



Good cause: Robert Richardson presents a cheque to Patsy Philip, from EKCWS

'Thanks for your help'

GRAND manager Robert Richardson has thanked everyone who helped raise more than £1,000 for a local good cause this year.

Mr Richardson and his staff held a variety of events in aid of the East Kent Child Witness Service, his charity for 2010, culminating in a Christmas raffle at a residents' party last week.

The last event raised £174, an amount matched by the venue. EKCWS spokesman Patsy Philip said: "We are overwhelmed by the support that The Grand has and is giving us and would very much like to publicly thank them

for all they are doing to support and promote the work we do."

Mr Richardson, who has already decided to continue his support of the charity into 2011, said: "The work we have done this year is simply unparalleled at The Grand in recent times and truly highlights our new direction to support local initiatives and our area, whilst still maintaining The Grand as the best public premises and cultural centre within the area.

"A very big well done and thank you to everyone who has contributed to the many charitable actions undertaken."

Schools need for urgent repairs

More than £6 million is needed

Report by Adam Westgarth

adam.westgarth@KRNmedia.co.uk

SHEPWAY'S schools need more than £6 million spent on them to carry out repairs deemed urgent and essential by education bosses.

Figures obtained by the Herald show Kent County Council needs to cough up £6,030,611 on fixing primary and secondary schools as well as special education centres in the district.

The multi-million bill includes repairs to leaky roofs, faulty boilers and resurfacing playgrounds.

Brockhill Park Performing Arts College makes up almost two thirds of the cost with a bill of more than £1.7m – the highest of all the 534 schools in Kent.

Experts believe £164,471 needs to be spent on facilities which KCC classifies are in a bad state and in need of "urgent" repair while a further £937,391 needs to be paid on repairs earmarked as "essential" at the school.

Around £623,000 needs to be spent on bringing other facilities up to acceptable standards.

The Harvey Grammar School in Cheriton Road has the second highest repair bill in Shepway at £559,644 while the Folkestone School for Girls is third with £442,590 needed for repairs.

Christ Church C of E has the highest

bill of the district's primary schools at £390,313.

KCC's total estimated cost of fixing facilities in all of its schools totals more than £89.6m.

But despite many repairs being classified as urgent and essential, the education authority said it does not know when it will be able to carry out the work.

It denied there is any risk to either children or staff safety but a spokesman said: "Maintenance programmes are planned on an annual basis; we do not yet have a programme for next year."

"That programme will be developed early in the New Year; work will be included in the programme having regard to condition survey priorities and the need to keep schools safe warm and dry."

Many of the schools on the list of those needing repairs were on the Government's axed Building Schools for the Future programme which would have seen a £250m overhaul of schools in Shepway and Dover.

A KCC spokesman added: "The county council's priority is to ensure that all schools are safe places of work and education."

"If circumstances arise that mean that this will not be the case then action is taken promptly to address the problem."

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