

## **BADLESMERE LEES AND HALL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, 3 August 2022**

Those present: Ian Earl (Chair); Sue Earl (Secretary); Rick Blackman (Treasurer), Dave Austin, Steve Burt, Charlie Kirby, Chris Moore, Ben Pullen.

Apologies for absence: Gareth Fulton, Fred Gregory, Katie Potter, Tom Sisley.

This meeting is the postponed July meeting.

### **1 Minutes of the January, February, April and May meetings**

1.1 The minutes were passed, and all will be posted on the village website, together with the Chairman's Report from the AGM, and an updated composition of the committee.

### **2 Matters arising**

From April

- 2.1 The emergency escape routes at the rear of the hall have received some attention (from a kind volunteer) but further efforts are still required to reduce the hazards to an acceptable level.
- 2.2 The metal posts (two) destined for the northern layby will be installed at the same time as a digger is acquired to put in the post for the village sign.
- 2.3 Wilding project: Our contact with the AONB has retired, but advice and possible funding will still be sought (SE/GF).

From May

- 2.4 IE has met with SB and CM to initiate the handing over of some of his responsibilities. SB will mainly deal with the day-to-day management of the hall whereas CM will focus on major projects and grant applications. IE will provide SB and CM with his current 'do list' of outstanding jobs, but will complete the tasks already begun in the kitchen.
- 2.5 DA has taken over the guardianship of the defibrillator from IE. He is now in the process of registering himself with the two databases on which site checks are recorded, which include a new one called The Circuit (set up through the British Heart Foundation) joined at the request of SECAMB.
- 2.6 A system for circulating the bookings received by the village hall has yet to be created.
- 2.7 Incorporating automated bookings into the website will not be pursued owing to a wish that the flexibility of the current system be retained.
- 2.8 Electronic key safe: to be followed up at a later date.
- 2.9 The Lees clean up took place on 23 June. A large bonfire near the southern wood now exists, its burning to be delayed until the current heat wave has abated to reduce the chance of the fire spreading.
- 2.10 Village Green Registration: questionnaires have been sent out to residents, and some received back, to provide evidence that the Lees has been used a typical village green for many years. (The Lees, owned by the Lees Court Estate since 1975, was registered

as common land in 1968-1971 by Swale BC, and became Open Access Land by way of the CROW Act 2000).

### 3 Accounts

3.1 Balances in the bank accounts as at 31 July are as follows:-

|      |                 |            |                 |           |
|------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| BPH  | current account | £5750.63,  | reserve account | £26819.80 |
| BLPC | current account | £12494.82, | reserve account | £2263.48  |

3.3 Notes concerning the values above:

a) the £1500 transfer from the BPH to the BLPC in support of the village sign has yet to take place;

b) the BLPC current account received a £9935.00 grant from the Lottery Fund in May and this has yet to be apportioned in accordance with the application details;

c) all 10k Run entry fees are being automatically posted to the BLPC current account.

3.4 Other grants that are being investigated include the Jubilee Grant for rural community halls (IE has already registered our interest), and the Swale Borough Council Members' grants.

3.5 Recent expenditure (and other items):

a) the repair to the store room door and doorframe has been completed, and cementing at floor level carried out to prevent entry by rodents;

b) the installation of the dishwasher has been completed (see below);

c) a second jug kettle has been purchased for £44 due to the unreliable performance of the large kettle (which will be kept for emergencies) and in lieu of an 'instant water heater' the cost of which would have been £200-£600;

d) boxes have been purchased to ease storage of glassware in the kitchen cabinets.

e) the marquee that was offered by Adrian Atkins (of the Phoenix in Faversham) has been politely declined on the grounds that it is old and large giving rise to probable difficulties of maintenance and storage;

f) a second blue (recyclable waste) wheely bin has been acquired from Swale Borough Council, at no cost;

g) the powder fire extinguisher in the kitchen was replaced by a CO<sub>2</sub> one in the recent fire equipment check to meet current legal requirements (invoice yet to be received).

### 4 Major Projects

4.1 Kitchen: the installation of the dishwasher, which necessitated the relocation of the water heater and a set of drawers, and modifications to a cupboard, the waste pipes and electric power supply, has been completed. Shelf supports have been added to all cupboards as the top shelf in most had begun to sag from the weight of items stored thereon. Ongoing is the construction of two 'broom cupboards' will enable the storage of brooms, mops and buckets, and Henry the Hoover to occur in what is primarily a food preparation area. Within these it is envisaged that the Village Hall Archive could also be stored (passed from chairman to chairman in the past), as well as a stock of paper products (paper towels, loo rolls, kitchen rolls) which are cheaper if bought in bulk, also releasing storage space in the kitchen units.

4.2 Hall Floor: A quote has been received from Timberstone for the repair, sanding and resurfacing of the hall and stage floors (£2295.00 plus VAT). While this was considered reasonable and the work necessary, concern was raised as to the state of the timber

frame of the (window-side) wall. It was also decided that painting of the interior walls should precede any renovation of the floor. SB/CM to arrange an inspection and repairs to the timber frame (accessing from outside); IE to inform Timberstone. Of the painting, it was agreed that only the lower part be repainted, and to be essentially the same green colour as now.

