

NENDEN VILLAGE TRUST
Trustees' Meeting of Benenden Village Trust Monday 28th July 2025, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion
MINUTES

Item		
PRESENT	Kent Barker, Simon Brown, Tom Dawlings, Martin Dickson (Chairman), Peta Grant, Julie Lewis, Sally Ann Marks, Chris Parkinson, Paul Tolhurst, Mike Taylor. Caroline Levett (Trust Manager).	
1. APOLOGIES	No apologies.	
2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes of the Trustees' meeting held on 28 th April 2025 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.	
3. LEASES	- The letters and heads of terms agreed by Trustees were sent to St George's Club and Benenden Pre-School on 10th July. MD thanked MT for his work on this. - SGC: 4 year term, with break clause at end of 2 years £6,000pa - Wef 1st September 2025 - New lease consistent with terms of existing lease - New lease to be excluded from sections 24-28 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 - Market rental assessment provided to SGC John Marshall has advised that the documents have been passed on to Jeremy Treliving (a Club member and chartered surveyor). No comment as yet from SGC. - BPS: 12 months' notice given, effective 31st August 2025, terminating current lease on 31st August 2026 - Current rent provisions wef 1st September - Rent wef 1st September 2026 - £6,000 - Expire 31st August 2027 No comment as yet from BPS.	
4. PRESCHOOL PLANNING APPLICATION	- BPS has advised that it is preparing a pre-application to submit to TWBC for a structure at the top of Benenden Recreation Ground and has requested BVT support for this. - When initial discussions with BPS took place this possibility was raised then. - BVT would not be able to give or sell the land to BPS and a long-term lease would need to be put in place. - Any support would be heavily qualified. BVT would want to see a draft of any planning application; proof of funding; estimate of all costs, to be met by BPS, including utilities / services; aesthetically pleasing structure; considerations given to parking. All these factors would be discussed in full and at an appropriate time. - PG highlighted that a pre-application advice is confidential between an applicant and TWBC and there would be no input from any other organisation, including BVT, regardless of the fact the application would be on BVT land. No input from BVT is needed at this time. TWBC will advise in principal if a full application can go ahead. - Whilst BPS is happy at SGH and might be able to pay an increased rent it is not ideal accommodation for a pre-school and even if increased rents are achieved this does not resolve all finance issues regarding the building and BVT would likely continue to sustain losses. - Trustees had agreed through the strategy work already carried out that BVH and the Recreation Grounds and playgrounds were the Trust's priorities. - It was agreed to write BPS setting out that BVT supports BPS's efforts to find a new home in the village and supports the need for a pre-school and, in principle, might be prepared to look at making land available to do this. MD to draft and circulate.	MD

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	It was also noted there is outline planning permission at Benenden Primary School for a pre-school as granted by KCC, and BPS should follow up on this too.	
5. FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE	The minutes of the FGC Group meeting held on 14th July were circulated. Items to note: ❖ <u>Income and expenditure to 30th June</u> - Q1 2025/26 - Total income BVT and BVH Q1 £24,584.96 - BVT : Q1 £11,247.04 - BVH: Q1 £11,311.76 - Fundraising: Q1 £2,026.16 - Total expenditure BVT and BVH Q1 £17,816.75 - BVT : Q1 £7,138.12 - BVH : Q1 £10,678.63 - Bank account balances at 30th June : BVT Current Account £4,211.69; BVT Savings Account £22,173.68; BVH £12,168.55. All accounts £38,553.92. - COIF - Income received 2025/26 - £5,478.75 May 2025. £5,478.75 expected August 2025. - Holdings value 31st March 2025 total £783,563. Income Fund - £759,099; Accumulation Fund £24,464. 30th June 2025 total £781,078. Income Fund - £756,520; Accumulation Fund : £24,558 14th July 2025 total £793,642. Income Fund - £768,689; Accumulation Fund : £24,953 ❖ <u>Cashflow to 31st March 2026</u> - Very approximate - income of £91,000 and expenditure of £77,000. Assumes a rent increase for SG Club wef 1st September and does not allow for any additional expenditure. - Spending must remain under strict control. - Current predicted income for BVH 2025/26 is £40,000 but may not reach this level. ❖ <u>Benenden Recreation Ground Fencing</u> - Fencing was raised again, not only because of the risk of incursion, but from a safety aspect and concerns about children and others playing on the field and running out into the road. - Trustees agreed that whilst this is not an essential spend it should be considered if funding is available. Quotes to be sought in the first instance for chestnut post and rail with stock wire, for both the road side and hall car park side, and then discussed further. ❖ <u>Woodcock Lane Allotment Field</u> - It had been suggested that this field could be used as a horse paddock at a higher income, (possibly £1,800 pa) than present (currently £40pa), and MT looked into this further. - Following appraisal from Lambert and Foster it was agreed that this was not a viable option to pursue because of the costs involved and the added issues this may bring. - Although the possibility of someone within the village wanting a pony paddock was not ruled out and it was agreed this should be mentioned in the Village Magazine. ❖ <u>Finance review</u> - This will remain ongoing.	CL

