

INFORMATION SHEET

Chippenham Town Council

<https://www.chippenham.gov.uk/neeld> (Community and Arts Centre)

THE NEELD

- **The story of how it came about.**

Timeline from inception to physical delivery.



Previously the Neeld was operated more like a 'Village Hall' type venue with an offer of family parties, limited performances and community use. Banquet type seating was used to form theatre, cabaret and boardroom style set ups. In 2013 the first

estimates were received from architects and consultants to include a new bar, retractable theatre style seating and associated works. It was officially opened in October 2015 by Bake Off star Mel Giedroyc, followed by a 'soft opening' with some local community groups followed by a Grand Opening with a professional shows programme from February 2016.

Who led the creation of the venue?

The Neeld Development working party and Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee together with Strategy and Resources Committee

How was the focus of what the venue delivers determined? With the above Committees and Venue Manager

Start-up funding – s106 / fundraised / grants, etc? **The project costs were circa £650K (£500k Public works loan, £141k from earmarked funds, £85K external grants)**

- **About the venue itself**

Capabilities / diversity of use / limitations / uniqueness / location within the town

CAPABILITIES: (The Neeld Hall – the dimensions are a maximum 11.8 x 18.8 M)

Theatre: 217 seats offered with 153 in tiered seating rest on flat seating with wheelchair access.

Functions: for weddings, banquets etc capacities are 170 seated at tables of 10, 130 seated at tables of 10 to include a dance floor.

Dance: Events such as party nights/discos capacity 275 (a few small tables and chairs around outside of room)

Concerts: Up to 350 standing (fire risk allows more but for ease of use we have found 350 as a ceiling more workable)

Themed Fairs: 29 stalls for wedding/craft type fairs

DIVERSITY OF USE

Without doubt retractable theatre seating rather than fixed is of great advantage, allowing total diversity of space offered.

LIMITATIONS

Whilst the space works very well for many reasons, one slight limitation is the location of the Bar, this is accessed through the auditorium and does not have a lounge area resulting in patrons taking drinks to their theatre seats and gives us limited time to get everyone served. I would recommend any bar/café to be accessed outside of the auditorium space.

UNIQUENESS

Town centre, adjacent parking, large venue (for Chippenham)

LOCATION

Town centre location with pay and display car park adjacent (free after 6pm), daytime a limit of 2 hours (presents some concerns for matinee shows)

Breadth of activities delivered, since opening, the Neeld has grown in its programme offer, to give you an idea of how this has been developed here is a list of the various ticketed activities offered in the venue together with audience capacity and revenue. The period is March 2019 to Feb 2020 (just prior to lockdown).

	Date	Capacity	Number of tickets sold	Gross revenue from ticket sales	Host	Total gross revenue
TRIBUTE BAND (matinee)	24/03/2019	217	128	£2,840.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND (eve)	24/03/2019	217	158	£3,900.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	03/05/2019	217	215	£5,088.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	30/05/2019	217	89	£1,540.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	07/06/2019	217	149	£2,920.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	21/06/2019	400	168	£2,995.50	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	28/09/2019	217	164	£3,280.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	07/11/2019	217	111	£1,998.00	3rd party hirer	
ORIGINAL ARTIST	18/11/2019	308	236	£5,735.00	3rd party hirer	
STEAMPUNK OPERA	22/11/2019	217	37	£525.00	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	16/01/2020	217	207	£3,690.00	3rd party hirer	
SHAKESPEARE PLAY	01/02/2020	217	177	£985.00	3rd party hirer	
ORIGINAL BAND	23/02/2020	217	217	£5,153.75	3rd party hirer	
TRIBUTE BAND	27/02/2020	217	217	£3,424.00	3rd party hirer	£44,074.25
MUSICAL THEATRE	13/03/2019	205	114	£1,613.20	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	14/03/2019	205	111	£1,722.20	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	15/03/2019	205	178	£2,515.80	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	16/03/2019	205	131	£1,808.20	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	16/03/2019	205	144	£2,052.20	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	17/03/2019	205	134	£1,961.00	Community group	
LOCAL CHOIR	07/04/2019	217	84	£820.00	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	06/07/2019	217	96	£1,040.00	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	07/07/2019	217	82	£870.00	Community group	
ROCK CONCERT	14/07/2019	217	177	£1,302.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	15/11/2019	217	215	£2,010.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	16/11/2019	217	211	£1,968.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	23/11/2019	217	217	£2,055.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	24/11/2019	217	210	£1,976.50	Community group	

DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	24/11/2019	217	139	£1,326.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	01/12/2019	217	194	£1,776.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	15/12/2019	217	171	£1,597.50	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	15/12/2019	217	205	£1,920.50	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	11/01/2020	217	152	£1,694.00	Community group	
MUSICAL THEATRE	12/01/2020	217	166	£1,802.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	07/02/2020	217	209	£1,555.00	Community group	
DANCE SCHOOL SHOW	08/02/2020	217	217	£1,665.00	Community group	£37,050.10
LOCAL BAND OFF	01/03/2019	218	37	£148.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	02/03/2019	217	66	£1,188.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	08/03/2019	218	38	£152.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	22/03/2019	218	16	£64.00	Neeld hosted	
BANDEOKIE	28/03/2019	120	79	£632.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	29/03/2019	268	108	£432.00	Neeld hosted	
JAZ (JAY RAYNER)	30/03/2019	217	140	£3,150.00	Neeld hosted	
ORCHESTRA	05/04/2019	217	107	£2,407.50	Neeld hosted	
FOLK BAND	06/04/2019	217	203	£4,567.50	Neeld hosted	
MAGIC (Britains got talent star)	11/04/2019	217	209	£4,486.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CHARACTER SHOW	14/04/2019	217	70	£700.00	Neeld hosted	
ORIGINAL PERFORMER	18/04/2019	37	33	£330.00	Neeld hosted	
MAGIC FOR KIDS	12/05/2019	217	89	£870.00	Neeld hosted	
PSYCHIC SHOW DEREK ACORAH	18/05/2019	217	201	£4,300.00	Neeld hosted	
AN EVENING WITH	21/05/2019	217	112	£2,128.00	Neeld hosted	
BANDEOKIE	23/05/2019	120	2	£16.00	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	01/06/2019	217	156	£2,496.00	Neeld hosted	
THEATRE PLAY	13/06/2019	217	77	£1,227.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	20/06/2019	217	111	£2,200.00	Neeld hosted	
AFTERNOON TEA EVENT	24/06/2019	130	19	£101.50	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	27/06/2019	217	38	£476.00	Neeld hosted	
BANDEOKIE	28/06/2019	118	47	£376.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	05/07/2019	217	216	£4,200.00	Neeld hosted	
AN EVENING WITH	09/07/2019	217	55	£1,045.00	Neeld hosted	
DISCO	26/07/2019	225	225	£1,800.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CIRCUS ACTIVITY	30/07/2019	72	72	£225.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CIRCUS ACTIVITY	06/08/2019	60	53	£155.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CIRCUS ACTIVITY	13/08/2019	68	66	£190.00	Neeld hosted	
ORIGINAL BAND	16/08/2019	200	28	£212.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CIRCUS ACTIVITY	20/08/2019	60	57	£150.00	Neeld hosted	
CHILDRENS CIRCUS ACTIVITY	27/08/2019	60	43	£120.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	30/08/2019	217	217	£4,473.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	08/09/2019	217	122	£2,440.00	Neeld hosted	
DISCO	27/09/2019	255	236	£1,888.00	Neeld hosted	
ADULT PANTO	04/10/2019	217	96	£1,710.00	Neeld hosted	

