

THE *chaotic* NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

# THE VILLAGE 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  
**Joan Blacker**

## **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**

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

## **Joan**

A dinner lady who is ever-present at the village hall. She controls the kitchen - and especially the tea urn - alongside lollipop lady, Jenny. She can put anyone in their place with a beautifully timed put-down and is the more imposing of the two ladies.

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 - Joan is playing the wicked step-mother in the Cheeley Players annual pantomime.

Joan is feisty and funny - and her dialogues with Jenny are a highlight of the show.

**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 firedoor 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. 81**

**Ken**        *(holds up his hands)* I have been known to tread the boards in my time.

**Jenny**      Of course he has.

**Geoffrey** I think if Ken has experience...

**Joan**        Experience?! He's a bloke. Have you any idea how hard it is to get blokes to risk their so-called manliness by 'treading the boards'?! Every year it's the same thing! Umpteen incredible women scramble and fight each other for the two token female parts, and the men just waltz in and take the lead because they can put one foot in front of the other and vaguely sing a bit. (beat) Am I wrong? Or have you lot forgotten Seven Brides for Two Brothers? And then you wonder why we're so bitchy. It's because on our side of the fence it's dog eat dog.



**B**

23

I'm do - in' fi - - ine. I've tried to rid my life of all the

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fe - ar and doubt. But I'm do - in' fi - - - ine\_\_\_\_\_

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Put - tin' both my socks on tends to stress me out.\_ But I'm do - in fi -

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- ine.\_\_\_\_ I ne - ver need to fret. Or ev - er get up - set. I

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like to watch Re - pair Shop but I'm not dead yet. I'm view - in', but

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I'm do - in' fi - - ine.

