

Ridgewood Village Hall – Case for Support

Purpose of this document

The Case for Support is the core document explaining how supporters – prospective or present – might support the fundraising strategy of Ridgewood Village Hall. This document explains what we need money for and what the benefits will be to beneficiaries. This document is designed to engage internal and external stakeholders in the work of the Ridgewood Village Hall.

A case is powerful and effective if it is:

- a clear, widely owned and understood vision of what is to be achieved
- a defined and costed list of the resources needed to achieve that vision
- aimed at a cluster of donors who have the potential to meet the expressed need

This Case for Support can be used as the source for other communications such as brochures, proposals, presentations and even speeches at events. It will form an important part of Ridgewood Village Hall's fundraising toolkit.

Contents

Ridgewood Village Hall – An Asset for the Community	2
Case Framework – Summary	3
Opportunity.....	3
Vision.....	3
Crisis	4
Risk	5
Case for Support Information	7
What is the need?	7
Why?	8
How?	11
Impact?.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
When	17
Refurbishment and Extension Costs – What we need:	18
Redevelopment Photos.....	20
RVH-Hosted Group Funding Costs.....	23
Sources	24

Ridgewood Village Hall – An Asset for the Community

A Village or Community Hall is one of the most valuable assets of any community, both in the sense of the facilities and activities it provides for the wellbeing of people living in the area and its capital value.¹

In East and West Sussex there are some 300 village halls, most of which are charities run by dedicated volunteer trustees. Their combined capital value is worth roughly £120 million. Ridgewood Village Hall, located on New Road, Ridgewood in Uckfield is owned by Uckfield Town Council but leased out on a long-term full repairing lease to the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee for a term of 25 years.¹ The current lease was signed in April 2010, and due to end in April 2035. Ridgewood Village Hall Committee pay an annual rent of £120 plus insurance costs, in the region of £650.

Village Halls are an important contributor to the rural economy, supporting on average seven jobs, either directly (e.g. cleaners, caretakers) or indirectly (pre-school staff, fitness instructors, caterers). They also use local building firms, electricians and other services.²

A properly maintained building of adequate size can provide facilities for social, educational and recreational activities for all ages. A well-equipped and up to date hall that is accessible to all is important to maintaining the health and wellbeing of local people, especially with an ageing population and infrequent public transport.³

The main use of most community halls is by local voluntary and community organisations, but this means that income does not always match expenditure. With above inflation rises in key running costs such as energy and insurance it is often a challenge to put aside sufficient funds for major repairs. Almost half depend on fundraising and parish council support. When it comes to major refurbishment or rebuilding external grant funding is usually required.⁴

According to a study of rural community buildings undertaken in 2009, 90% of rural community buildings are charities run by local volunteer trustees and heavily reliant on fundraising. Nonetheless, they support a range of local jobs and provide a wide range of services and activities which reduce public expenditure. They deliver policy outcomes at low cost, such as childcare, health and wellbeing, stronger communities and environmental sustainability.⁵

Ridgewood Village Hall hosts a diverse range of community groups serving Ridgewood and the surrounding area. Pivotal in the Ridgewood community, our Village Hall is the only community facility serving 2,600 residents and as 1,000 new homes are built on its doorstep in the next three years, Ridgewood Village Hall will be the only facility providing communal use opportunities in the southern end of Uckfield for 25% of the Uckfield population.

Ridgewood Village Hall is used as a polling station for local, county and general elections for Ridgewood and New Town residents.

Built by volunteers and local residents in the mid-1980s, Ridgewood Village Hall is run by a committee of volunteers/trustees who run the day to day operations of the hall but also provide community fundraising events throughout the year in the form of Christmas and summer fairs, family-friendly firework events, Easter bunny hunts, quiz nights, dance nights and other events suggested by the local residents.

Self-governed by the committee of volunteers/trustees, and financially self-supporting, the Ridgewood Village Hall is the hub of the Ridgewood community and provides a warm, welcoming community facility for local residents of the village and Uckfield town. Our Hall is a hub of community activity and we cater for a variety of local groups, of all ages and from different walks of life at a reasonable hire fee.

Case Framework – Summary

	Present	Future
Positive	Opportunity	Vision
Negative	Crisis	Risk

Opportunity

The Ridgewood Village Hall hosts a diverse range of community groups serving Ridgewood and the surrounding area. Pivotal in the Ridgewood community, our Village Hall is the only community facility serving our existing 2,600 residents.

A properly maintained building of adequate size could provide facilities for social, educational and recreational activities for all ages. A well-equipped and up-to-date hall that is accessible to all is important to maintaining the health and wellbeing of local people, especially with an ageing population and infrequent public transport. ⁶

Over the years, it has become clear that our well used hall is a very popular facility but that its size, layout and accommodation does not maximize its potential and constrains hirers activities. The hall could be a much more appealing space with two/three separate additional rooms to hire and an additional income stream could be generated by the tea room/ server for the recreation ground.

Ridgewood Village Hall meets the criteria of the Private Action, Public Benefit government strategy paper (2002) as ‘we are a vehicle for community involvement contributing to diversity, developing new approaches to local problems’.

We have raised money and had plans drawn and passed by Wealden District Council for a refurbishment and extension to the Village Hall and are now trying to raise vital funds to bring the project to fruition.

Vision

The Ridgewood Village Hall Committee is continually exploring ways in which we can collaborate with local businesses and organisations to offer more to our local, growing community. We want the Hall to be a central community hub, maximising opportunities to generate additional income to ensure we are around for many more decades supporting our local residents and community groups, as well as developing our building and offerings to be able to benefit an even more diverse range of people. With our plans for Artytime, Sunday afternoon bingo for the elderly, vitality village and café to the recreation ground, we want the impact of Ridgewood Village Hall in the community to continue for many years to come.

To accommodate the increase in population in the Ridgewood area with the development of 1,000 new homes in the next five to ten years, and to improve the existing facilities available within the hall, the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee plan to build an extension and refurbish the building.

We have also identified that the hall’s existing layout does not work for smaller groups, and by adding a multi use room for craft groups and a meeting room, we can better accommodate our local groups and also generate additional revenue for the hall.



