

THE *chaotic* NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

THE VILLAGE HALL

The background is a solid teal color. Scattered across it are several light blue musical notes of various shapes and sizes. In the center, there is a stylized orange character that looks like a person with a round head and a long, thin body. The character is positioned behind the word 'VILLAGE' in the title, with its head overlapping the letter 'I' and its body extending down towards the word 'HALL'.

WRITTEN BY **RICHARD SYKES**
EDITED BY **MARIA SYKES**

PRODUCED BY **WOODHOUSE MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY**
AND **LAWRENCE BATLEY THEATRE**

World Premiere

10 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2025

LAWRENCE BATLEY THEATRE

Audition Pack
Jennifer Crump

A very warm welcome to 'The Village Hall'...

Thank you for your interest in being part of this unique show. As it's a premiere there aren't any reference points to go by when creating your character for the audition. Some find this 'freeing', some; find it 'utterly terrifying'. It's going to be staged in-the-round (see above 'freeing/terrifying' comment) with a 9-piece live orchestra and no click-tracks. It's as live, vibrant and exciting as we can make it and if its' predecessor 'By George' is anything to go by, the rehearsals and process of creating the residents of 'Cheeley Village Hall' will be hugely enjoyable. The entire production team are routing for you to give the best audition possible.



To help, you can find guide vocal files and backing tracks using this QR code, just view it through a smartphone camera and click the yellow link. You'll find a drive with an audition folder, a full script and demos. Please **download them before opening**. Any issues - contact rich@richsykes.com.

Précis

Cheeley Village Hall and its committee are stretched to their limits when the keys disappear. A hasty rearrangement by determined committee treasurer Frances, sees the morning's missed activities scheduled alongside the afternoon's programme. Chaos and farce ensue, with battles for territory and power causing the villagers' secrets to be revealed – particularly when outsiders Helen and Ken stir things even further.

Cast of Characters

Rvd. Geoffrey Potts	Cheeley Village church's vicar
Melanie Potts	The vicar's wife
Frances Waring	Committee treasurer and wife of Robert Waring
Helen Gorsage	Widow of Mollie
Diana ('Di') Coombs	Excitable secret partner of David
David ('Dave') Goosham	Excitable secret partner of Diana
'Big' Ken Rushton	Brash know-it-all from Stackworth,
Jennifer Crump	Lollipop lady for Cheeley Infants School
Joan Blacker	Dinnerlady at Cheeley Infants School

Other named characters include Gordon, Pam, Christine, Deidre, Dot, Freya and Carol. These will be part of multiple role company parts with a standard audition piece for all genders. If you'd like to be considered for a specific role, please let the panel know on the day of the auditions.

From all at LBT and Woodhouse Musical Theatre Company - the very best of luck.

Jenny

A lollipop lady who is ever-present at the village hall. She controls the kitchen - and especially the tea urn - alongside dinnerlady, Joan. The more energetic of the two ladies, Jenny is a powerhouse with some terrific lines - particularly when bouncing off Joan.

Her songs include:

Unbreakable - the rules of Cheeley Village Hall are listed by the committee to Helen

I'm Doin' Fine - The company bemoan the ageing process.

The Panto - Jenny is playing the fairy godmother in the Cheeley Players annual pantomime.

PIECE 1 - pg. 35-37

Helen looking for Frances, heads to the kitchen. Joan and Jenny form a polite, yet intimidating barrier across the kitchen entrance.

Joan Are you wanting a tea?

Jenny Or a coffee?

Helen No thanks. *(backing off)* What do we need to set up for next?

Joan *(consulting a list from her pocket)* The scheduled Chairobics will now be sharing with... Silver Surfers.

Helen Right. Do you need a hand? What would Mollie do if she was here now?

Joan Mollie'd be making 'whatever nonsense Frances dreamed up' work.

Jenny She was very faithful. If Frances said it – no matter how farfetched – she'd support it.

Joan For better or worse – that's what Mollie'd do.

Helen *(rethinking her approach)* Alright-ee.

Joan and Jenny move apart allowing Helen to exit to the kitchen. Their eyes follow her.

Jenny Coffee's on the left.

Joan Tea's on the right.

Jenny 10p on the saucer.

Joan *(calling after Helen)* No hot bottoms on the worktop.

Jenny *(shouting)* And don't touch that last Jaffa cake!

They snap back and turn to each other in 'gossip mode'.

Joan I think someone should ask her.

Jenny Ask her what?

Joan Ask her why Mollie never told us she was so ill.

Jenny Mmm. Remember when she had that turn? And I asked her if something was up? "I'm just tired" she said. Imagine! Now if she'd have just told us...

Joan I know.

Joan and Jenny start setting up the chairs for Chairobics and the chairs around the trestle tables for Silver Surfers.

Right there and then, I'd have done her my hot pot and whipped it over.

Jenny Or fetched Dr. Chakraborty. He did wonders when I had my hip.

Joan We'd've done so much for her.

Jenny So much.

Joan Remember when Glenys had her hysterectomy? We barely left her side. No matter how much she said (*as Glenys*) 'Girls, you're too kind'

Jenny (*as Glenys*) 'Ladies. Honestly that's enough'

Joan (*as Glenys*) 'Not another ruddy hotpot.'

Jenny (*as Glenys*) 'Leave me in peace.'

Jenny and Joan smile at each other.

Joan But we didn't. Did we?

Jenny We did not.

Joan And in 3 months - she was right as nine pence.

Jenny Mmm.