If and when the floor is renovated, it will be essential that certain activities be curtailed or the floor given protection. In particular clog dancing will need to occur only on a special surface. Research suggests this could be expensive and we could choose to ask the dancers to contribute partially or fully to the cost. We should also be prepared to lose the bookings if they don't.

- 4.3 Toilets/storage: Since a grant has been received specifically for improvements to the toilets and this would need spending within a reasonable, if not specified, time limit, work should go ahead as soon as possible. However, what funds might be available is dependent on the cost of the ongoing work above, and so what exactly can be achieved is yet to be determined. CM/SB to continue to investigate options.
- 4.4 Drive and ramp to the main entrance: This formed part of the grant application mentioned above, and the above comments (4.3) relate to this work in the same way.

## **5 Safety**

- 5.1 A fire safety equipment check has recently taken place (and a new fire extinguisher acquired – see above).
- 5.2 A full fire safety risk assessment will be conducted in the near future (by IE).
- 5.3 A quote for the writing of an EIC (Electrical Installation Condition) Report has been received and accepted. It was agreed that the electrician should be asked to carry out PAT testing on all portable equipment for although it is no longer a legal requirement the testing would show we take electrical safety seriously and allow us to insist that hirers have their equipment tested similarly. IE will contact EKOGG to ask if their equipment can be PAT tested at the same time (at their expense).
- 5.4 A general risk assessment of the premises, following HSE guidelines, was carried out (by IE) superseding the last one from Jan 2021. Copies were passed to SB and CM for consideration. It was agreed that an inspection by a professional to detect the presence of asbestos, and advise accordingly, should be arranged.

## **6 Dates of future meetings**

- 6.1 The dates of regular meetings will in future be the third Monday of the month in which they occur, no longer the second Tuesday.

## **7 Village Sign**

- 7.1 Competitive quotes have been received from 'Sign of the Times' of Tebworth, Beds, 'Blackforge Signs and Weathervanes' of Wittersham, Kent, and 'CS Willett & Co Ltd' of Acol Farm, near Birchington, Kent. Willets, who are also the manufacturers of the sign at Sheldwich, were chosen. A bonus of using them is that it would enable the design of the Sondes' lions to be copied from the original template used for the Sheldwich sign, so guaranteeing its accuracy and acceptance by Lady Sondes.
- 7.2 Notification has since been received from Willets that sign might be delivered before the end of August.

- 7.3 In preparation for erecting the sign a hole needs to be dug. Since the ground is so hard due to the lack of rain this year, any attempt at digging will be put off till Autumn. The source of the digger has yet to be determined, nor the concrete or a mixer. The oak post is due to be delivered (at The White House) next week.
- 7.4 The 'unveiling' will hopefully take place in October, completing the project in this Jubilee year.

## **8 Badlesmere 10k Run**

- 8.1 Entries and publicity: All were concerned that only 78 entries had been received to date. 140 is the number at which the event is expected to break even. However, considerable effort has gone into publicising the event – by email to known runners and past competitors, in person at local Fun Runs and other sporting events. Rachel Sisley and Lorraine Blackman have spent time making a presence on Facebook. It is known that many sporting activities, and other events such as live theatre, are not as well supported as they were before the pandemic.
- 8.2 Roles: Since IE and SE will be unavoidably absent on the actual day of the run, CM will act as Chief Marshal, Emily Moore will supply and drive the lead car, and Linda Kirby (tbc as volunteered by CK) will supervise the refreshments. George Blackman is prepared to act as the tail runner ('sweeper') if no one else is found.
- 8.3 Immediate tasks: the insertion of advert in Parish Magazine (IE), acquiring a float [N.B. there are no longer any banks in Faversham] (RB), the testing of the SumUp card reader before its use on the day (IE), the washing of the marshals' Hi-Vis jackets (SE).
- 8.4 North track repairs are set for w/e 27-28 August; a wacker plate may need to be hired.
- 8.4 Date of pre-race meeting: 20 August, 3 pm, to be attended by at least SB, RB, IE.

## **9 AOB**

- 9.1 Trees. SE announced she would like to identify and map all the trees growing on the Lees. IE said Bill Harbour has information on those that were planted at the same time as the beacon was erected (1 Jan 1993, when the EU acquired 12 member countries). It was known that Gareth Eccles (who has since left the village) had done a survey – CM gave details of the website that contained the list (N.B. it does not go to species level, e.g. oaks are not subdivided).
- 9.2 Puddle. The very dry summer has meant that the sunken track leading to the Leavemere bungalows has not filled with rain water since the water main leak in the Spring, but concern about the effect of winter rains was raised. It was felt that any problems should be addressed by the Estate and Optivo.
- 9.3 Posts. CK expressed his opinion that the posts along the edge of the Lees next to the A251 neither looked nice nor served their prime purpose (of preventing vehicles from entering the Lees from the road). IE to raise this with the Estate, suggesting replacement or, if not, their removal.
- 9.4 Map. DA, on behalf of Jane Austin, declared that the map displayed near the village hall identifying local footpaths had faded to the extent that it was no longer readable. IE to investigate ownership and possible replacement.

9.5 Film Location. A delegation from Selling Village Hall has visited to see how we heat the main hall and charge separately for it. Other matters of common interest were also aired. Selling's hall was once used by a film company for the production of a period drama. CM has now added our hall to KCC's register of possible filming locations.

**The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.**

**The next committee meeting is now scheduled for Monday, 17 October, in the village hall at 7.30 pm.**