**A message from the Village Hall Committee, 7th February, 2019**

We are delighted to report that we have received a grant of £4,000 from the Rank Foundation under its Pebbles Grant Scheme towards the cost of the Village Hall project. The word is that we have done very well to secure this award with so much competition for funding these days.

In addition to the amazing £7,500 from Ute and Ricarda’s ‘Proms’ concert just before Christmas (it’s still sinking in!) and added to the accumulated funds from the Garfield Weston award and our own efforts over the years, such as the Art Auction, we now have the confidence to start work on our project. Stage 1 will be to rebuild the kitchen and toilets with comfortable and accessible new facilities and upgrade the main hall for the many art exhibitions, talks and events we hold here. We will also be doing more prosaic stuff such as replacing the boiler, installing a bunded oil storage tank and improving the carpark.

We are taking a pragmatic approach to the upgrade of the kitchen and toilets to reduce costs by retaining the existing external walls and literally raising the roof (and the floor) to improve access and provide proper facilities for the less well able.

We need to go through the proper planning process before physical work commences and also tackle what could be the biggest challenge yet, that of appointing a building contractor to undertake the work. All suggestions and ideas on this point would be very welcome!

Our Village Hall has never played a more important role in our community than it does now and it would be no exaggeration to suggest that our much loved building has been saved from a very uncertain future.