

# Village hall receives £103,000 lottery boost



*Delighted: village hall committee treasurer Pam Thorne with the letter announcing the award.*

EAST Meon villagers are over the moon with the announcement of a £103,750 lottery grant to improve their village hall.

The National Lotteries Charities Board made the grant to East Meon village hall management committee under the Community Involvement Programme.

Committee treasurer Pam Thorne told The Herald: "Getting this grant is a real achievement for the village because the hall is an essential part of village life."

It has taken 18 months of hard work, mainly for chairman Tony Fry, who did all the background research including the estimates for the work, and Mrs Thorne, who prepared all the financial statements and did the endless form-filling.

"The management committee agm is in April and Tony and I decided that if we did not manage to get the grant we would resign," said Mrs Thorne. "But we shall have to see it through now."

The grant will enable the hall committee to carry out essential repairs to the roof, including replacing the existing heavy concrete roof tiles, which have caused the roof to sag and leak. These will be replaced by more suitable lightweight tiles.

Kitchen and catering arrangements will be improved.

In addition, wheelchair access and a dedicated toilet for the disabled will be provided and the existing toilet facilities will be enlarged and modernised.

The hall is very short of storage space so an extension will be built at the back of the building to provide room for furniture and user groups' equipment.

"We hope to carry out the work with the minimum disruption to the hall users," said Mrs Thorne.

"Work will begin as soon as possible after this year's country fair, which will be held on Bank Holiday Monday, May 29."