

# BENENDEN VILLAGE TRUST

## Minutes of the Meeting Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021, 6pm, Benenden Village Hall

Present : Kent Barker, Athena Cripps, Olivia Collier, Tom Dawlings, Martin Dickson, Sally Ann Marks, Jonathan Strong, Richard Stubbings. Holly Clayson (Hall Manager). Caroline Levett (Trust Manager).

Item		Action
1. APOLOGIES	All present.	
2. VILLAGE HALL	<p>Holly Clayson reported on the following :</p> <p><u>Hall usage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This has recovered fairly well since the Hall reopened. Existing regular customers have returned and some new hirers secured. There are bookings made through to the end of the year, with some space to fill.</li> <li>• Ami Piper, dance classes, is the greatest hirer and has increased her hours.</li> <li>• KB, HC and KS met with Nancy Tolhurst in May to discuss some issues with The Players, and HC is waiting to hear back from The Players. The main issue from the Hall's perspective is the impact on other hirers once The Players start to set up for panto. The lights and part of the Hall become unusable to other people, for example, badminton cannot take place, and there is a degree of disruption to others paying to use The Hall. The guidelines for hiring the Hall are straightforward and should apply equally to all and, whilst the Trust wants to support The Players, it must also generate an income and achieve the right balance for all. The Players wish to set up the stage extension in October, but Trustees felt that this would not be possible and request that this does not happen until after 1<sup>st</sup> January. Trustees are keen that the lines of communication between HC and The Players remain open and felt it might be useful for both to list any issues to work through. It was also suggested that Holly contacts other halls to see how they manage panto season.</li> </ul> <p><u>Wi-fi</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current system is unreliable, patchy and not fit for purpose.</li> <li>• HC has investigated alternative broadband suppliers and it was agreed to progress this.</li> </ul> <p><u>Website</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HC has made some progress revamping the Hall's website, but this is very time-consuming, and it is proving difficult to include an online calendar which synchronises with bookings. Rohan Barnett has provided some support where he has been able to.</li> <li>• Trustees agreed to employ someone to build the website and provide support so that HC can manage it.</li> </ul> <p><u>Contents Insurance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HC had suggested a reduction in the value of contents to £20,000. It has been made clear to hirers who store items at the Hall that they are responsible for their own insurance. Trustees felt that £50,000 was a more reasonable figure. CL to advise insurance brokers.</li> <li>• CL/HC to arrange an independent valuation of contents for future reference.</li> <li>• HC to check that Portable Appliance Testing has been carried out on all hirers' electrical equipment and that hirers have the necessary insurances in place.</li> </ul> <p><u>Hall Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HC advised that she has been looking into ways to improve Hall security through use of a key card or biometric system. There are systems available which can be controlled remotely, and KS is keen on this system. Cost is approximately £2,000.</li> </ul>	<p>HC</p> <p>HC</p> <p>HC</p> <p>CL CL/HC HC</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was agreed to progress with a biometric system. HC to obtain quotes and report to the Property Group.</li> </ul> <u>Renewable Energy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RS asked if it would be possible to start considering again longer-term plans for the Hall, such as solar panels and a sustainable heating system. He had previously obtained a quote of £1,700 + disbursements for an independent consultant to give advice. JVS suggested that each group revisits various projects which had been proposed but postponed because of the pandemic and that these are all re-considered and prioritised at a subsequent meeting of Trustees.</li> </ul>	HC
3. ST GEORGE'S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unexpected and urgent expenditure of £702 following issues of blocked drains at St George's and the need to sanitise and dispose of waste in the Pre-School garden.</li> <li>The new fire alarm system at St George's is scheduled to be installed in September by C&amp;M Fire Alarms. CL is working with the tenants to obtain access to the building to ensure that this can go ahead. The cost of the new system and installation is £6376.76. Additional electrical work is required before this can take place. Trustees agreed that the work must proceed as planned and that tenants have to allow access for this purpose.</li> </ul>	
4. REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Y/E 31/03/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft reports had been circulated.</li> <li>A final version is awaited from Manningtons to include the correct AGM date and a comment to show that the Trust entered into a contract with Sovereign before 31<sup>st</sup> March with an amount of £34,134 payable in the financial year 2021-22.</li> <li>Subject to these changes Trustees unanimously agreed to approve the reports.</li> </ul>	
5. FINANCE	<u>Cash Flow</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash flow for 2021-21 had been circulated and CL responded to queries.</li> <li>Trustees noted that the previously approved sale of and transfer of £20,000 worth of COIFF Accumulation Fund Units had taken place in June.</li> <li>The current policy is to maintain cash reserves within the Charity's bank accounts to meet contingencies equating to 3 months' of the Charity's average annual operating expenditure. KB pointed out that the Trust has easily accessible reserves within the COIFF Accumulation Fund with a current value of in excess of £750,000 and felt that this policy should be amended.</li> </ul> <u>Rents</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-School is aware that its rent will be reviewed wef 1<sup>st</sup> September.</li> <li>A new licence has been agreed for grazing at Woodcock Lane and a rate of £40 per annum.</li> <li>CL had contacted The Good Estate Agent to obtain an idea of open market rental of the spaces at St George's. CL to chase.</li> </ul>	FINANCE GROUP  CL
6. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS	Trustees agreed to employ someone to carry out the weekly inspections of the playgrounds at Benenden and Iden Green. CL to draft.	CL
7. DATE FOR AGM	It was agreed that AGM would be held on Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> October, 7pm.	
8. MEETING DATES	It was agreed that Trustee meetings would be held quarterly. Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> September, 7pm Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> December, 7pm	
9. TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT	A number of parishioners had expressed an interest in becoming a Trustee and the need for more Trustees acknowledged. JVS to follow up.	JVS

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