

Winchelsea New Hall Kitchen Consultation

Each attendee was asked to give a background summary of their use of the hall. Many were multiple users, involved in more than one society either as organisers or helpers.

Bonfire Boyes: 3 x pa. 60 – 120 people. Meal based. Some food cooked in the hall, some cooked elsewhere and re-heated in kitchen. No meat prepared in hall.

Second Wednesday Club: 11 x pa. Approx 70 per event. tea & cake

NGS Open Gardens 2 x pa. 200 – 600 people. Tea & cakes and sandwiches. Cut cakes in cloakroom because not enough room.

Parish Harvest Supper: 1 x pa. 80 – 100 people. Main food made at home. Peas heated/cooked on cooker. Reheating needed.

Fete: 1 x pa. Tea and cakes. 400 people.

Cricket club. 17 x pa. Teas. 40 people. End of season hot meal cooked at hall or at home.

Mayoring. Use outside caterers.

Attendees were asked to put forward any other people who used the hall, but weren't represented and their usage.

Weddings – 3 x pa allowed due to noise restrictions. Don't use kitchen except for boiling hot water. Children's parties. Occasional use. Bring in food. Need for frozen space for icecream/lollies but can do without.

Winchelsea singers. Soiree. Brought in food.

Quizes. Provide cold food like ploughman's.

Christmas fair. Teas.

Electoral. Teas.

Attendees were asked to give details of problems and any positives using the hall.

Problems:

1. Tea-making. Hot water for tea making a problem. Need more volume and quicker heating of water, especially for large events.
2. Washing up. Insufficient hot water. People often not appreciating the boiler is a combi-boiler and how to use it to get hot water.
3. Crockery regularly found to be dirty.
4. Sinks too small for the volume of washing up, and also for large cooking trays. Also the drainage area is too small for large meals (60+).
5. Lighting very poor in the first part of the kitchen, particularly over the sink and may contribute to washing-up not being done sufficiently well.
6. One window in the kitchen doesn't open and the other one appears unopenable. Need to release heat and steam.
7. Handwash only sink is for when any meat which is prepared and cooked in the hall. At the moment all food is prepared elsewhere. Sink larger than necessary.
8. Fridges are not used for chilling, but keeping things cool, like milk for teas. Lot of milk needed. Caterers bring their own freezers with them. Commercial fridge may be a more appropriate design as no need for vegetable trays at bottom or freezer. More milk could be stored then. Freezer compartment of fridge used for ice cream for children's parties, but not big enough.
9. Microwaves take up space and never seem used. (**Asked for by polling people*). Is it necessary to have two? Could one be place out of the way. Too close to the cooker.
10. Ovens are too small for the volume needed for large meal-based events. Really need double the capacity. Pans slip around on the current hobs. Need hobs for bigger pans. Current

- cookers hard to clean. Gas good. \
11. Storage. Confused and inaccessible in places. Would like to have identical crockery for 120 place settings. An audit needs to be done. Some crockery from a set is stored out of the way. Needs to be brought in so all the same, instead of two sets. Ideally want 120 plates, small plates, bowls, water glasses, wine glasses and beer tankards (30). Insufficient water glasses. Kitchen items such as serving spoons and knives go missing, so need to bring own. Tea cups don't stack very well. Division between those wanting stacking cups and those wanting teacups and saucers.
 12. Cleaning up afterwards, there is a lack of clarity for outsiders. Cleaning materials are disorganised. Someone needs to take responsibility.
 13. Trays too random & look poor, rusting. Would be better to have ones which fit together and maximise space. Ideally 20 + some for people to carry out themselves. Must be non-slip.
 14. Mops disgusting. Wet and left. Smell. Unhygienic?
 15. Bigger bins was suggested and counter-balanced with not wanting to lose space in kitchen. Bigger bins outside.
 16. Worktop. Insufficient room for cooking and too much clutter like microwaves. Need something heatproof to put trays from oven onto.
 17. Selection of pans not seen as necessary. People bring own.
 18. Cupboard shelves carrying too much weight and bowing.
 19. Plinth can hide vermin and flooring should go up the sides to protect against this.

Positive:

1. General appreciation for the kitchen, but needs improvement as old and worn.
2. Appreciation of kitchen space being cleaned and tidied over the past few weeks by the management committee.
3. Appreciation of a new sign giving clear instructions on how to use the hot water tap to get continuous hot water. One or two people were still experiencing problems, but for some there was an improvement.

Summary of ways forward:

1. No one wanted a commercial kitchen.
2. Desire to see the kitchen smartened up a bit.
3. Meal-led events would benefit from a "finishing kitchen" which includes: dishwasher, commercial fridge, large cooking rings and a warming cpd or double oven with plenty of space (eg range oven) for re-heating food.
4. Large tea-based events would benefit from a new hot water urn; a good supply of hot water for washing up; and a commercial fridge.

Three practical decisions were agreed towards the end of the meeting.

1. A new hot water urn would sit on the counter near to the serving hatch for safety reasons. Unfortunately this lessened the space for tea and coffee preparation, but did free up space along the window counter for food preparation.
2. Indoor Bowls club, Sequence Dancers and Cricket Club all have their own cupboard. The Cricket club provisions, like tea and coffee, regularly go missing from their cupboard despite being labelled. The Second Wednesday Society have their own plastic storage box of items, stored in the cloakroom. It was felt all societies could potentially store their items in a plastic box, in the cupboard in the cloakroom, to free up working space.
3. To investigate the practical feasibility of a commercial/domestic dishwasher. This arose because there were opinions for and against, both based on practical considerations.

Summary of kitchen wish list

1. New urn
2. Better water boiler for washing up
3. Commercial fridge
4. Dishwasher (steam cleaner)
5. Trays
6. Better lighting in first part of kitchen
7. Windows to open
8. Larger washing-up sinks & drainage area
9. Smaller hand-wash only sink
10. Remove one of the microwaves and put the other off the surface away from the cooker.
11. Range oven
12. Identical crockery for 120 places
13. Stacking trays
14. Improve storage
15. Improve shelving
16. Organise cleaning materials and make someone responsible
17. Heatproof racks
18. Bigger bins outside
19. Instruction manual for new people using the hall kitchen

The consultation was presented to the committee by Hilary after everyone had left. She went through the items giving feedback. The committee agreed to the following:

1. Rob and Hilary to look at planning of changes requested.
2. Rob to install a new urn on the counter as agreed.
3. Steve spoke with a kitchen fitter and will get approximate costings.
4. Inexpensive items can be purchased. So new trays and heat-proof racks to be purchased. Also new teapots to be purchased: although they hadn't arisen in the consultation it was noted new ones were needed and essential given the number of teas made.
5. The cleaners, who clean once a week, to be asked to take responsibility for ensuring cleaning materials are organised and available.
6. To remove one of the microwaves.
7. To consult with groups about storage.
8. To look at plates in storage and rationalise plates into identical sets where possible.
9. To do an audit of items and purchase more water glasses if necessary.
10. Create an instruction manual.
11. Look into possibility of a large fridge, as this was something all the larger scale users of the kitchen wanted: both meal-based and tea-based.
12. Look at ways to fundraise