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	❖ <u>Insurance</u> • Renewal date 1st August. • The Finance Group is currently considering and comparing 2 quotes received.	
6. PROPERTY	The minutes of the Property Group meeting held on 7th July were circulated. Items to note: ❖ <u>St George's Building</u> ○ Window • The window repair is complete. ○ Mowing/Hedge Cutting • CL has asked Tembo if he would like to take on the contract and if so what his costs would be. ○ Pre-School Gates and Fencing • The front gate post has been replaced. Cost £281.40 • Quotes have been sought for the repair/replacement of the backgate and back garden fence. ○ Cottage • The Property Group recommends supporting a request for approval of a garden shed, already constructed in the garden. This does not contravene any planning regulations and replaces previous sheds. The Property Group would prefer that the shed is less prominent and positioned away from the road, perhaps along the boundary hedge to the car park side. This was agreed by all trustees. • CP has attempted to contact the tenant to follow up on other outstanding items but has received no response. ○ Water • John Marshall is waiting for a response to his latest communication from Castle Water. • MT will follow up with JM. ❖ <u>Iden Green Car Parks</u> • Quotes sought for repair of potholes in the car parks. ❖ <u>Iden Green Playground Fencing</u> • The main fencing work has been completed. • There are a few loose uprights on the fencing panel to the left of the gate entrance which have come apart from the lower arris rail as it's rotten. • CP has made the repairs at cost of materials - £12.	MT
7. VILLAGE HALL	The minutes of the VHWG meeting held on 23rd June and the BVH Q1 report were circulated. Items to note: ❖ <u>Hirers</u> • There has been a loss of some regular hirers (yoga, badminton, tuition classes) who have moved to cheaper, more appropriate venues, including the new hall at Sissinghurst. • The newly available vacant slots have been advertised but more promotion of BVH is required. • Several enquiries have been received from potential new hirers including ballroom dancing and karate and a question asked about the availability of a piano. ❖ <u>Outdoor Lighting</u> • Electrician, Pete Russell, quoted to replace the current outdoor lighting with PIR lighting, as previously discussed and agreed by trustees - £299.50 for materials and labour free of charge. Pete Russell has already disconnected the halogen light at the kitchen end of the building and has not charged for this.	

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	- The PIR lighting will ensure that lights are not left on for long periods of time as they currently are on the fixed timer, therefore hopefully saving on some electricity costs and helping to protect the dark skies of Benenden. - The Finance Group approved this expenditure and the work is due to be carried out on 6th August. At the same time Pete Russell will be installing new sockets on the balcony and the costs of this will be met by the Players. ❖ <u>Plumbing</u> - Quote received for previously identified and agreed items, including parts and labour - £520.00 - To fit new parts to repair accessible toilet and one toilet in the ladies - To fit new sensor for automatic flush for gents' urinals - To fit new parts to repair boiling water machine in kitchen - Work is likely to take 1 day with possibility that additional work may be required if urinal sensor doesn't immediately fix the issue, but cost should be minimal. - Finance Group approved. ❖ <u>Parking</u> - A one item meeting to be held with all trustees and JB to discuss how to resolve/agree a way forward regarding the issue of parking at BVH.	
8. HR	Staff performance appraisals to be carried out during August.	
9. RISK MANAGEMENT	- Each group leader has reviewed the documents and changes made where appropriate. - Some actions are required. - MD and CL still intend to carry out a complete overhaul of the system to remove unnecessary repetitions and streamline the whole process using the Property Group's new format, which PT produced. - Deadline for MD and CL to complete – April 2026.	MD/ CL
12. AOB	<u>Benenden Bowls Club Lease</u> - MT advised that he has worked on lease renewals for Bowls Clubs elsewhere and rent is charged at a rate of £250 per lane per annum. - No progress has been made on the lease renewal. The initial letter was sent from BVT to the Chair of the Bowls Club in January and was passed on to John Marshall to deal with. - CL is chasing the Bowls Club regarding its insurance for which BBC is responsible.	CL
	Date of next meeting 27 th October, 7pm	
	Meeting closed at 8.20pm	