

**Bexhill Heritage Committee Meeting Minutes Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**Bexhill Heritage Committee Meeting Traffs, Egerton Road, Bexhill on Sea**

**Committee :**

Raymond Konyn (RK) : Chair  
Steve Johnson (SJ) : Vice Chair /Treasurer  
Alexis Markwick (AM) : IT Support Officer  
Simon Allen (SA) : Projects Coordinator  
David Beales (DB) : Planning officer  
Anthony Lightly (AL) : Chartered Building Surveyor  
Jeanette Eason : Committee Clerk

Prior to the formal meeting Claire and Chris Baldry were asked to introduce themselves to the Committee. Claire and Chris have volunteered to take over management of the new Heritage Hub in the Methodist Church, Sackville Road.

Claire gave a brief overview of progress to date. The Hub has opened formally and currently opens between 10.00 and 15.00 on Tuesdays only. By the end of Feb and with more regular volunteers, it is planned to have the Hub open on Fridays and Saturdays too.

Currently there is a problem with getting adequate heating for the large space.

There has been a steady delivery of leaflets from various organisations. A rota sheet is available for members to volunteer for various slots on Tues, Fridays and Saturdays.

It is hoped to have a more formal opening on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the school half term period. A locally based associate has volunteered to run some children's events on the day. It is hoped to get a ¼ page article in the next issue of the quarterly Bexhill Voice magazine.

If the venue becomes more popular and enough volunteers come forward, it may be possible to open more often. Currently if someone wants to use the disabled access or toilet, it is necessary to open the side door located on Parkhurst Road. This is not an easy procedure and will need to be remedied for more regular access. There was a brief discussion about progress with the church on arranging for an external bell to fitted at the disabled access door.

In order to keep a tally of foot fall for future use, it is planned to purchase a 'clicker'. At present a simple '5 bar gate' system is being used.

There is also a need to ensure volunteers are trained in how to sign up new members to BH, in addition to familiarisation with the many leaflets and organisations available at the Hub and in Bexhill generally.

Also, discussion about the Bexhill Community Bus, leaflets/timetables etc., and need to check with Cllr Lynn Langlands if BCB are wishing to use the Heritage Hub space.

There being no further issues, the Committee Meeting returned to the formal agenda.

## 1. Apologies

No apologies

## 2. Approval of minutes and Matters Arising

No amendments required. Copy minutes to be signed.

There was concern that members without email access were missing out on communications such as expired memberships or notices of events. RK would like to ensure those without email, get a membership reminder when the next Newsletter sent out.

It was noted that 100 people had not renewed their membership. It is recognised that there is a need for a Membership Secretary, to follow up with non renewals and a need to feedback any issues of members experience.

## 3. Planning and Development

### (i) Cemetery Lodge

Nothing further heard on this item. When SJ saw J Brotherton, BH was promised early sight of plans and drawings. It was agreed that BH would ask again to see any plans and would welcome a meeting to discuss in a positive way.

### (ii) Baptist Church

Nothing further heard on this item. Query if possible to follow up via the local councillor and whether they had heard anything back from RDC?

**Action** : DB to ask question via local ward councillors.

### (iii) Down Cottage

In 'limbo' at present. SJ stated he only had the estate agents information to use at the moment. He would like to visit the property with a.n.other, possibly just try a knock on the door approach with the current resident.

**Action** : SJ and AM to follow up.

### (iv) Clavering Walk

Awaiting outcome of appeal. Nothing heard yet from Spindlewood.

**Action**: Remove item from future agendas.

### (v) Bexhill Indoor Market, Western Road

Considered that current plans for the site is excessive, too dense for dwellings. DB suggested that the failed render at the front needs replacing without diminution of the historical façade. There may be issues with the terms of tenancy, and currently the fenestration matches with Wetherspools. It was recognised that the Freeholder is possibly negotiating new leases with current stall holders. It would be a positive if the freeholder could complete the restoration of the block, which could enhance the whole area. There was ref to a thesis by Tony Leonard on Shop Fronts in Bexhill.

### (vi) Others

Nothing to report.

