

Bexhill Heritage Trustees. Minutes for the meeting held on Monday 19th April 2021

In attendance: Raymond Konyn, Steve Johnson, Simon Allen, Alexis Markwick

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

No apologies received. RK declared that he is a trustee of the Bexhill Old Town Preservation Society.

2. Draft minutes for the January meeting.

These were approved.

3. Matters arising

a. Register of trustees' interests

These had been completed by all trustees.

b. Charity Commission registration

SJ had reported previously that the application process was extensive and that it was necessary to submit evidence to show that the charity was already undertaking or was equipped to undertake its charitable objects. For example, the Charity Commission would require sight of the lease agreement between Bexhill Heritage and RDC for the operation of the Bandstand. Given that the signing a lease was some way off, SJ recommended that the application be streamlined to remove references to BH leasing property and. He further recommended that references to activities that are tangential to our main objects should not be included in the application. This would enable an application that would be shorter, more specific and more realistic. It was agreed that SJ should go ahead on this basis.

c. East Parade Interpretation

It was agreed that AM would send SJ an appropriate graphic with the date removed. SJ confirmed the location of the board and that it would be constructed to match the Motoring Heritage boards.

d. Bexhill Heritage calendar

It was agreed that John Swap be asked to liaise with Margaret over the number of calendars required. AM agreed to send John Swap an appropriate map of Bexhill to be included in the calendar.

e. King Offa Anniversary

SA asked whether a 1972 booklet from the last main anniversary might be available. AM confirmed that Bexhill Museum had a copy and that he would forward a copy and appropriate Bexhill Observer reports to SA.

4. Governance and good practice including the differences between trustee and committee roles

a. Trustees' role

SJ reminded trustees of the different roles carried out by a board of trustees and by a committee. The distinction had become blurred partly because all trustees were also committee members. RK had invited trustees to either attend a course for trustees or read the Charity Commission document outlining the trustees' role.

It was agreed that:

- Trustees' agendas would include only matters concerning strategy and monitoring / evaluation.
- Our trustees' role description be amended (RK) to state that trustees do not also have to be committee members. This would enable people with a wider range of experience and expertise to join the Board of Trustees.
- Trustees should signify their approval of the amended wording by 26th April.
- The amended document would be placed on the shared drive.
- All trustees would familiarise themselves with the duties and responsibilities required of a trustee.

b. Vulnerabilities

RK outlined the following vulnerabilities.

- Trustees and committee members do not always reply to messages in a timely fashion and are sometimes unavailable without reasonable notice. This places undue pressure on the Chair and hampers organisational efficiency.
- Actions agreed at meetings are sometimes not completed.
- Data protection requires attention so that our members can be reassured that the charity is compliant with all relevant legislation.
- There is an over-dependence on one person for the efficient use of IT in the support of the charity's work.

RK went on to outline solutions that may mitigate some of the above risks as follows:

- Trustees should let RK know if they are unavailable.
- Draft minutes should be circulated within 7 days of a meeting having taken place. Agendas should be circulated at least 7 days prior to a meeting. Minutes should include clear action points. An alternative would be for action points from a committee to be circulated within 7 days of a meeting with the detailed minutes to follow. (RK offered to discuss this with the minutes secretary.)
- Co-opt additional trustees (preferably female). RK offered to make appropriate approaches once local elections were over.
- IT support could be outsourced to a local firm. RK acknowledged that this would be expensive. The alternative would be for AM to train others to deputise when necessary.
- Committee members and trustees should upload documents to the shared drive if something needs to be shared.

In response, trustees made the following points and suggestions:

- SJ suggested that we should adopt more effective email and communication protocols that would allow colleagues reasonable time to respond, especially in relation to important decisions. Such decisions should, in any case, be discussed in committee or by trustees rather than decided by email.
- SJ further suggested that we should communicate more often on a 'need to know' basis in order to reduce the sometimes overwhelming email traffic. Replying to 'all' or copying to all is also something that should be avoided unless it is necessary.
- AM suggested a 'document folder' idea. He would create a folder titled 'website'.
- AM suggested that Luke at RVA may be prepared to handle security upgrades in an emergency as we operate the same system as RVA.
- AM offered to train John Swap so that he could maintain the membership records and show RK how to administer core Google functions.
- AM would also consider other vulnerabilities and report these back to trustees.

5. Nominating additional trustees

This was discussed and decided as part of the previous item.

6. Approval of Development / Organisational Plan

(Our discussion included reference to points connected to the charity's project plan – agenda item 7.)

It was agreed that:

- RK would amend timescales in the organisational plan to reflect Covid-related slippage or other unanticipated delays. He would then file the plan as a 'shared document'.
- SJ would send SA marketing information for the sale of the Bexhill flag as a Christmas gift.

7. Project plans

See previous item.