By relocating and refurbishing the existing kitchen area and the addition of a new kitchenette to include a hatch onto the recreation ground, we have the opportunity to provide refreshments to the adjacent external facilities, whilst the main hall and kitchen are in use.. This will help bring in a small revenue to maintain the hall, and also allow us to develop ideas of a 'vitality village' and involve the Village Hall with the recreation ground (currently not being used to its full potential) and the adjacent [Millennium Green](#) to provide areas for exercise, mindfulness and wellbeing.

Along with the current Hall users, we have a waiting list for other activities including exercise classes and puppy training, enquiries on availability for seminars and two wedding receptions booked for August 2019 and August 2020.

By providing these new facilities it is expected that there will be an uplift of approximately 15% in year 1 and hopefully this will rise to 20% in years 2 and 3, 40% in year 4 and 50% in year 5.

Providing the works proceed, it is hoped that the present running costs would not increase significantly, and that further savings can be made by the provision of solar panels, increased insulation and modernisation of the heating installation.

More information can be found within our application: [https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/planning - WD/1993/1267/F, WD/2018/0683/F](https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/planning-WD/1993/1267/F,WD/2018/0683/F)

Sustainable & Environmentally Friendly

By embarking on this ambitious project to upgrade the Ridgewood Village Hall, we have the opportunity to make the building significantly more environmentally-friendly. This could include:

- Using building materials with a reduced carbon footprint and impact on the environment
- Better insulation to save money on heating bills
- Energy-efficient fixtures and fittings
- Solar panels to provide electricity and heating for the Hall
- An accompanying wild garden to increase insect population.
- Grey water recycling
- Ground source heat pump

By committing to focus on environmentally-friendly options during the upgrade / redevelopment, Ridgewood Village Hall may unlock additional funding opportunities from organisations such as EDF Energy, the government's Low Carbon Buildings Programme, the Big Lottery Fund and Biffa, NFU who demonstrate giving to similar projects in other areas of the country.

In 2018, Ashurst Village Hall was awarded £10,000 in the second round of grants by the Rampion Fund. The money will help with the installation of solar roof panels at the new purpose-built hall which provides a central hub for community cohesion. The Rampion Fund is designed to help fund local projects, particularly those with links to the environment and ecology, climate change and energy, as well as those that work to improve community facilities, with some consideration for energy generation and use. It is managed by Sussex Community Foundation, a local grant-making charity.⁷

Crisis

The infrastructure of Ridgewood Village Hall is simply not adequate for the growing population of our immediate area and we are determined to offer more for our local community.

Growing Population in Ridgewood Parish

The Hall was constructed in the mid 1980s using stock bricks and recycled materials and is now showing its age. It was originally designed to cater for the population of Ridgewood which at that time encompassed the “Ridgewood triangle” of Lewes Road, Eastbourne Road and New Road. The development of the Pipers Field estate had commenced. It is therefore obvious that there has been a massive increase in the population of the area with the addition of houses on Pipers Field, Mallard Drive, New Barn Lane/Shepherds Way, Fernley Park and soon the further addition of Ridgewood Place. The population in 1980 was approximately 2,800 and the present population of the Ridgewood ward is approximately 3,680.

Desperate Need for Upgrade

The Hall is in desperate need of refurbishment, repair and an extension. The toilets and plumbing are inadequate, causing issues with blocked drains flooding the car park. The hall floor (originally second hand from an RAF Base) is in poor repair. Storage facilities are under the building and are difficult to use, especially bringing toys up for our toddler groups.

It is expected with the development of the new Ridgewood Place development Ridgewood will account for approximately 24% of the population of Uckfield which clearly is a massive increase since the original hall was constructed.

Disabled Access

Despite a residential home in Ridgewood for adults with learning difficulties and other disabilities, currently disabled access is poor and does not facilitate any groups for this part of our community. We need to increase and adapt the disabled facilities at the hall and better provide for another important group within our community.

Currently, disabled access is poor both inside and outside the hall. A wider entrance area is essential for wheelchair access and a modern opening door would help users with walking frames, walking sticks and wheelchairs. There is an access slope into the hall from the car park but this is in poor condition and uneven and there is a second emergency exit which discharges onto the grass/muddy field and makes access back to the car park extremely difficult especially if the ground is saturated. This makes attending community functions especially with other family members very difficult. The path that would go from the car park/ hall entrance around the building to the hall exit/entrance would give access to all. The current access slope into the hall entrance is steep and made of rough concrete and difficult to use with wheelchairs and the emergency exit slope is uneven and needs weeding frequently.

It is essential that the disabled toilet/ baby changing area is brought inside the building, as it is currently in an unacceptable position and sits within the entrance to the building and is at risk of vandalism.

Risk

The Ridgewood population has increased since the original hall was built, with a further 1,000 new homes being built in the foot fall of the Village Hall and no community facility planned. Growth in our immediate area will mean that Ridgewood Village will house 25% of the Uckfield population. The Hall is currently used to capacity and the increased population will put further strain on the already limited facilities we can offer.

Without investment in Ridgewood Village Hall, as with all village halls across the country, the population will lose a vital asset both in the sense of its communal facilities, the diverse range of activities it provides and a centre point for the community wellbeing of the people it serves. It plays an



extremely important role in economic and social regeneration and needs to adapt and change to meet the needs of its users and beneficiaries.

Ridgewood will lose a centre point for the community wellbeing of the people it serves as it plays an 'extremely important role in economic and social regeneration and needs to adapt and change to meet the needs of its users and beneficiaries'.

If we are do not proceed with the redevelopment plans, there are several potential risks that have been identified:

- The Hall continues to fall into greater disrepair and will become unusable to existing and prospective groups.
- Other local halls improve and become a more attractive space for groups which currently use the hall.
 - There are several other alternative spaces for local groups in Uckfield Town:
 - Civic Centre – 7 rooms catering for groups ranging from 10 to 250 people
 - Foresters Hall
 - Luxford Centre - For all those aged 60+ of Uckfield and surrounding villages for social activities, refreshments, companionship and mutual self-help. Premises available for hire by other community organisations in the evenings and at weekends.
 - Scout Hut - The 4th Uckfield Scout Hall has large a main hall for daytime presentations, social functions or children's parties. It is not for hire for evening events. It also boasts a big kitchen, an off-road car park, and caters well for disabled guests. Additionally, there is a large outside grass area should a party wish to take advantage of good weather during an event. The Scout Hut can host groups of up to 150 people.
 - There are also alternative spaces in surrounding villages including High Hurstwood Village Hall, Hadlow Down Village Hall, Framfield Memorial Hall, Isfield Village Hall, Nutley War Memorial Hall, Fletching Village Hall to name a few.

