

BENENDEN VILLAGE TRUST

Minutes of the Meeting Monday 27th September 2021, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion

Present : Athena Cripps, Olivia Collier, Tom Dawlings, Martin Dickson, Julie Lewis, Sally Ann Marks, Jonathan Strong (Chair), Richard Stubbings. Caroline Levett (Trust Manager).

Item		Action
	JVS welcomed Julie Lewis to the meeting and Trustees unanimously agreed to co-opt JL as a Trustee.	
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received from Kent Barker and Holly Clayson (Hall Manager).	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	SAM declared a non-prejudicial interest as a member of the Shop committee. JL declared a non-prejudicial interest in Iden Green Pavilion. CL to produce a disclosure of interests form for all Trustees to complete.	CL
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	The minutes of the meeting held on 26 th July were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman. Matters arising are covered elsewhere on the agenda.	
4. VILLAGE HALL	<p>The Village Hall report for August had been received and circulated. CL reported the following updates received from HC :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several issues had been encountered setting up new broadband. A line and router have now been installed but there are connectivity issues to be resolved. Until it is completely usable there is a small portable system, sufficient for low-level internet use, which can be topped up with data. • Multiple meetings with the Players have taken which have been productive. Some issues around lighting have been resolved and the Players have agreed to put the stage extension up after the new year. HC has a meeting booked with Nancy Tolhurst. • Bookings are good, with private events booked every weekend until Christmas. The empty Wednesday morning slot has been filled with a new regular hirer for Zumba classes. • There are ongoing issues with bank signatories. CL had advised the Finance Group of issues with the Barclays mandate. • The website is being worked on and issues with the calendar are trying to be resolved. • CL had recommended to HC a free KCC Covid-19/infection safety training workshop on 14th September, but HC did not find this particularly useful. • HC had suggested that KS undertakes training to become qualified to carry out Portable Appliance Testing so that the Hall's equipment could be tested in-house with the potential for outsourcing these skills. It was also suggested that HC and JG could be trained. CL has asked HC for a break-down of costs – the training, the equipment and what the normal annual cost is for PAT. Trustees also asked what the cost might be in terms of staff time to carry this out and any insurance requirements for carrying out tests for others. CL to raise with HC and to revert to Trustees for a decision. • Trustees asked if HC had checked if Portable Appliance Testing had been carried out on all hirers' electrical equipment and that hirers have the necessary insurances in place. CL to raise with HC. <p>JVS thanked HC for her report and updates.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>CL</p>

