

BADLESMERE LEES AND HALL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 14 May 2024

Committee members present: Chris Moore (Chair), Sue Earl (Secretary), Rick Blackman (Treasurer), Steve Burt, Ian Earl, Gareth Fulton, Fred Gregory, Ben Pullen, Tom Sisley.

Apologies from: Dave Austin, Charlie Kirby.

1 Election of officers.

- 1.1 The chair, secretary and treasurer were prepared to remain in these posts, as were those with other responsibilities. The committee officers were duly proposed and seconded, and all members present agreed with the other roles.

2 Approval of minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the March meeting were approved.

3 Matters arising (numbers in parentheses refer to entries in the March minutes)

- 3.1 (3.1) No progress yet on:- the constructing of broom cupboards (IE) and the checking for asbestos (SB).
- 3.2 (3.2) Footpaths cabinet: still awaiting KCC PROW to contact us.
- 3.3 (3.5) DA is still progressing the purchase and installation of suitable signage.
- 3.4 (3.7) Northern layby post(s): GF will now coordinate its(their) erection.
- 3.5 (3.10) NatWest has changed the names associated with BLPC accounts.
- 3.6 (3.12) Speed calming signage on the north track is yet to be progressed.
- 3.7 (3.13) Although IE forwarded contact details CM requested that IE should still organise the cutting of the lees. The first cut was carried on 16 April, delayed by the wet weather, and the full area of the lees was tackled.
- 3.8 (3.14) IE presented his survey of several fence/post options and costings for the ~70m stretch from The Dell to Godfrey's Cottages. A lively discussion took place as to which posts/fence option would be best, including having no posts. Having a trench-and-ridge instead was also considered as were horizontal tree trunks, both seen when farmers want to bar access to their fields. The latter was rejected, though, apparently, this was the arrangement ~40 years ago. CM to liaise with the Estate to seek their view and possible help.
- 3.9 (4.3) IE investigated systems, specifically tailored for charities, that allow purchases to be made online (context: 100 Club membership). None were found suitable mainly due to the high cost of setting up such a system and/or the charge incurred per transaction, with often a monthly fee on top.
- 3.10 (4.4) Upon request, EDF offered a new electricity tariff, but a cheaper one was found through brokers, Bionic, acting on behalf of U-Switch. This was accepted, with the contract to begin on 3 Apr. Ironically it is still with EDF. Although the brokers have recently stated all went through, EDF still enacted a debit under the original Direct Debit mandate (using the old account number) on 17 Apr. RB to investigate.

- 3.11 (6.3) The Spring Clean-up in March was successful. However, several tasks remain or have arisen since. A second Clean-up is now scheduled for Sunday, 9 June, starting at 9.00 am. The Triangle and the Leavemere verge have been earmarked for attention and since Colin Hutchinson is interested in helping the committee TS will approach him to see if he will volunteer his services in this matter.
- 3.12 (9.1) IE has yet to ask EKOGG to move the timing of their AGM as expansion of the car park (an item on the list of priorities) may solve or at least alleviate the problem.

4 Accounts

- 4.1 Yoshi Euridge has checked the accounts for 2023 and has passed them subject to the correction of one error: a payment associated with reimbursing the purchase of food for the 10k Run. The error has been corrected and a summary of the accounts will now be posted to the website.
- 4.2 The current balances in the four accounts as at 14 May 2024 are:
BPH: current = £2 457.74, reserve = £12 491.35;
BLPC: current = £2 045.21, reserve = £7 332.07.
Expenditure due to the extensive renovations is the cause of the sizeable reduction in the BPH reserve account.
- 4.3 The 100 Club. The draws for the monthly prizes have taken place. Each of the following have won £30:- Jen Scutt, Nicola Bullock, Ian Earl, Phil Thompson, Chris Jones, Julie Dee (January to June respectively).

5 The Hall – refurbishment works

SB gave an update on the work done and that which is in progress:-

- 5.1 The south wall renovations have been completed, with timbers and corrugated cladding replaced as necessary. This required the removal of part of the stage (the same width as the width of the new floorboards). A new downpipe for the guttering (western corner) has been installed and connected to the drainage system to the soakaway. A ‘hedgehog’ has been placed in the guttering along the full length of the south wall.
- 5.2 A concrete path has been laid along the full length of the north wall, and from the north track to the main entrance. The latter (~125 cm wide for most of its length) included an area for waste bins to stand, a ramp, and a platform in front of the entrance doors. Pea-shingle has been placed in trenches along the north and south walls. ‘Cold-pour’ was used to remove the step up from the track to the path.
- 5.3 Turf has been laid over most of the area between the ‘back’ (north-western) end of the hall and the copse. This was watered repeatedly, and has bedded in and grown impressively. The turf has been mown once so far.