But none of these community facilities are suitable because:

- Not within walking distance for the local Ridgewood residents
- Foresters Hall is the nearest facility and a minimum approximately 1.5 miles away
- The civic centre and others are substantially more expensive to hire and there preclude the use by small groups
- The scout hut has extremely limited availability as it is regularly used by cub/scout groups and is approximately 3 miles from Ridgewood Village Hall.
- All the other village halls are in local villages and only accessible by car with very limited public transport.
- We will be unable to generate any additional income from Hall rental and will operate at the maximum ceiling average of £16000 per annum which includes money raised from community fundraising events.

Case for Support Information

What is the need?

Building Redevelopment & Extension

Since the building structure is in reasonable condition it is therefore felt that a thorough upgrade is preferable, in order to provide additional letting space, storage and more modern kitchen and toilet facilities.

It is likely that within the next twelve months the main hall floor will need replacing and the kitchen and toilet and drain areas will need refurbishment. Replacements such as these will be carried out during the rebuilding/additions, and some of the projected increases in service charges can be offset. By the addition of items such as insulation, grey water recycling and solar panels, these considerations have formed a key part of the design.

The final proposals are for the main hall to be increased in length by approximately 3 metres to the south with additional accommodation being provided on the east side of the existing building incorporating storage, meeting room and external terrace thus enabling the internal rooms to be increased. In addition, the north facing main entrance is to be covered to provide a more welcoming façade and to include an upgraded disabled toilet with nappy changing facilities.

Kitchen Facilities – A new and modern kitchen equipped for varied community use needs to be provided and located away from the hall area to improve the width of the present hall floor space. The plan is to create an additional kitchenette that can serve refreshments to the new and improved recreation ground during the summer months. This would allow Hall users to access one kitchen and other users to access the kitchenette without disturbing hall users. The kitchenette would also aid the development of the ‘vitality village’ idea which would incorporate outside activities on the recreation ground and guided walks in Millennium Green as we could provide refreshments without the need of entering the hall.

Storage – The Hall needs to be extended as it is currently too short and narrow for certain activities and lacks storage facilities. Currently all storage is under the hall and accessed by trap doors on the hall floor which is a huge Health and safety risk if hall users are in the hall at the same time the trap doors are open. It also means that all the toys and items (including fridges for community events run by the committee) have to be manually lifted up a loft ladder type construction from under the building for all activities and replaced after use. Whilst this is time consuming and dangerous there is also some concerns over the safe storage of items such as food and drink which are kept under the hall. There needs to be easily accessible storage on ground level for all hall users.

Creation of Additional Rooms – There is a need to provide at least one or two additional small rooms which could be used for meeting space, toddler groups or arts and crafts groups, as there is demand for this locally. Currently even groups of 4-5 have to hire the whole building and use the hall which reduces the use for other hall users and makes the cost for small groups prohibitive.

Hall Floor – The hall needs a new floor. The current wooden floor was reclaimed in 1985 from an RAF base and brought up piece by piece and laid when the building was built. It is now thinned and very dusty and causes problems especially for hall users using mats and for those with dust allergies.

Toilet Upgrade – The toilets are antiquated. There are only 2 facilities in the ladies’ toilets and one in the men’s toilet. Some of our community events are supported by over 1,000 people and most classes are between 20-30 people. The plumbing can cause frequent problems and the drain outside of the building frequently lifts and sewage spills into the car park. This is a public health concern and

to date we have spent £600 in 12 months to have the drains flushed to clear blockages. Also there are old shower units which need to be removed and the floor and wall made safe. These have been unused for many years and the 'live' water supply runs a risk of legionnaires disease as the taps are not capped off. This needs to be done at the same time as relocating the toilet blocks.

Widen Entrance Hall – The entrance to the hall is narrow and there is no waiting area except the toilets and at change over class time it is chaotic with small children running out of the entrance into the car park. A wider entrance and security doors would reduce the danger risk.

Security System Installation – Security at the hall is currently non-existent. The entrance is a metal grill gate and padlock followed by 2 single wooden doors locked by a key. It is not possible to close the grill gate when inside the hall for fire escape and when using the hall, members of the public can access the entrance, toilets and kitchen. Property has been stolen from the toilet area. This has meant that the toilets have been vandalized during hall use and people using the hall have had problems with anti-social behaviour from teenagers using the adjacent recreation ground. It is essential that there is some sort of security entrance system and automatic doorway at the hall for the protection of hall users and their property.

Carpark and Entrance – It is hoped that the existing car park area can be upgraded/refurbished jointly between the Town Council and Hall Committee since it is jointly used by both visitors to the recreation ground, Millennium Green and hall users and is owned by Uckfield Town Council and not leased by the hall committee. In addition to the parking area a path from the present entrance ramp around the east side of the hall will run to the end of the terrace area. This addition will necessitate the repositioning of the adult training equipment but provide full disabled access to the hall and from the emergency exit.

Internal Equipment – It is envisaged that fundraising will continue after the building works are completed to purchase equipment such as projectors, demonstration screen, tables and chairs.

Why?

Direct Need – Building Redevelopment & Extension

The Hall is in desperate need of refurbishment, repair and an extension. The toilets and plumbing are inadequate, causing issues with blocked drains flooding the car park. The hall floor (originally second hand from an RAF Base) is in poor repair. Storage facilities are under the building and are difficult to use, especially bringing toys up for our toddler groups.

It is expected with the development of the new Ridgewood Place development Ridgewood will account for approximately 24% of the population of Uckfield which clearly is a massive increase since the original hall was constructed.