(vii) Community Asset Register

SJ discovered that responses to submissions should be made within 8 weeks. RDC were very late in responding to Pages Gap submission. There is no right of appeal under the Localism Act for non inclusion on CAR. Although the letter mentions 'criteria' none are specified in the response, or on the web site. It was suggested RDC be more careful re decisions and the parameters used to guide their final decisions. It would appear there are no criteria, only policy guidance. There was discussion regarding who or which councillor or committee would have oversight or development of this item and social enhancement. SJ mentioned that he waited nearly a year for one reply and it would appear that the same person has been involved in the decision making and responsible for enhancing council assets.

Action : SJ to email D Oliver (ward councillor).

#### 4. Methodist Church Hub

- (i) Currently a short term let.
- (ii) Depending on how many interest groups decide to be located there and overall usage, it may turn into a longer term residency.
- (iii) The Information Point has already been installed and handed to Claire Baldry.
- (iv) Nothing has so far been received about the future use by BH of St Barnabas Church. Still awaiting confirmation. There was discussion whether to amend the formal postal address of BH to that of the Methodist Church. It was agreed to keep it registered at St Barnabas, as BH was due to make its application for full charitable status. In the meantime, it would also be sensible to book the venue for the BH AGM.

#### 5. Events

(i) Civic Pride Award – Certificates and Presentations

No reply so far to the suggested dates and venue for the awards.

**Action** : SJ to suggest some new dates and organise event via RDC.

(ii) Update on events and meetings in 2020

It was agreed the Great Gatsby Event 2019 was not a very positive experience for BH. If booking for this year, BH needs a gazebo and a more central placement, or in No.1 Shelter. BH to ask RDC if we can make use of No.1 Shelter. Currently waiting to learn situation re (a) possible VE Day Event (Roger Crouch), (b) Sea Festival in September, (c) Anglo/French Market, (d) Easter Bonnet Parade.

It was agreed not to book a stall at the Bexhill 100 or Cycle event. Bexhill 100 may be possible with sufficient volunteers, and could probably be slotted in at the last minute.

**Action** : SJ to contact Carole Green re positioning of stall for Sea Festival

(iii) Members Meeting speakers for 5<sup>th</sup> Feb and 6<sup>th</sup> May AGM

Suggestions are Keith Rhodes (Bexhill Flag) for 5<sup>th</sup> February and ask Joe Powell to speak about regeneration at the AGM. Suggest no Q&A afterwards, but ask to stay for the refreshment break, to avoid any 'grandstanding' or ambush by BH members.

## 6. Projects and Priorities

(i) East Parade Shelters

Glazing has been completed, although there is concern that it may sustain some damage with work still being done. The volunteer team are ensuring they vacuum and sweep every visit. There have been some cracks noticed in the roofing tiles.

The SE & SW roof has now been completed. Rescrewing of the joists is nearly completed too. There are concerns with the state of the floors.

The floor is pitted and has holes which could be filled and finished with concrete paint, but Lee Beckham against on H & S grounds. BH will probably have to accept patching rather than replacement, even though it may detract from the rest of the renovation work. SJ queried the arrival of the paint.

Acknowledged that the painting work maybe held up by the roofing work that needs to be completed first. If the weather stays fine, volunteers can get on with the painting.

**Action** : RK agreed to check the paint order, estimated quantity required and date of delivery.

(ii) De La Warr Bus Shelter

SJ has telephoned the Academy, who have indicated they are still wishing to be involved in the project.

(iii) West Parade Clock Tower

SA stated he will arrange to check the Clock Tower in spring time, to see what state it is in and give it a clean. The plinth that was recently damaged by a vehicle collision is still in need of repair, but recognised that it did its job in protecting the clock tower.

(iv) Sainsburys Mural

Nothing further heard from Sainsburys

(v) Civic Voice Affiliation

AM confirmed that it was a national organisation, but was too expensive per member to affiliate. **Action** : Remove item from future agenda.

## 7. Finance and Governance

(i) Charity Commission application – There is now a need for BH to apply for full status as our income very healthy and exceeds the limit allowable under HMRC guidelines. There was discussion as to whether BH wishes to (1) stay as a membership organisation with an annual AGM, (2) have Trustees make all decisions, or (3) become a CIO, Charity Incorporated Organisation, which will need BH to follow a ‘model’ set of guidelines. The meeting agreed it wished to remain as a membership organisation. Agreed also that there would be a need to put this to the membership at the earliest opportunity at the Members Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February. It will be useful to obtain formal agreement of the decision to submit to the Charity Commission.