TRIBUTE BAND	05/10/2019	217	140	£2,700.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	12/10/2019	217	192	£4,320.00	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	18/10/2019	217	195	£3,705.00	Neeld hosted	
MEDIUMSHIP NIGHT	25/10/2019	217	77	£1,155.00	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	26/10/2019	217	140	£2,293.50	Neeld hosted	
ORIGINAL ARTIST	03/11/2019	217	192	£4,202.00	Neeld hosted	
COM (Britains got Talent star)	08/11/2019	217	184	£3,150.00	Neeld hosted	
TALK	19/11/2019	217	217	£3,225.00	Neeld hosted	
DANCE NIGHT	29/11/2019	125	50	£400.00	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	06/12/2019	217	139	£3,636.50	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND	08/12/2019	300	59	£649.00	Neeld hosted	
BALLET	10/12/2019	217	217	£4,251.00	Neeld hosted	
CHOIR	18/12/2019	218	40	£190.00	Neeld hosted	
CHRISTMAS CHILDRENS SHOW	22/12/2019	217	213	£2,279.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	17/01/2020	300	80	£72.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND	26/01/2020	160	63	£600.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	31/01/2020	300	79	£64.00	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	14/02/2020	300	82	£88.00	Neeld hosted	
COMEDY	16/02/2020	217	214	£3,195.00	Neeld hosted	
TRIBUTE BAND	21/02/2020	217	148	£3,117.50	Neeld hosted	
LOCAL BAND OFF	28/02/2020	300	71	£44.00	Neeld hosted	£94,392.00
			12066	£175,516.35		

In addition to the ticketed events above, the space has been hired out for various events as shown below, this is also for the same period as stated above.

Type of event	Number of occasions it took place
Training/Meetings/Conferences	62
Awards evenings/Private Parties	27
Exhibitions/Fairs	13
Dance classes	40
Blood donation sessions	27
Charity Dinner Dances	2
Coffee mornings	2
Food testing/Market research	38
Auction	1
Wakes	1
Business Dinners	6
NHS Clinics	6
Quiz nights	2
Wedding ceremonies	4
Wedding receptions	2
Community events	8
Elections/Hustings	3
Boxing matches	1

The above does not include any council business events such as Civic Ceremonies, Council meetings etc

Open 7 days a week / or not - Yes open for shows and hire 7 days per week

Usage / audience or visitor numbers – how far do people travel / reach of venue (see chart above for usage) – our audience is mostly from the local area and surrounding villages and towns, however when we host a well know performer (particularly those on TV) we attract out of area visitors – it should be noted these also benefit our local business such as hotels, restaurants etc.

What's great about it / not so great – would avoid if doing it again **Whats's Great** - A space that offers a wide range of activities for many members of our community to enjoy, collaborative working with local businesses, partners, NHS and contributes significantly to the Council's Corporate Strategic plan.

Not so Great - Would put theatre bar in a different location

- **Governance of the venue (business model/ management)**

Owner of venue – outright ownership / peppercorn lease / etc. ? Chippenham Town Council

Community owned / Council owned / stakeholder representation, etc? Chippenham Town Council

How are decisions made – what freedoms or not, are there? Day to day decisions by Head of Venues – reporting to Director of Community Services. Other major decisions by report to the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee

- **Annual running practices and costs**

Core funding – base line budget / is it subsidised (needed) / profit/loss *Running costs for staff, utilities, building infrastructure by the precept. Head of Venues taking responsibility for shows on a break-even basis. Bars and catering are outsourced.*

Staffing levels – employed staff / volunteers – what works best/issues

Full time Facilities Supervisor and Part time Facilities Assistant (not just Neeld but for whole Town Hall Premises)

Venue Booking and box office Coordinator

Technician/Duty Officer (theatre light and sound engineer)

Head of Venues (including show programming)

Duty Officer (part time) – to take responsibility at events

Casual Halls staff for room set ups, ushering etc (employed when demand requires)

Building repairs / maintenance / environmental credentials – By CTC staff or appointed contractors.

Marketing / promotions needed – in house CTC marketing and communications department

- **Other**

In addition to the Neeld theatre area we have two dressing rooms which are also hired out as smaller meeting rooms to maximise potential use.

Our box office is by the way of an outsourced software system, run by our Venues Booking and Box Office Coordinator, with tickets available in person at our box office reception and online services. We also offer our box office service to other local venues (a box office levy is applied).

Your unique experience

What of the future – expansion / reduction / change? We are looking at a more suitable/natural entrance foyer and bar/café area as part of a future plan and to continue to build the programme and offer of hire spaces to maximum potential.