The Hall is already used at capacity and we have a waiting lists of new groups who are interested in using the space on a regular basis for their beneficiaries. With issues such as an ageing population (see below), and government cuts to children's services (see below), there is a pressing need for Ridgewood Village Hall to take action and be part of the solution to these problems. The groups that Ridgewood Village Hall hosts are uniquely positioned to be able to support the generations affected.

Direct Need – Disability-Friendly Space

Despite a residential home in Ridgewood for adults with learning difficulties and other disabilities, currently disabled access is poor and currently does not facilitate any groups for this part of our

community. We need to increase and adapt the disabled facilities at the hall and better provide for another important group within our community.

Currently, disabled access is poor both inside and outside the hall. A wider entrance area would be far more suitable for wheelchair access and a modern opening door would help users with walking frames, walking sticks and wheelchairs. There is an access slope into the hall from the car park and from emergency door in hall to the field but to get from that to the car park means crossing a muddy/grass field and makes attending community functions especially with other family members very difficult. The path that would go from the car park/ hall entrance around the building to the hall exit/entrance would give access to all. The current access slope into the hall entrance is steep and made of rough concrete and difficult to use with wheelchairs.

It is essential that the disabled toilet/ baby changing area is brought inside the building, as it is currently in an unacceptable position and sits within the entrance to the building and is at risk of vandalism.

Indirect Need – Aging Population

Statistics and projections produced by Office for National Statistics (ONS) have long shown that the UK's population is ageing. Latest projections show that in 50 years' time, there are likely to be an additional 8.6 million people aged 65 years and over – a population roughly the size of London. The ageing population and changing structure of the population will bring both opportunities and challenges for the economy, services and society at national and local levels.⁸

Looking ahead to 2040, the 1960s baby boomers (aged in their 50s now) will have moved into older age and by 2066 there will be a further 8.6 million projected UK residents aged 65 years and over, taking the total number in this group to 20.4 million and making up 26% of the total population.⁹

The fastest increase will be seen in the 85 years and over age group. In mid-2016, there were 1.6 million people aged 85 years and over (two per cent of the total population); by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million (four per cent of the population) and by 2066 to treble, by which time there will be 5.1 million people aged 85 years and over making up seven per cent of the total UK population. In contrast, the population aged 16 to 64 years is projected to increase by only two per cent over the next 25 years and by five per cent by 2066.¹⁰

Within the UK, the older population is not equally spread across local areas, with older people making up higher proportions of the populations of rural and coastal areas than urban areas.¹¹ According to 2011 Census¹², the average life expectancy in 2012-2014 for the Uckfield wards is 84 years, higher than the Wealden average of 83 years, with Uckfield New Town having the highest life expectancy, 87 years, of all the wards.

Public and private transport is less available in rural areas than in cities, so people are more reliant on cars but driving rates decrease with age. This can leave older people in rural areas isolated and struggling to access services, particularly those who cannot afford to pay for taxis or do not have family members or neighbours who can provide transport. Even in areas where public transport provision is good, difficulties with mobility or other health issues can be a barrier to accessing services for those without use of a car.¹³

In terms of personal well-being (life satisfaction; how worthwhile life is; and happiness) levels vary across different ages. Ratings of personal well-being are lowest around mid-life but then start to rise around ages 60 to 64 years, peaking between the mid-60s and mid-70s before starting to decrease with age. It seems feasible that the reported higher levels of well-being from the mid- to late-60s

reflect the life stage change from working life to retirement and the decreases in well-being at the oldest ages reflect declines in health and increased risk of widowhood.¹⁴

How socially connected people feel is a factor in quality of life and living alone is a risk factor for social isolation. Older people are more likely to live alone than younger people and older women are more likely to live alone than older men, but with a small decrease for women over time. Older women are more likely to live alone than men mainly because they tend to marry men who are older than them and women have longer life expectancies than men, so they are more likely to be widowed.¹⁵

While less likely to be socially connected online, older people are more engaged with their communities, with those aged 65 years and over more likely to say they feel they belong to their local area, regularly stop and talk with people in their neighbourhoods, to trust their neighbours and be willing to help them than younger age groups.¹⁶

Indirect Need – Cuts to Local Children’s Services

We all want children to have the best start in life. But right now, our communities are struggling to provide the services necessary to keep children happy, healthy and safe. Since 2010 the Government has significantly reduced the funding available to local councils to support children, at a time when rising numbers of children and young people are in need of help.¹⁷

In East Sussex, funding available for children’s services has fallen by £13.5 million between 2010-11 and 2017-18, representing a 21% reduction in funding. An investment of at least £3 billion is needed in this year’s Spending Review to address the funding crisis in children’s services.

Between 2010/11 and 2017/18 local authority spending has reduced by 16 per cent from £10.3 billion to £8.6 billion. Over the same time period local authority spending on early intervention has fallen by 49 per cent and spend on late intervention has risen by 12 per cent.

Most local authorities have worked hard to try to protect investment in children’s services – but in the face of falling funding available, spending has been increasingly squeezed. Across England, spending on preventative or early intervention services, like children’s centres, youth groups and parenting programmes, has been particularly affected – falling from £3.7 billion to £1.9 billion between 2010/11 and 2017/18. The consequence of this means that local authorities are being forced to shift funding towards costlier late intervention statutory services such as supporting children in the care system. This is stretching decreasing budgets to breaking point.¹⁸

Council spending on early intervention services for children including Sure Start centres and youth clubs has fallen by 49 per cent to £1.9 billion since 2012. More than 1,000 children’s centres and 600 youth clubs have closed. Spending on disabled children fell 11 per cent.¹⁹

Indirect Need – Healthier Population

Many of the groups that Ridgewood Village Hall is home to offer fitness and wellness sessions which are vital to promote a healthier lifestyle.

The prevalence of obesity in the UK has trebled since the 1980s. Already, around one-third of children and two-thirds of adults in England are overweight or obese. If trends continue as forecast, by 2050 only 1 in 10 of the adult population will be a healthy weight. This could mean a doubling in the direct healthcare costs of overweight and obesity, with the wider costs to society reaching £49.9 billion by 2050.²⁰



Mental health problems are a growing public health concern. They are prevalent not just in the UK, but around the world. Common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety are distributed according to a gradient of economic disadvantage across society. The poorer and more disadvantaged are disproportionately affected by common mental health problems and their adverse consequences.