Next jobs:

- 5.4 The new sheets of corrugated (galvanised) iron will need painting. IE to get a quote. A T-Wash mordant (etching) solution will be used before primer is added. Part of one window frame needs repairing (SB). The loose airbrick and other brickwork in the toilets extension will be dealt with if and when the toilets are redesigned.

- 5.5 A concrete ramp down from the platform and a path to connect with the entrance to the store and the new path along the north wall will be next. SB to draw up a snags list (in particular, the dips and grooves in the new concrete path) for the contractor to correct. A smooth join between the platform and the hall doorstep is also needed.
- 5.6 Turf adjacent to the hall (stage and toilets walls) to be removed to fill the area in the far corner devoid of turf (IE). Trenches next the hall walls to be extended and filled with pea-shingle. Soil from near the track to be moved to level the ground alongside the new path to the main entrance, and then seeded.
- 5.7 No further work, unless small and already agreed, to take place until the contents of the list of jobs/projects under consideration are prioritised, including whether to move, or even keep, the stage. IE will, however, attempt to reduce the number of items stored under the stage, ideally from three to two drawers/trolleys.

6 The Hall – Community Events

- 6.1 D Day 80. The beacon will be lit at 9.15 pm on 6 June in line with instructions received from the Pageantmaster. Villagers will be invited (via Facebook, email, etc. – CM), and told to bring their own refreshments. The film ‘A Canterbury Tale’ will be shown. CK will load the beacon with wood. Some of this will come from the recent work on the village hall. DA will act as MC, and GF will read the International Tribute.
- 6.2 The hall has been booked for a Pet Service which is to take place on 23 June.
- 6.3 CM intends to celebrate Halloween as last year, with the procedures going towards the village hall. He also intends to have other events both to raise funds and promote a community spirit in the village.
- 6.4 FG has agreed to host a Quiz evening on 23 November. IE and SE to help.

7 The Lees

- 7.1 North Track. GF will invoice to the village hall for its contributions to the work carried out in September 2023 and March 2024.
- 7.2 It was agreed that further work on the north track was needed, possibly requiring the use of a wacker plate. The date set was Saturday 29 June and concerns only the track beyond the village hall as the hall has been booked for that day. GF’s digger may become available but not before July. The width of the track may, at some stage, be reduced and a drainage trench dug on the lees-side (beyond the village hall).
- 7.3 The Spring Clear-up took place on 23 March. A bonfire, yet to be lit, was created by the southern copse. A second session is deemed necessary, to include work on the triangle at the entrance to the north track (tidying the vegetation and adjacent surface of the track) and around the village hall (a bonfire pile exists that needs to be moved and burnt), and was set for Sunday, 9 June. Colin Hutchinson was said to be willing to assist the committee; TS will liaise with him and lend his petrol strimmer so that the triangle and the Leavemere verge can be tackled.
- 7.4 It was agreed to remove the partially collapsed knee-rail fencing by Leavemere. IE will contact Colin to seek his assistance. If any of it can be salvaged it will be re-used on lees-side of the north track.
- 7.5 The second mowing of the lees, delayed by the wet weather, is due this week.

Governance

- 8.1 Charity Status update. CM's solicitor has agreed to assist with the paperwork, and would charge £500-£800. It may be possible that we submit whatever is necessary, basing the details on the Trust Deed that currently governs the hall's management.

9 Safety and Crime

- 9.1 The A251 Safety Group has asked villagers to support their attempt to reduce the speed limit from Challock to Faversham to 40 mph, and to ban HGVs on this road. They have a new simple website: www.a251safety.org.

10 AOB

- 10.1 IE was offered a projector screen (approximately 8-foot square, and self-supporting) by Perry Wood Arts, and was gratefully accepted. It came originally from Teynham Village Hall but most recently resided in Selling Village Hall.
- 10.2 GF requested that cat owners keep their pets indoors at dawn and dusk for this is the time of day the wild bird life is most vulnerable.
- 10.3 To benefit the natural flora and fauna of the lees, GF would like strips of the lees to be left un-mowed. IE supplied GF with the contact details of the contractor so that he could specify the areas directly.
- 10.4 The placing of bird boxes and bat boxes on the lees, mostly the southern woodland is being considered (GF).
- 10.5 Japanese knotweed has been seen growing again. CM to contact the Estate.
- 10.6 From IE: EK0GG are having their Open Day on Saturday 29 June.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for 6.30 pm, on Monday, 15th July, in the village hall.