**Action** : Next Members Meeting – to arrange an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss and agree future of BH. SJ to prepare items for meeting.

- (ii) Finance Update : Copies of the BH accounts/balance sheet were circulated and items discussed and agreed. There has been some good income derived from events, but perhaps there will need to organise more soon. SJ stated that the cost of the Information Board at Pages Gap has now been largely offset by the donations received from the Co-oP Scheme (£275).
- (iii) Student Membership – if introduced it could potentially nudge the BH demographics towards younger people. There was discussion around criteria for the discounted rate e.g requirement to be in full time education, hold a valid student card, query what happens when they move into employment, or leaving education. Suggested that a Young person's Discount for those 16-25 could be £5 instead of £10 per year.  
**Action** : AM to organise web site information and an update to the membership form.
- (iv) Circulation and approval of agendas and members minutes – It was agreed that there was no need to print formal agendas for members meetings. The agenda could be displayed on either a white board or OHP, with the items for presentation/discussion and the speaker. A formal printed agenda would however be needed for the AGM.  
**Action** : SJ to organise EGM information required.
- (v) Electricity Bill, Devonshire Road (Temporary BH Shop) – A bill for £260 + VAT has been passed to BH for payment. It was agreed that it is excessive for the amount of time and activity undertaken by BH at the property. It is understood that A Crotty took meter readings before and after BH use of the shop. Main BH use was to boil a kettle for teas & coffees. It was also noted that there were builders working elsewhere in the property using electrical equipment daily and there was a separate tenanted flat. There were also other concerns raised regarding the bill, which would need follow up action. It was noted that Claire Baldry has taken the meter readings at the Methodist Church.
- (vi) Proposed 'Bexhill Town Council' Meeting – RK reported to the meeting that one of the speakers at the meeting held at St Barnabas Church, Tony Steer Leader of Bolney Parish Council, met and spoke to the BH representatives and proceeded to edify the organisation during his presentation to the meeting. A film of the meeting can be view online. Tony Steer has said he would like to work with BH and support our charity. Through his work with Bolney Parish Council, he has experience and knowledge of how to access funding for charities. It was agreed it would be worth meeting Tony again, perhaps with an invitation to lunch to introduce him to Bexhill, our projects, and aims and to seek more information.

## 8. Any Other Business

- (i) Museum – There is an invitation to a meeting with the museum this week. AM confirmed that they have at last accepted some BH leaflets.
- (ii) Bexhill Day, Sussex Day, Heritage Day – after discussion it was agreed there are too many 'days' and that a separate Bexhill Day is not required. Sussex Day is on 16<sup>th</sup> June and can be discussed at a future Members Meeting and possibly celebrated at the Heritage Hub.

Heritage Day – will be the opportunity for people to open up houses and buildings of interest locally. No need for BH to be closely involved in this national initiative. BH plans to repeat the 2019 event on 5th September, which received very positive feedback last year.

- (iii) Matching BH aspirations to committee capacity – recognised there are not enough committee members to cope with all the work required. BH will have to learn to say ‘No’ unless or until more members can be persuaded to become more pro-active and volunteer to help with various aspects.
- (iv) Offer of Low Cost Printing – there is an opportunity to obtain cheaper printing. RDC has identified some money which may enable us to purchase a laser printer that Claire Baldry has suggested could be used at the Heritage Hub. All BH would need to purchase going forward are the usual consumables.
- (v) King Offa Charter Anniversary 2022 – SA mentioned that in 1972 there was a royal visit organised with Princess Alexandra visiting St Peter’s Church. One Bexhill resident (Roger Allias) remembers the last event as he was a choir boy, who also sang in the choir on Bexhill Seafront. SA & AM are interested in attending the meeting to discuss the Anniversary Commemorations.  
**Action** : SA to respond to the email invitation and for both to attend the meeting.
- (vi) Offers to BH of Use of a garage and additional offers of carpentry equipment – as a result of the ‘Bexhill Town Council’ meeting, one person who has had a stroke and now feels unsafe using his equipment and wishes to donate it to BH. SA has also since been offered use of a carpentry workshop.  
**Action** : RK to follow up contacts and check basis of offers.

## 9. Date of Next Meetings:

- Members Meeting – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 19.00 The Friends Meeting House.
- Committee Meeting –17<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 19.00, Traffors Bar, Egerton Road, Bexhill