How?

Ridgewood Village Hall has several groups which benefit our older generation of local residents including arts and crafts, wellbeing and sports and recreations.

The Ridgewood Village Hall Committee are currently looking at ways to further improve community cohesion and social isolation both for low income families and for the elderly by setting up regular Sunday bingo afternoons, and a toddler group under the Artytime banner which will provide a low-cost entry messy play toddler group and a training opportunity for young mothers who wish to get back into work. This project has been sponsored by the Lions International and Sussex police overseen by the committee. The committee also considers other community opportunities and is currently looking at how we can use the facilities available to develop a 'vitality village' offering opportunities for outside exercise linked to the adjacent recreation ground and Millennium Green, in the form of guided walks and outside exercise classes.

Current Impact on Local Community

Adjacent to a large recreation ground and Millennium Green, the Hall is in an ideal space to provide both indoor and outdoor events benefitting the local community and since its early beginnings in 1985, it has central for community groups to meet and for community events, bringing a diverse age range of people together for fun, fundraising and community cohesion.

The Ridgewood Village Hall Committee is continually exploring ways in which we can collaborate with local businesses and organisations to offer more to our local, growing community. We want the Hall to be a central community hub, maximising opportunities to generate additional income to ensure we are around for many more decades supporting our local residents and community groups, as well as developing our building and offerings to be able to benefit an even more diverse range of people.

Ridgewood Village Hall currently has over 10 local groups using the Hall from Monday to Saturday. These include:

- Children and Young People
 - Little Learners is a unique and exciting mark making class designed and led by a qualified teacher. It is designed for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers to learn to write through play (Ages 5 months – 5 years) Fun & engaging one hour sessions develop your child's pre-writing motor skills, as well their physical and social development in relation to the EYFS guidance.
 - Ridgewood Parent and Toddler Group
 - The Story Frog offers magical, enriching and educational children's classes that teach early reading and writing through sensory experiences, messy play, song and stories! Children will learn sounds, explore mark making and develop their fine and gross motor skills. Classes planned and led by a qualified Primary school teacher.
- Arts & Crafts
 - Deborah Lamb Theatre School
 - New Barn Stitchers



- ACRES Adult Learning use the hall for an Upholstery workshop
- Wellbeing
 - Butterfly Spiritual Healing
- Sports and Recreation
 - Ridgewood Table Tennis Club
 - Ridgewood Short Mat Bowls
 - Ridgewood Dance Club
 - Tai Chi for the over 60's is a fun class focusing on the health and social benefits from regular practice of this ancient exercise. There are so many benefits from the classes, including relaxation, improved balance as well as gently making the body more supple and stronger. These classes are aimed at beginners so no experience is necessary.

On Saturdays and Sundays, Ridgewood Village Hall hosts a monthly stamp fair, meditation and clairvoyant meeting and we host private children's parties. We are looking at hosting an evening puppy training class and have been approached by many other groups but cannot fit them into the timetable at present due to the limited space that we have available

With our plans for Artytime, Sunday afternoon bingo for the elderly, vitality village and café to the recreation ground, we want the impact of Ridgewood Village Hall in the community to continue for many years to come.

Community Fundraising & Celebrations

Ridgewood Village Hall organises several events during the year which raise money for the Hall. These events are organised by the Hall committee and are supported well by local residents.

- Our Summer Fair in June 2018 brought in 600 people as well as local groups who demonstrated dance, music and exercise. We had a local resident provide a dog show and we awarded prizes to the local residents for the best kept garden and a baking competition.
- Our annual firework event held in November is specifically for children and families. Starting at 4pm and finishing at 7pm with grade 3 fireworks to avoid scary bangs, entertainment in the form of fire eaters, food and stalls the event hosted 1,000 local people who pre-purchased tickets prior to the event.
- In December, over 150 people squeezed into the Hall with 21 local stallholders for our Christmas fair and Santa's Grotto.
- The year is completed with 200 children taking part in our Easter bunny hunt held on Easter Saturday.

Aspirational Impact on Local Community

Benefits to the Local Economy.

- Investment in the redevelopment plans of the Ridgewood Village Hall from grant funding will bring a potential minimum of £300,000 from outside funders into the local area
- Local building contractors will be encouraged to go to tender for building works for hall and car park redevelopment increasing work opportunities for local people.
- Additional hire opportunities will increase revenue into the village hall and potentially increase revenue to local business in Ridgewood, for example the Ridgewood post office and shop and the brickmakers public house.



- Development of the Ridgewood Village Hall and ideas of a 'vitality village' and links to other charitable organisations, for example Millennium Green, will raise their profile and increase interest, revenue and funding into their organisations, further increasing opportunities for work and increased local economy funding.
- Redevelopment of Ridgewood Village Hall as a community facility will reduce the need for vehicle transport by local resident into surrounding areas to access community groups for a diverse age range

Indirect Need – Healthier Population

As well as aspiring to be a central community hub, Ridgewood Village Hall's vision is to house a Vitality Village for the local residents of Ridgewood and Uckfield. As part of this, the Village Hall with the recreation ground and the adjacent [Millennium Green](#) would provide areas for exercise, mindfulness and wellbeing.

If we were able to relocate the existing kitchen and create an additional servery, we would be able to generate additional income through catering for people using the outdoor space by the Hall. We could serve a selection of healthy drinks and snacks for people.

