

Letter from F. G. Standfield to John Simpson, Chair of Village Hall Committee

Apparently in response to query about faults in the ceiling and possibility of reparation.

Forge Cottage

11/4/1994

Dear John

Further to our recent brief conversation, I hope the following notes may be helpful:

1. Prior to and during the construction of the present village hall, I was Vice Chairman of the Management Committee and as second-in-command to the late Herbie Goddard very much concerned with the events of 1973/4.
2. Before deciding upon the general style of a new hall, members of the Management Committee viewed other new halls in the area, and were very impressed by such a hall at Bramley, north of Basingstoke. I believe that certain features of that hall (not necessarily the roof) were followed.
3. A Winchester firm of architects was subsequently appointed¹ to design and supervise the erection of East Meon's new hall. I cannot recall the firm's name, but according to a newspaper cutting in my possession, the firm was represented at the official opening by a Mr E.J.Sealy (*see footnote ... suggestions follow for contacting the architect.*)
4. The firm of builders employed was MOULDS, a long-established Petersfield firm, formerly located (*.... contact details*).
5. As far as I can recollect, the Management Committee was satisfied with Moulds workmanship, but their paper work must have been far from efficient, because they were completely incapable of producing a financial account. After many weeks of trying to obtain such an account, the architect calculated that a round sum of £X should be offered, and the firm had no way of opposing that final reckoning!

¹ The minutes of a committee meeting in October 1972 give the name of the architect as Mr Sealy of Sawyer Partnership, Winchester.

6. Assuming the trouble with the hall's roof is caused by faulty design or workmanship, there may be a legal claim for damages against the firm of architects, notwithstanding the time-lag.
7. As it is many years since I retired from legal practice, I cannot remember to what extent the Statute of Limitations may be applicable to a claim for damages in these circumstances ... *more advice follows about niceties of liability.*