

The logo for Beoley Village Hall is a dark grey square with the words "BEOLEY VILLAGE HALL" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font, centered within the square.

BEOLEY VILLAGE HALL

History of the Hall

In around 1900 Andrew Carnegie set up a trust fund to further the education of the people of Great Britain and the colonies, by providing grants for the provision of reading rooms in country areas. It was this initiative that was responsible for the creation of what is now Beoley Village Hall.

The Early Years

In 1905 the Reading Room was opened by Miss Hope Bowen. It was held in trust by the Worcestershire Education Authority. After the First World War, the Worcestershire County Council delivered a regular supply of library books which were loaned out weekly by volunteers.

In 1933 the Reading Room was extended so it could be used for other activities. The management of the Hall was undertaken by the Parish Council.

Electricity was installed in 1936.

The 1950's

Hall trusteeship was transferred to a newly formed Village Hall Management Committee in 1951. The Beoley Village Hall being registered as a charity.

In 1953 a water supply was laid into the Hall at a cost of £45. The school started to use the Hall as an overflow classroom. This provided the Hall with its main source of income.

An extension to the Hall was completed in 1959, providing toilets and a kitchen.

The 1960's and 1970's

In July 1961, the school ceased full-time use of the Hall as a classroom and reduced its usage to 4 half days per week.

Fan heaters were installed to replace coke stove heating in 1962, but these were to be short lived. In 1963 they were deemed to be too noisy and were replaced by radiant heaters at a cost of £148.

The school ceased its use of the Hall in September 1973. Insufficient income from lettings prompted discussions of the possibility of selling the Hall and building a new hall on the school site, in conjunction with the Education Authority. The Chivers Committee was formed in 1974, to establish what alternative was possible and practical for the Hall's future. It published a report in 1975 and a large public meeting voted overwhelmingly to keep the existing Hall and refurbish it.

Plans were formulated and the refurbishment was started in October 1976. The contract price was £13,597, but the final cost was £18,534.

The Hall was reopened by Mr Archer Chambers on 14th April 1977 and, just 4 days later, the Social Club was formed with the intention of being able to provide a bar in the Hall to stimulate lettings.

The 1980's and 1990's

In 1985 the Village Skittles League was formed and the freehold of the car park was bought from the Parish Council.

Further improvements and extensions took place in 1988. The new bar store, general store, toilets and kitchen extension were built, substantially enhancing the versatility and desirability of the Hall for hirers.

The disabled access ramp from the car park was built in 1991.

Into The New Millennium

The Beoley Parish Council donated a replica Foundation Stone, to mark the new millennium. The original had become severely weathered over the first 95 years of the life of the Hall and was almost impossible to read.

2000 proved to be a busy year in terms of improvements to the Hall. New curtains were bought, the kitchen was re-fitted and new gas central heating was installed.

But 2001 proved to be another year of high expenditure. The disabled toilet facility was built, the main toilets were decorated and new double glazing was installed in the main porch. Part of the car park was also resurfaced.

In 2002 the major expenditure was the purchase of a new floor covering for the main entrance porch.

A comprehensive audio system, incorporating a loop system for the hard of hearing was installed in 2003. This significantly enhances the Hall as a venue for talks by guest speakers.

In order to recognise the first 100 years of the Hall, a pictorial project was undertaken to gather photographs, postcards and other information showing the history of the Hall and the surrounding area of Beoley. This material was framed and hung in the Hall in 2005.

History of the Hall

An on-going programme of maintenance and improvement continues, with the Hall being repainted inside and the second part of the car park being resurfaced in August 2006. In conjunction with Beoley First School, a new stage system was bought in November 2006.

In late December 2008, the floor of the hall was completely refurbished. It was sanded back and re-sealed to provide a smart protective finish. The entrance to the car park was also re-surfaced and a speed hump added.

The ladies and gents toilet facilities were comprehensively refurbished in late 2009 and late 2010 respectively.

A large drop-down projector screen was installed in 2012 and is available for use by hirers of the hall.

Also in 2012, stage lighting was bought and is available for hire with the hall.

The overhead projector was installed in late 2014, allowing the showing of presentations from laptops and BluRay or DVD-based films. New, upholstered chairs were also bought.

In mid-2015 the bar was completely refurbished, including moving the counter to provide more room for the bar staff. New doors from the porch into the hall were installed and new curtains purchased.

In 2016, a CCTV system was installed. Just before the end of the year, the pair of central heating boilers was replaced.

Over the Christmas and New Year period 2016 to 2017, the hall was redecorated - including changing the colour of the ceiling from the red that had prevailed for some 40 years.

In the summer of 2017, the floor was again sanded back and retreated.

In 2018, it was decided that the pictorial history of the Hall and the Beoley area, undertaken in 2005, needed to be refreshed. This turned into a significant project that was undertaken by Stuart Lamb, who digitally restored the original photos and postcards and found additional items to be included in new, larger, frames. This came to fruition in early 2019 and the results have aroused significant interest amongst the hirers of the Hall.

The 2020's

As 2020 started, little did we suspect that the activities at the Hall would be so severely disrupted from March onwards by the coronavirus pandemic. The first two Jazz Nights took place as scheduled, as did the Ricky Cool and the In Crowd concert in early March. There then followed a succession of event cancellations and postponements.

Plans had already been made to update the kitchen and to renew the stage lights and, with the help of a Lottery Fund grant towards the cost of the kitchen refurbishment, it was decided to bring forward that work. Originally scheduled to take place in August, the kitchen was renewed in early to mid July 2020 - taking advantage of the Hall shutdown. This followed the delivery of the new LED stage lights and cabling installation in April 2020.

It was the autumn of 2021 before hall bookings started to resume (although the before and after school club - BASIC - had continued to operate when the school was open). A Jazz Night took place in November 2021, at which the new stage lights were used for the first time.

In 2022, it was decided that the Gents toilets should be refurbished and new pipework installed. This work was undertaken in the summer.

During the Easter period of April 2024, new inner and outer double doors were installed in what was the original entrance to the hall (on the side facing the road), which is now known as the Bar Lobby. The main part of the hall was redecorated in August 2024, with white ceilings throughout. Skirtings were changed from dark green to grey, creating a fresh new look. Later in the year, the curtains throughout the hall were replaced with a new set in a teal colour.

In January 2025, with the aid of a grant administered by Worcestershire County Council, solar panels and battery storage were installed, offering the facility to provide a "warm space" environment to the local community in the event of an extended power cut.

In August 2025, the hall wooden floor was again refurbished (having last been done in 2017). It was professionally sanded and resealed to provide a bright, smart finish.

The Future

The management committee is continually looking at ways to improve the facilities provided to the community and the hall's users.