Vitality Village

- The current recreation ground adjacent to the Village Hall is not being used to its full potential. The large outside space could provide a venue for exercise groups for all ages and abilities. For example, Tai Chi and walking groups which would be linked to the Millennium Green Trust.
- The extra kitchen/server hatch would allow refreshments to be provided to the recreation area all year round and would also provide an extra income for the village hall. Currently there is no facilities for refreshment in the Ridgewood area apart from The Brickmakers Public House which has limited opening times and facilities for children.
- The village hall should also have toilet facilities that can be accessed during the use of the recreation ground. There are No public toilet or baby changing facilities currently available anywhere in the Ridgewood area.
- A Vitality Village would bring an increased opportunity for Health and wellbeing in the Ridgewood and New Town areas, accessible to all, and available to those on a limited income – walking is free!
- The long-term benefits of the vitality village are limitless. The recreation area provides facilities for all types of sports including rounders, stoolball and any sport that requires a small amount of equipment and a large green space. Currently there is the children's' playground and the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) which is accessible to the public with low cost equipment. This all potentially reduces anti-social youth behaviour as it provides an area for activity and this is a developing issue in the Ridgewood area as accessing activities in town is difficult and can be expensive.

Indirect Need – Ageing Population & Healthier Population

“Long-term, significant changes to connect older people to their peers and community resources in order to prevent loneliness and isolation more effectively for more people” especially those aged 50 or over could be developed using the Village Hall as a community hub, meeting point and educational centre with more room availability and better disabled access.²¹

- **Sunday Afternoon Bingo / afternoon tea / social groups** – Weekends can be a time when social isolation is felt most when people live alone. Especially the elderly. Extra room availability would facilitate space for group activities to be held at the weekends to reduce this area of need, especially for the elderly.
- **Vitality Garden** – We are aware that getting an allotment can take time as waiting lists are long, but that gardening offers a great opportunity for physical and mental wellbeing. Ridgewood Village Hall would like to create a Vitality Garden as part of the proposed works, which would allow residents to enjoy time outside. It could also lead to intergenerational education as members of the Allotment society would be encouraged to share their gardening skills with less experienced members of the community to develop the RVH garden. The produce from the garden could then be used by the Village Hall and sold via the kitchenette hatch to increase revenue.
- A **Community Herb Garden** – This could be developed alongside the Vitality garden which would aid diverse community interaction and cohesion.
- **Neighbourhood Watch Coffee Mornings** – in liaison with Sussex Police on a regular monthly basis could ensure good communication, reduce the effects associated with anti-social behaviour and crime directed at the older population and improve social isolation and community cohesion. This could be developed into community lunches for those on limited incomes or housebound in conjunction with other organisations for example the Lions or the housebound clubs.
- **Digital Technology Classes** – Directed at those over 50 to help improve digital literacy which is also acknowledged to help improve feelings of social isolation and loneliness²² could be offered to small groups in the planned meeting room.

Indirect Need – Cuts to Local Children’s Services

- **Artytime** – Artytime is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee whose overall mission is to bring Arts and Craft to all ages and abilities. This is achieved by setting up creative workshops and sessions as well as training people to deliver them.

Family Fun sessions are only £2 per family and are for parents, grandparents and carers with babies and children aged 0 to 5. They are an opportunity to meet new people and for children to play and explore in a safe and friendly environment. The sessions cover aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which, is the learning through play curriculum. There is time to investigate the different activities, adult led story time, music and rhyme as well as arts and craft. The sessions are usually an hour and a half and take place in Buxted, Crowborough and Uckfield across East Sussex.

Saturday Club sessions take place in various venues such as village halls, church halls and community centres. They are essentially the same as the afterschool activities but are open to all children in the area from age 4 to 11.

Artytime uses trained volunteers to become Session Leaders. This provides an opportunity for people to acquire new skills which may help young people get into work, provide people with the opportunity to become active in their community and meet new people and encourage older people to volunteer and share intergenerational life learning skills and develop new friendships.

‘Wellbeing’ Wild Garden

- A wild garden linked to the Village Hall would provide an area of peace and tranquillity for those seeking time and space and improved mental wellbeing. The importance of a ‘nature space’ has been long documented in the importance of improved mental health²³ and the garden could provide an area for ecological development and conservation and offer a garden area for public use.



- Gardens and outdoor projects have been proven to reduce stress, depression, self-harm and destructive behaviours and improve social interaction, life satisfaction, self-esteem, meaningful activity and achievement.
- The garden could also be used to develop horticultural learning and could provide the opportunity for the Allotment Society already at the recreation ground to encourage intergenerational knowledge transfer and inspire a new generation of gardening enthusiasts.
- There are over 75 community gardens in Brighton and Hove where people get together to grow food. People can discover the joy of growing fruit and vegetables with other volunteers in a community garden where everyone shares the work and the harvest.²⁴ We could look to replicate this idea for residents of Ridgewood and Uckfield and beyond.

Environment/Recycling

There is a glass recycling area in the Highlands Pub car park and in the main town car parks all requiring vehicle access. Ridgewood Village Hall could provide a recycling centre in its car park and also an area inside for smaller items as the hall is used and open most of the week and weekends which can be accessed on foot by local residents to reduce car omissions. Most of the recycle companies offer a charity fundraising scheme which will help continued funding BUT currently we have no space to offer these recycling incentives as the Village Hall space is so limited.

- <https://www.walkers.co.uk/recycle> (we have already applied to become a base for this project
- <http://www.officegreen.co.uk/campaign/ink-cartridges/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIjMOG2uD-4QlVWijVCh1N9>
- <https://ghsrecycling.co.uk/charity-scheme/>

Wedding Venue

Wedding venues in surrounding areas are expensive as most are linked to large Hotels or public House chains. Ridgewood Village Hall sits adjacent to a beautiful recreation ground and the Millennium Green trust. The committee has already been approached by a local registrar about registering the Hall as a wedding venue. This could provide a less expensive but beautiful setting for weddings and could be hired out from Friday 8pm to set up until Sunday Midday – still allowing time for children party rental on Sunday afternoons and is an income opportunity and an opportunity to provide an affordable venue option for those on a more limited income.

- We have already had our first two wedding reception booking confirmed for August 2019 and August 2020.

Extension

The long term benefits of the extension are limitless as new groups, sports, recreational activities are developed in the future. However currently:

- The short mat bowls club can't enter league competitions as the hall is too short to use the required mat sizes.
- Table tennis club only has space for three tables, currently doing very well in the league, the extra space would allow the club to expand.

