

CONNECT	
Dolphins Hall Needs Our Help	

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*Some things are worth standing up - and fighting - for.*

- 1 It's been a long time coming, but I'm delighted to see that, finally, a change is gonna come at Tetbury's Dolphins Hall.
- 2 At a public meeting on 17 November, the Trustees of the Dolphins Recreation Centre Trust - the charity that runs the Hall and the Recreation ground - explained the redevelopment plan and invited views on raising the funding needed for Phase 2.
- 3 The Dolphins Hall was built over 50 years ago as a much-needed community facility for Tetbury, alongside The Recreation Ground.  
  
It has been well used for events, gatherings, weddings and other celebrations, as a polling station, for sports, meetings, films and all kinds of other activities. The Dolphins Hall is our town's "village hall" and holds a special place in the hearts of our community.  
  
With that said, the Hall no longer serves the community well enough, due in part to having only a single space. The current Hall, in other words, can only be used by one group at a time – hence the redevelopment.
- 4 The redevelopment of the site has two phases, described by the Trust as Project 1 and Project 2.  
Project 1 is to build a new Community, Youth & Sports Complex.  
Project 2 is to build a new Community Hall. The new Hall will have three separate spaces, meaning three different events can take place or three different groups can meet at the same time.  
  
The plans and designs for the two new buildings, together with an image of a model showing how the site is going to look, can be seen on [the Trust's website](#).
- 5 Once the new Community Hall is completed, the existing Hall will be demolished. Tetbury thus will not be without its "village hall" at any time.  
  
Project 1 is fully funded and is in the building phase - the Dolphin Hall's [Facebook page](#) has updates and photographs showing the work.
- 6 Project 2 is still to be funded, hence the recent public meeting, which was a Fundraising Kick-Off meeting for Project 2.  
At that meeting, Jamie Ponting, Trustee and Chair of the New Building Project, explained how the Trust anticipates raising the money.

Before I give the figures, I'll just say that planning permission has been granted for the construction of two houses on a part of the site that cannot be used for community benefit. The planners actually *require* two dwellings to be built to hide the car park from the road. I have to admit that the workings of planners' minds are a mystery to me, but they must have a reason for stating that a car park is an eyesore. I can think of quite a few that have been allowed without a screening stipulation. That's planners for you!

In any event, the value of this land is currently assessed as being £275,000. Selling this piece of land – which can only be done if the people of Tetbury agree – will obviously provide additional funding for Project 2. However, building costs have increased and are continuing to increase.

This increase means that having contingency funding – an ace up the sleeve, you might say – is essential.

That piece of land which can be sold to developers is that ace, which the Trust will play – with the community's agreement – at just the right time.

7 So, to the figures, as provided by Jamie.

The total cost of the build [P1+P2] is anticipated to be £1.5million.

The Trust has £1 million so needs another £500,000.

£400,000 is expected to be raised from grants.

This leaves just £100,000, which the Trust is asking our community to raise.

8 Other than giving these figures and explaining the plan, the purpose of the meeting was to hear people's ideas for fundraising.

Fundraising and awareness building has already started, with a successful Quiz Night. It quickly became clear, however, that – no matter how many great ideas people have – we need to avoid "Dolphins Hall fatigue." If there were too many initiatives, too many requests to donate to the fund, the people of Tetbury would quickly become fed up with it.

It was also clear that fundraising needs to be, as much as possible, free of active involvement by the Trustees, who have enough to do – such as hold down full-time jobs like the rest of us.

The community needs to be strategic in its fundraising, with people collaborating on a smaller number of lucrative fundraising initiatives rather than a larger number of less lucrative ones.

Fundraising needs to come from people outside the town, as well. So, a succession of Quiz Nights and Coffee Mornings is probably not the solution, no matter how yummy the cakes are at the latter.

9 We all know that the Trust has had to fight a long war to get to the point of starting the work.

I am sad to have to say that, even now, with the funding for Project 1 finally given over and the work having started, that the war is not yet over.

With skirmishes still breaking out, and digital grenades still being lobbed, CONNECT can say this.

We look forward to publishing, before too long, a detailed account of the story of the Dolphins Hall so that we can all understand what went right, what went wrong - and what we need to avoid doing in future.

Finally, every cloud has a silver lining.

The black American singer-songwriter Sam Cooke was subjected to a hideous experience in 1963 - he was [turned away from a whites-only motel](#) in Louisiana. Cooke wrote a song that spoke to that particular struggle and that song became an anthem - "A Change Is Gonna Come."

Similarly, a positive aspect of the Trust having to fight - as Churchill would probably have put it, on the Rec, in the Hall, on ZOOM, on social media and no doubt, other places as well - is the positive support that has emerged within the Tetbury community.

Many people say they will get behind the task of making sure that Project 2 is fully funded and goes ahead.

CONNECT applauds those people and looks forward to publishing their stories, as well as supporting Dolphins Hall in whatever way we can.

### **CONNECT'S Maxim and Oath**

Connect is only interested in finding and sharing the TRUTH.  
In search of that TRUTH, we only pose questions - we have no answers.

By: Helen King

Source: Tetbury CONNECT: [Magazine](#)

[LINK](#): Dolphins Hall website - New Build updates

[LINK](#): Dolphins Hall - Facebook page

[LINK](#): Wikipedia - "A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke

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