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	<p>The following items were raised by Trustees :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Finance</u> <p>It was felt that the way that average income for the Hall is written is misleading as this includes Covid-19 grants, insurance claims and furlough payments, and that expenditure and the running costs of the Hall are not truly represented as it does not include payments made by the Trust directly. Trustees agreed that these figures should be presented differently to include Hall costs currently paid by the Trust. This would give greater transparency and a better indication of what the Hall needs to achieve to stand alone.</p> <p>The reported projected income for the year has not altered throughout, and Trustees agreed that should be updated monthly to show the actual monthly income from confirmed bookings for greater clarity. Trustees would also like the Hall report to focus on actual income against targets, actions taken to improve income and increase bookings, and marketing which has been carried out.</p> <p>CL to discuss with HC.</p> <p>There was some discussion amongst Trustees about bank accounts, funds, movement of funds and the Finance Group's comment that the Village Hall's bank account balance is part of the Trust's assets and is not isolated just for the Village Hall.</p> <p>The Finance Group will consider this further, and the implications, and make recommendations first to the Property Group and thence to Trustees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Electric Vehicle Charging Points</u> <p>TD reported that KCC is offering grants for the installation of EVCP.</p> <p>CL advised that she had previously applied for a grant. The application was successful and KB had met with the supplier who had looked at the power from within the Hall but a load test carried out showed that the power is already overloaded. A new supply installed from the power cables in the road would cost at least £10,000 for the power connection alone but likely significantly more, and therefore prohibitive.</p> <p>HC had attended a workshop in June and felt that there was still the potential to install two chargers, despite being told that there was not the electrical capacity.</p> <p>The Property Group to revisit.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>FINANCE GROUP</p> <p>PROPERTY GROUP</p>
5. PROPERTY GROUP	<p>St George's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new fire alarm has now been installed at a total cost of £6,600. The Operation and Maintenance Manual has been received and will need studying. CL to request a hard copy from the supplier. • It was agreed that it is imperative that the Trust holds a key to the front door and has access to the entrance hall of the building. JVS to follow up. 	<p>CL</p> <p>JVS</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JVS and AC had attended a forum hosted by Pre-School regarding its relocation. Two options considered were the Gibbon building and land on the Primary School site. The Gibbon building was ruled out by Pre-School due to its run-down state. It was agreed that Pre-School needs to consider how to raise funds and draw up a business plan. JVS had offered Trust support, which was not taken up. RS requested that the Property Group is involved in any further discussions, and this was agreed. All Trustees agreed that it is very disappointing that KCC is allowing two buildings to sit empty. TD will find out with whom at KCC it would be best for this to be raised. 	TD
6. FINANCE GROUP	<p>Notes of the Finance Group meeting held on 14th September had been circulated.</p> <p>Bank account balances at 27th September : Trust £15,613.21; Hall £20,725.12; total £36,338.33.</p> <p>The current reserves policy is to maintain cash reserves within the Charity's bank accounts equating to 3 months' average annual operating expenditure and allowing for known capital expenditure. At the Trustees meeting in July KB had pointed out that the Trust has easily accessible reserves within the Accumulation Fund and felt that this policy should be amended. It was acknowledged that there is a good case for making this change, but the Finance Group had considered the pros and cons and risks of making changes given current uncertainties and recommended that the 3-month figure is retained but kept under review. This was unanimously agreed.</p> <p>RS suggested that there should be policy and procedure regarding access to funds. JVS and CL to consider what policies and processes need to be in place.</p>	JVS/CL
7. PLAYGROUNDS	<p>Benenden Playground</p> <p>The RoSPA report for Benenden had just been received, and AC and CL had met and noted actions required and shared these with the Playgrounds Group.</p> <p>Overall the risk level is low but some issues noted which CL will raise with Sovereign regarding design.</p> <p>One area of concern highlighted in the report and raised by several parents is the heavy wearing and large dip at the gate entrance and other areas of uneven ground due to heavy use. AC suggested that, rather than just fixing this small area, there is the need now to prioritise the path from the carpark to the playground, as previously discussed by Trustees, and felt that a solid surface such as tarmac would be more suitable than rubber mulch. While doing this, it was felt that carrying on with this new surface to create a path up to the back entrance to the school would be worth installing.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously agreed that the footpath should be addressed this autumn, and costs will be sought.</p> <p>CL advised that the replacement of all the D handles and T plates should be completed soon.</p>	CL PROPERTY AND PLAYGROUND GROUPS

	<p>Iden Green Playground</p> <p>It had been agreed, to address an issue of maintaining and keeping surfaces clear of leaves and tree debris, a broom would be purchased and left securely in the playground with a notice encouraging parents/users to sweep the surfaces. This will be monitored for effectiveness and, if necessary, in early summer and autumn a contractor will be asked to carry this out more thoroughly.</p> <p>Playground Inspections</p> <p>Trustees thanked CL for volunteering to do the weekly checks of the Benenden Playground and JL and her team for doing the Iden Green ones. No current issues reported at IG.</p>	
8. RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>The Playgrounds Group has completed its initial Risk Identification and Management report. The Finance Group and the Membership, PR and Website Group have made a start on risk identification.</p> <p>AC was thanked for all her work regarding Risk Management.</p>	
9. TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT	SAM to follow up a contact.	SAM
10. WORKING GROUPS – RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING	<p>JVS set out the wish to make full quarterly Trustee meetings more strategic with Working Groups meeting regularly and providing timely reports for CL to circulate to the rest of Trustees highlighting decisions required by Trustees.</p> <p>CL to draft a template terms of reference document for groups to use setting out the areas of work and responsibilities and processes to be followed.</p> <p>JVS requested that all Trustees email him individually stating whether or not they wish to remain in their current role and group, which group they would like to be involved in and whether there could be better use of anyone’s expertise and experience.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>ALL</p>
11. AGM	<p>The AGM takes place on Monday 11th October, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion. Trustees to meet at 6pm.</p> <p>JVS and CL to draft the agenda.</p> <p>JVS offered to provide drinks and glasses. SAM offered to provide nibbles.</p>	<p>JVS/CL</p> <p>JVS/SAM</p>
Date of next meeting	Monday 6th December, 7pm.	
	Meeting closed 9pm	