Flexible Space to Rent/Use

- Hall
 - The hall is currently used to capacity from 9am on Monday morning to 5pm on Saturday evening and on Sundays for local hire e.g. children's parties.
 - Additional rooms at Ridgewood Village Hall would allow smaller groups to access smaller rooms and increase the availability of the main hall.
 - The Theatre Guild has shown interest in hiring the hall, as well as other exercise groups, dog training and group presentation evenings. The committee has also been approached by travelling theatres and musicians who wish to put on single night events.
- Multi-Use Room
 - By providing a multi-use room, the Ridgewood Village Hall can facilitate smaller group hire. For example, art and craft groups which already hire the whole hall at increased cost for 3-5 group members. A need for a small room for crochet and knitting groups who currently meet in the coffee shop in the town and our art group who already hire the main hall but only once a fortnight due to lack of availability.
 - Personal training sessions and one to one counselling sessions could access the smaller room rather than hire the large hall area.
 - By putting a moving room divider into the multi-use room, the room can be used as one slightly larger room suitable for 10-12 people or two smaller rooms for 1-6 people which reduces the cost of hire for the group/user but increases the potential revenue for the village hall.
 - The divider could also be used to make a male and female changing area for hall users such as dance and sport.
 - The larger area could be used for the table tennis electronic serving machine, providing a practice area when the main hall is being used for game play.
- Meeting Room
 - The current Village Hall Trustees and Committee cannot meet during term time as the hall is rented out throughout the week during every day and every evening. A separate meeting room would allow the committee to meet regularly when the main hall is in use.
 - The Committee has been approached by educational groups to hold training and seminars and currently we do not have the availability or facilities required. A meeting room would allow the village hall to be used as a conference/training centre with refreshment facilities available using the additional kitchenette area even when the main hall and kitchen is in use.
 - The Hall can provide both car parking and outdoor rest space for those attending conference/training/seminars without causing any disruption to the local community.
 - It is our understanding that local business and groups would be keen to support the conference/ training and seminar facilities as there is limited provision in the Uckfield area.
 - It is likely that local groups such as the Ridgewood allotment society, Millennium Green trust committee and similar would use the meeting room as an alternative venue.



When

Ridgewood Village Hall Redevelopment

The plan for redeveloping Ridgewood Village Hall either by extension (if the funds become available) is estimated to commence in November 2019 and will take approximately 26 weeks to complete. A separate facility will need to be provided for regular hall user use throughout the extension/redevelopment period to ensure hirers do not find alternative premises and to fulfil health and safety requirements during building works.

Ridgewood Village Hall Refurbishment

If the Village Hall Committee are unable to secure the funding for the redevelopment by the end of October 2019, we will look undertake the smaller refurbishment phase in 2019/2020. It is estimated that this will take 12 weeks to complete.

Refurbishment and Extension Costs – What we need:

Preliminary estimates for the refurbishment works have already been obtained and these vary between £300,000 and £350,000.

Cost	Item	Upgrade Plans	2021 Build
£5,000	Heating	✓	✓
	Kitchen A new kitchen that can serve refreshments to the new and improved recreation ground during the summer months which is accessible without disturbing hall users.	✓	✓
	Toilet This will create facilities which are accessible for disabled users	✓	✓
£12,000	Flooring The existing floor was second-hand from the beginning and is in desperate need of replacement.	✓	✓
£250,000	Bricks & Mortar – the ‘Shell’		✓
	Internal decoration		✓
	Temporary facility in car park during redevelopment		✓
	Grey Water Recycling		✓
	Solar Panels		✓
	Insulation		✓
	3m Side Extension		✓
	Entrance Development		✓
	New Meeting Room Space Even the management committee is forced to meet elsewhere as the hall is so busy.		✓
	Meeting Room Equipment - IT equipment (computer, monitor, teleconferencing) - Projector(s) - Demonstration Screen		✓

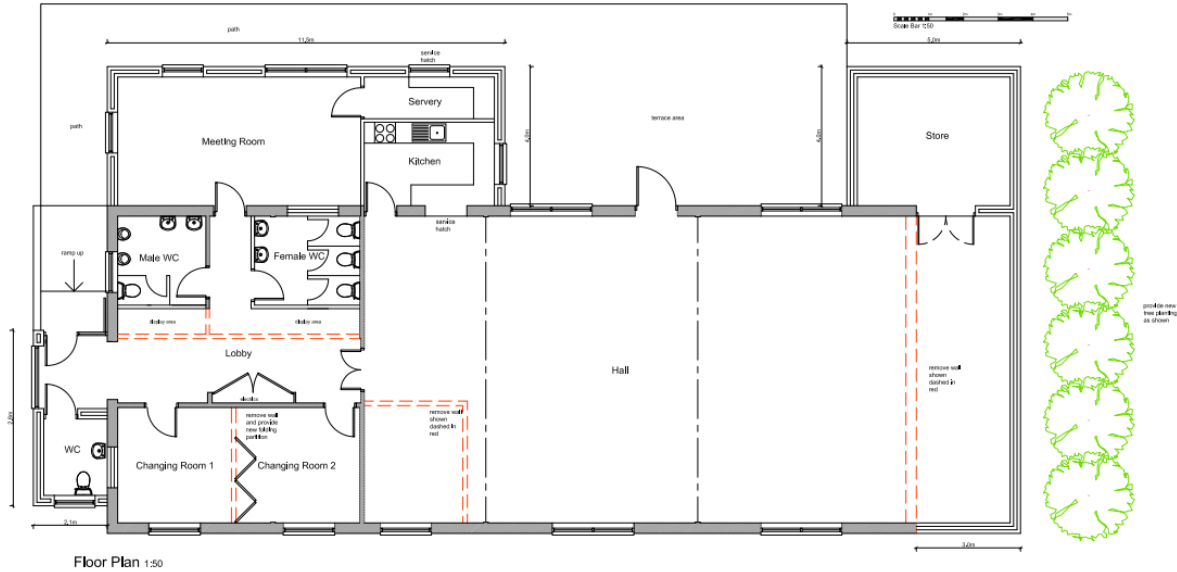
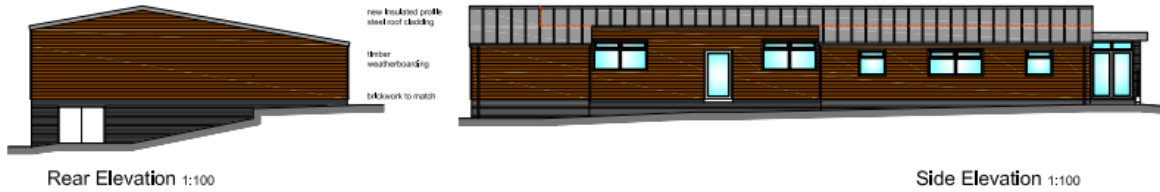
Cost	Item	Upgrade Plans	2021 Build
	- Tables - Chairs		
	Servery Build		✓
	Kitchen Move		✓
	Additional Storage Space		✓
	Improved Fire Doors The existing doors do not meet regulations		✓
	Improved Changing Facilities		✓
	Security Equipment	?	✓
	Exterior Wooden cladding on the building to make it more attractive and in keeping with the surrounding area	?	✓
£7,500 +VAT	Project Manager Salary The committee will employ a project manager to oversee and ensure the smooth running of the whole build.		✓
	Vitality Garden To include bushes, trees and a terraced area		