8. Approval of provisional end of year account and arrangements for the annual trustees' report to members.

Trustees approved the provisional accounts for 2020/21. SJ agreed to mention members' 3 month Covid 'discount' as part of the commentary on the accounts. It was agreed that SJ would produce a draft trustees' report to members in good time for trustees' consideration and approval. This would then be circulated to members prior to the AGM.

9. Arrangements for the AGM

It was agreed that the AGM be held on 16th June as previously planned and that the meeting would be held Google Meet since this would enable more members to attend. SJ agreed to produce an agenda. This would include the election of trustees and committee members. The notice for the meeting would be sent to members at the end of May. It was agreed that RK would approach the Chair of the newly elected Town Council to be guest speaker on the theme of 'Vision for Bexhill'. The agenda would also include a reminder to members to make their nominations for the Civic Pride Award. This would include nominations for 'heritage' shop fronts. RK would arrange for the nomination form to be suitably amended and placed on the website.

10. Any Other Business

- **Cooden Moat**

Trustees remained concerned about the possibility of illegal excavation of Cooden Moat. It was agreed that RK would ask David Beales about representation at the public enquiry.

- **Town Hall redevelopment proposal**

RK had written to members of Rother District Council on behalf of the committee expressing concern about the possible demolition of two Edwardian houses adjacent to the Town Hall. SJ suggested that he would have expected committee members to have been given more time to consider the letter as part of an agreed strategy or that the matter had been discussed by trustees this evening. It was agreed to discuss next steps at the forthcoming committee meeting.

- **West Parade Clocktower**

SA would carry out a review of the clocktower's condition and report to the committee. SJ offered to assist. AM would obtain the key.

11. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would be held on 25th October

12. Development planning

Trustees worked through a project development plan for the next two years having agreed that the process would enable members to better understand the charity's priorities and help the charity guard against over-commitment.

Project	Charity aims to which the project relates	Start date	Finish date	Working hours needed	Project leader	Estimated cost from BH funds (without grants or sponsorship)
Bandstand	1 and 2	Sept 20	Sept. 21	1500	SA/SJ	
Sainsbury's mural	1 and 2	June 21	TBA	100	SJ	£500
Flag	1 and 2	March 21	Nov 21	30	SA	TBA
Norman's Bay kiosk	1 and 2	Aug 21		Unknown	SA/RK	£400
West Parade clocktower	1 and 2	Sept 21	Sept 22	Unknown	SA	
De La Warr Road Bus Shelter	1 and 2	Sept 21	Sept 22	100	SJ	£2000
RSL	1 and 2	Winter 21/22	2023 / 4	Unknown	RK	TBA

Those responsible for each project agreed to produce a project plan for trustees and the committee.

Notes:

- Bandstand** See item 4 of the agenda.
- Sainsbury's Mural** SJ would contact Sainsbury's management again in June for permission. Cleaning and restoration costs would be minimal.
- Flag** SA had found a possible local manufacturer and would approach her to confirm the flag size for a quotation.
- Kiosk** SA would help to assess the condition of the kiosk and the work required. One option would be to dismantle the kiosk and transport it to the workshop for renovation during the winter of 21/22.
- Clocktower** Re-assess condition and work required in Sept. 2021. (Likely to include electrical work, cleaning and timber renovation.) Undertake most internal works during winter 21/22. Paint externally, as necessary, in summer 22 subject to RDC consents and with reference to the building's original design.
- Bus shelter** Commission interpretation board. Commission external contractors to repair roof and roof timbers. Volunteers to repair bench, reinstate glazing and paint internally and externally.
- RSL** Awareness raising underway. Support enlisted. Working group formed. Trinity House supportive. Moral support from RDC. Scoping exercise needed on costs, logistics and the sustainable operation of the attraction.

AOB

- East Parade Interpretation Board**
 It was agreed to go ahead with a sole sponsor providing £250. The remaining cost (£500) would be funded by the charity.
 It was agreed to include the sponsor's logo and the maxim 'Aldershaws handmade tiles of Battle (as used on this shelter)' SJ would liaise with the funder, AM would prepare an adjusted design.
- Town Forum**

RK informed trustees that he had accepted an invitation to conduct an online interview on Bexhill Heritage's progress for the Town Forum.

- **Calendar to support Bexhill Heritage**

RK informed trustees that Margaret Hales had kindly agreed to donate the proceeds of her 2022 calendar to Bexhill Heritage. She would produce a draft for the committee's approval. SJ asked that consideration be given for purchasers to make a Gift Aid declaration. RK would reply to Margaret telling her of the trustees' agreement in principle.

- **King Offa's charter to Bexhill, 1250-year anniversary**

SA advised the trustees that he was seeking to become involved in the 1250-year anniversary of the granting of a charter to Bexhill by King Offa. SA's idea was to direct a play and he was seeking a programme from the 1200-year anniversary.