community and showed this commitment via their 'Community Regeneration Projects'.

It is our hope that, together with our regularly up-dated web site ([www.hiltonhall.com](http://www.hiltonhall.com)) this report will illustrate the amount of work already carried out by our Team of Volunteers (in both Pictorial form and ongoing news reports), but will also identify the next stages of this Five Year Repair & Refurbishment Programme that we need to concentrate our efforts on, with regard to future fund-raising and development work needed to complete our scheduled work within the time-scale planned.

The outcome of all of our hard work and effort culminated in not only complying with the work listed in the original 'Jacobs Report' and subsequently and more pertinent; to our own HHCA Schedule of Work Report, but we also managed along the way to address many more issues of the refurbishment relating to Disabled Access – i.e. New DDA Toilets and a complete New Kitchen refit that was not listed in the original scheme of work.

Once the Main Hall is in use again, providing a much needed Community meeting place for local community groups & clubs, which will generate a steady income through 'Hall Hiring Charges' that are needed to provide a sustainable income for the Hall to run effectively and to pay its way with regards Rates & Utility Bills and running / maintenance cost. Work now starts in earnest on the Lower Floor Level – which includes Football Changing areas and Toilets, plus office and storage space that will further increase the viability and potential income of Hilton Hall as a whole.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we have won a National Award from Living Streets (the national charity for Pedestrians in the UK) for our work within the Community. We teamed up with Living Streets and through a programme of work centred on Landscaping and Planting and participation in a programme known as the 'Fitter For Walking' campaign (these are organised social and community walks for Health – based from Hilton Hall). The Landscaping part of the project involved working with two Wildlife Trusts - who provided the expertise and guidance – and with the local Tenants & Residents Association, local Schools in the area (which the children helped plant traditional Wild Meadow Flowers and Shrubs) and with other community groups within the Lanesfield and surrounding Wards.

The outcome of this National Award (presented by Living Landscapes) will provided a wider and stronger Community Cohesion, which in turn will make Lanesfield a more interesting and inviting place to live in and visit. A wall mounted Plaque outside Hilton Hall will commemorate this community achievement, and I am sure will be the first of many future awards we will work towards and achieve.

Keith Jones, Chairman HHCA