Other Ongoing Costs which may be covered by a trust / foundation grant:

Cost	Item		
£650 pa	Annual Leasing and Insurance		
£250 set up £720 pa maintenance	Website Maintenance		

Redevelopment Photos

Scale Bar 1:100

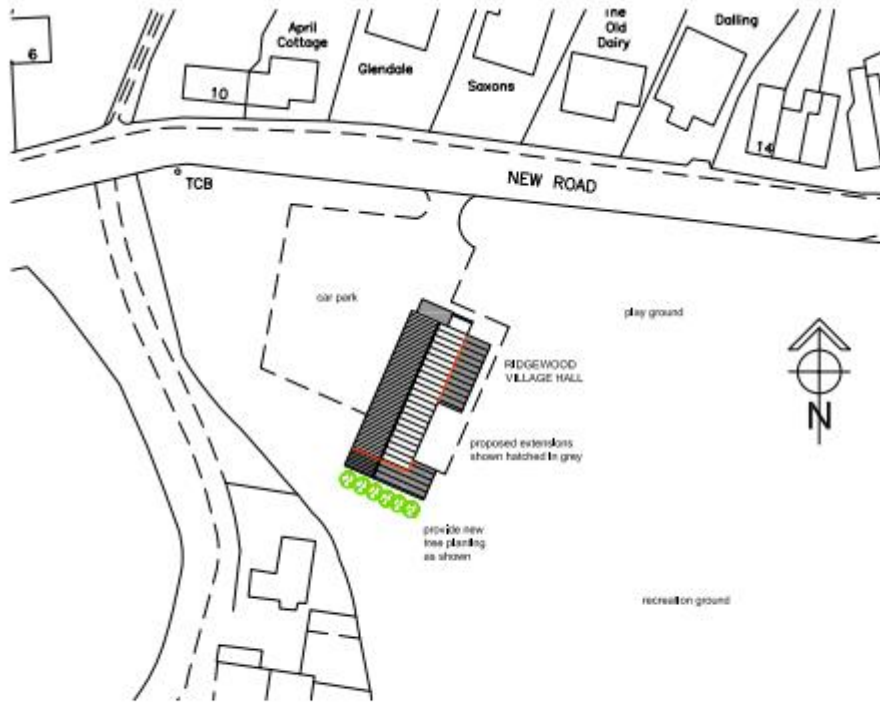






Ridgewood Village Hall

Working For The Community



Block Plan 1:500



Code of Practice - This plan shall be controlled under the Code of Practice for the Design and Construction of Buildings. The drawings shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations and shall not be approved by the Building Control Authority.

Contractor to provide - Foundations & walls etc.
 Foundations & walls shall be constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations. The drawings shall be prepared in accordance with the Building Regulations and shall not be approved by the Building Control Authority.

RVH-Hosted Group Funding Costs

Cost	Group	Local Residents	Youth / Children	Elderly	Disabled
	Artytime	✓	✓		
	Christmas Fair	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sunday Afternoon Bingo	✓		✓	✓
	Bunny Hunt	✓	✓		
	Summer Fair	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fireworks	✓	✓		✓

Sources

- ¹ <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/what-we-do/village-halls-community-buildings/the-role-of-village-halls-community-buildings/>
- ² <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/what-we-do/village-halls-community-buildings/the-role-of-village-halls-community-buildings/>
- ³ <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/what-we-do/village-halls-community-buildings/the-role-of-village-halls-community-buildings/>
- ⁴ <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/what-we-do/village-halls-community-buildings/the-role-of-village-halls-community-buildings/>
- ⁵ <http://acre.org.uk/cms/resources/res-downloads/acrercb-economicimpact.pdf>
- ⁶ <https://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/what-we-do/village-halls-community-buildings/the-role-of-village-halls-community-buildings/>
- ⁷ <https://www.wscountytimes.co.uk/news/new-eco-friendly-ashurst-village-hall-given-10-000-grant-by-the-rampion-fund-1-8602121>
- ⁸
- ⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/livinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2018-08-13>
- ¹⁰
- ¹¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/livinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2018-08-13>
- ¹² <http://uckfieldnews.com/facts-and-figures-about-uckfield-people/>
- ¹³
- ¹⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/livinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2018-08-13>
- ¹⁵
- ¹⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/livinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2018-08-13>
- ¹⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/livinglongerhowourpopulationischangingandwhyitmatters/2018-08-13>
- ¹⁸ <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/campaign-for-change/childrens-services>
- ¹⁹ <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/mp-la-briefings/east-sussex.pdf>
- ²⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/feb/26/childrens-services-financial-crisis-big-five-charities>
- ²¹ <https://www.thensmc.com/resources/showcase/change4life>
- ²² <https://www.ageingbettermiddlesbrough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Evening-and-Weekend-Loneline>
- ²³ <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Promising-approaches-to-reducing-loneliness>
- ²⁴ <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/nature-and-mental-health/#.XMoAe-hKiiM>
- ²⁵ <https://bhfood.org.uk/team-building-and-group-volunteering-in-community-gardens/>