Geoffrey enters from the fire door entrance and heads towards the kitchen.

Joan Can we help you Vicar?

Geoffrey I just need a bucket, cloth and disinfectant. I'm afraid someone's taken the notice on the collection box rather literally. Maybe I should make it clear that 'for the sick' refers to monetary donations only.

Geoffrey exits into the kitchen. Jenny and Joan watch him go.

Jenny *(calling after him)* Under the sink, to the right, behind the Vim. *(beat)* And don't go near the tea urn!

Joan Oh no. Don't go near the tea urn!

Jenny and Joan once again snap back into 'gossip mode' and resume setting out the chairs. Jenny runs an electric extension to the trestle tables.

Jenny When should we change the tea bags?

Joan That lot'll dry out tonight. Stick 'em on the radiator. They've got another week in them!

SFX. A violent steam phhhht comes from the kitchen.

Geoffrey *(off)* Aargh. *(in pain)* Oh blow and blast it.

Jenny *(shouting to the kitchen)* Don't go near the tea urn!

Jenny and Joan wipe their hands on their t-towels again and hurry to the kitchen.

PIECE 2 - pg. 66-68

Ken is sitting with a small circle of three parishioners including Freya (with four spare chairs) – some are reading books and holding pencils. Ken has a ball of toilet paper stuffed up one nostril.

David is by the kitchen, wiping up the last of the blood with a jay cloth. He stands and exits into the kitchen.

Joan and Jenn, sitting on a chair each, are knitting in the other half of the hall with a large jute bag of wool.

Jenny Do you remember Jackie?

Joan Jackie with the ear infections?

Jenny That's her – 'Jacks the Wax'. Well, she's started seeing someone.

Joan Is she dating or hallucinating?

Ken *(frustrated)* Can we get going?

Freya We usually wait for Geoffrey.

Ken sighs.

Freya It's nice of you to join us Ken.

Ken Yes. Well... as a published author...

Joan *(interrupting)* How's your... *(glancing down)*?

Jenny Worse.

Joan winces. Ken looks disgusted.

Jenny One day it's 'ease and squeeze', the next it's 'spirt and squirt'. I could weep.

Joan What are you doing?

Jenny I phoned urology. 40 minutes! They said 'Can you hold?'. I said 'If I could I wouldn't be calling'.

Ken *(standing)* This is a forum for writers, like myself, to share their work and give and receive feedback. It's high brow, not women discussing what medication they're on this week. I don't mean to be disparaging of the fairer sex. But let's keep them separate, yes?

Joan bristles at the mention of the 'fairer sex'.

Geoffrey Oh. Right...

Jenny I think you'll find Kenneth that Joan here has been giving feedback for the thirty years I've known her.

Joan Too right.

Jenny Joan. Bring the jute. I'll need my readers.

Joan puts her jute tote bag of wool on her chair and, bringing their chairs they join the writer's circle. They sit and exchange bitter glances with Ken.

Jenny These days I can't see things close up. *(to Ken)* But I can spot a pillock at forty paces.

Geoffrey Welcome ladies, oh, and everyone. Now, I'm very keen...

A lady (Denise) with a nosebleed is escorted through from the kitchen by a fellow Highland dancer who has a bandaged leg and is limping.

Geoffrey Well done Denise. Keep that head back. *(returning to the group)* Now I'm very keen to hear your pieces this month. Has anyone had any problems.

Jenny Only with this cardie. I think my dryer's shrinking it.

Joan It's not your dryer. It's your fridge.

Jenny casts her an acid glance.

Piece 3 - pg.94

Helen I WISH ONCE.
I WISH TWICE.
I WISH THRICE...

There is an uncomfortable pause.

Jenny (off) Is there a poof?

Mel (off - stressed) No. Just say 'Poof'

Jenny comes on to the panto stage as the Fairy Godmother

Jenny Poof. (*as Fairy Godmother*)
I AM YOUR FAIRY GODMOTHER
WHAT DOES YOUR HEART DESIRE?
IS IT A MOP AND DUSTER
OR USE OF GLASS SHOES YOU REQUIRE?

Helen FAIRY GODMOTHER?
MY WISH CAME TRUE!

Jenny TELL ME DEAR CINDERS,
WHAT CAN I DO?

Helen ALL THAT I WISH FOR'S
AN EVENING OF BLISS
AN UBER, A DRESS, AND A CHANCE TO IMPRESS
THE HANDSOME AND CHARMING YOUNG PRINCE

Jenny TOUGH, BUT NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION.
I'LL NEED SOME THINGS AS WE START
A MOUSE AND A PUMPKIN – YOUR BEST ONE.
THEN WISH IT WITH ALL OF YOUR HEART.

The transformation music begins in earnest. Mel gestures Helen to the side of the stage then gives her the inflatable pumpkin and a toy mouse. Helen takes them and places them in front of Jenny. Jenny swirls her arms wildly.

Geoffrey That's it Jenny. A little more if you can with your sciatica...

Jenny overacts.

The Village Hall The Panto

Richard Sykes

24 **B** Is there a 'poof'?

Poof I am your Fai - ry God-

38

moth - er. What does your heart de - sire?_ Is it a mop and

42

dust - er?_ Or use of glass shoes you re - quire?

47

Tell me dear Cin - ders what can I do?

55

Tough. But not out_ of the quest - ion I'll need some things as we

58

start. A mouse and a pump - kin, your_ best one_ then

61

wish it with all ___ of your heart

6

