We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

It’s ‘curtain up’ in 2022 for a transformed Ferneham Hall

THE LAST night of this season’s pantomime at Ferneham Hall will be a showstopper.

It will be two years before the curtain rises again, then it will reveal the present jaded building stunningly transformed into a new community, arts and entertainment venue.

This will be the flagship of the Conservative Council’s vision to revitalise Fareham town centre over the next few years.

Councillor Connie Hockley said: “Ferneham Hall has become tired and dated over the 40 years of its life, and transforming it is one of the Council’s key priorities. “This exciting concept will see it become a bustling hub of activity, daytime and evening, seven days a week, offering something for everyone.”

And the new £12.3m centre will be professionally managed for the Council by leading leisure and events operator BH Live, which manages 17 venues in the South and London, including Portsmouth Pyramids and Bournemouth International Centre.

Ferneham Hall will close on January 6 after the cast in this year’s panto ‘Beauty and the Beast’ take their final bow so the project can take centre stage. It will include:

• Main auditorium with 808 seats, retractable on the ground floor and fixed on the first floor balcony, bigger stage dimensions to attract wider range of professional productions.

• New larger foyer continuing up to a first floor bar and terrace, with areas for small pop-up exhibitions. All-day café on the ground floor, with outdoor seating available.

• Secondary performance space with 120-capacity auditorium, de-mountable seating, projector and screen. Flexibility allows uses such as cinema screenings, conferences, dance, community or club meetings.

• First floor studio to accommodate a range of activities eg yoga, dance, exhibitions and conferences.

• Large, flexible meeting room for hire on the ground floor. Organisations will be encouraged to hire the studio and other spaces if required.

The design team is looking to ensure the building has a low carbon footprint and is investigating solar panels, photovoltaic panels and an air source heat pump.

Councillor Sarah Pankhurst added: “Town centre shopping areas will have to transform over the next few years.

“The need for a traditional shopping centre is declining. We can see that in our own shopping centre.

“Shopping centres will need to develop and attract residents for other purposes and a brand new community, arts and entertainment venue will bring residents into Fareham and be a vibrant venue in the town centre.”

Vision: Artist’s sketches of the remodelled Ferneham Hall and (below) the spacious foyer.

Celebrating Titchfield’s golden moment

It was held to thank those whose efforts to make the villagers’ entries in the South and SE England in Bloom competition ‘just perfect’.

The evening was a huge success with many awards going to folk who had ‘done their bit’ without seeking recognition.

Thanking them for their efforts, Councillor Connie Hockley said: “In the South and SE England competition, they were awarded a gold in the ‘Large Village of the Year’ category, plus an award for the highest marks in the Hampshire entries.”

Titchfield in Bloom had the honour to represent the South and SE Region at the National in Bloom Awards held in London on October 26 and won a silver medal.

She added: “Considering the TIB volunteers have only been going 3 years, this is a remarkable achievement.”

VOLUNTEERS are pictured celebrating at an awards evening in Titchfield Community Centre.
NEWS ROUND

Scouts need volunteers
The Scout Association in Fareham is looking for people to commit to becoming a leader at weekly meetings of Beavers (ages 6-8), Cubs (8-10), Scouts (10-14) and Explorers (14-18). They are also seeking leaders, such as treasurer or manager, to support the efficient running of groups in Fareham or people with specific skills who can assist with activities for the young people, such as sailing and climbing. To find out more please contact Mike McHugh on 07714 872599 or Bridg Ryan on 07733 060882.

Choose your local heroes
Residents are asked to nominate local heroes for Citizen or Young Citizen of Honour awards. The Council runs the annual awards to honour specific skills who can assist with activities for the local community. The awards are open to anyone aged 18 and 18+. To nominate your hero either fill out our nomination form online or call communications on 01329 236100.

80 years of good advice
Citizens Advice in Fareham has celebrated its 80th year of service in the town, a real achievement as the centre requires a large number of regular volunteers. It largely uses its own resources and project funding, although the Borough Council continues to assist with financial support.

Our apologies
In the summer edition of InTouch, under “Vil-lagers’ floral displays” the photo showed a stunning water feature on the green at the bottom of West Street. This was attributed to Titchfield Primary School. When, in fact, it was designed by a Titchfield-based florist who provided the flowers. We are sorry for any confusion and apologise for the error.

Meadows will ‘bee hive’ of summer activity
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Nitrates pollution disrupts Fareham housing plans

FAREHAM planners are well advanced identifying new sites to meet Government demands for up to 2,500 extra homes, but the Council could still fail housing delivery tests due to the nitrates pollution factor.

After being forced to take its development plan back to the drawing board, it hopes to put the revised strategy and any necessary new policies before the December Executive meeting.

But Executive Member for Planning and Development Councillor Keith Evans said that although progress was being made to achieve nitrates neutrality on development sites, there were still 1,700 on-hold house applications. He said: “These delays are not good news because until this backlog is cleared, Fareham is at serious risk of failing government housing delivery tests with resulting penalties requiring even more short-term housing delivery – a real mess.

“Fareham, with other local authorities, is strongly engaging with government departments and statutory organisations to get some common sense applied and to see longer term solutions as opposed to short term fixes.”

Meanwhile, if the Executive agrees the revised strategy there will be a public consultation during the winter.

The Council will then merge the results with the ‘on-hold’ draft Stage 1 and prepare the plan that it proposes to submit to the Planning Inspectorate.

This new overall Borough Plan will be published for general comment in early summer 2020, before going to the Inspectorate in mid to late summer.

The examination timetable is up to the Inspectorate but should be over the autumn – winter period, allowing formal Council adoption of the plan in early 2021.

Prestigious Queen’s award for Fareham’s Y-Services

Y-SERVICES, the charitable organisation looking after youth services across the Borough, were honoured to receive a Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service.

It’s the highest award a voluntary group can receive and was presented by the Lord Lieutenant for Hampshire, Mr Nigel Atkinson.

Andy and Maria Kennedy, who founded the charity in 2011, received the award. Councillor Connie Hockley said: “Y-Services is well-known across the area as being a great organisation offering a range of diverse groups and young people fantastic opportunities.

“This prestigious award is well deserved.”

PHOTO (l to r): Y-Services CEO Andy Kennedy, quadriplegic yachtsman and Deputy Lord Lieutenant Geoff Holt, Mayor Pamela Bryant, Lord Lieutenant Nigel Atkinson and Councillor Connie Hockley.