

Minutes of Berwick St James Village Meeting
Monday 9th January 2023 at 19:00hrs

In attendance: Christian Lange – Chairman
Sarah Humphreys – Co-Chair
Bill Hiscocks - Treasurer
Hayley Burrey - Secretary

Total attendees: 35 people

Apologies received and read out: Christine McConnell, Martin Gairdner, Rosie Gairdner, Tim Upwood and Pauline Stephenson.

Summary of agenda discussions, actions and decisions agreed:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chairman (Christian Lange) opened the meeting at 19:00hrs and welcomed everybody in attendance to the meeting and wished all a Happy New Year.

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Chairman (Christian Lange) said that the minutes have been on the website for a few weeks and asked if all were agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed by Nicky Street and Seconded by Neil MacDougall. All in favour and no objections.

2. Reading Room Update

- Nicky Street provided a brief update and made mention that the re- thatching has almost finished and that finances will be disclosed at next meeting – as scaffolding was not included within the quote.
- There will be another Tea, Cake and Chat this Wednesday 11th February from 2:30pm – 4:30pm.
- The Art Talks will be starting again, thanks very much to Brian Armstrong with dates to be fixed and Brian will circulate them around.
- Chairman (Christian Lange) referred to the previous Tea, Cake and Chat had gone really well and Nicky mentioned that Anne Hughes had brought along the embroidery from the church to it for all to see.
- Co-Chair (Sarah Humphreys) mentioned that the Christmas Raffle in the Reading Room, was successful and raised a fair amount of money, which many concurred with.

3. Berwick Farm Shop

Chairman (Christian Lange) stated how wonderful it was to see so many people attend the BBQ at the Village Farm Shop to thank Marilyn and wish her well for the future.

Christian then introduced Sam Shipley-Baker, who is now taking over the Farm Shop and Sam kindly gave a talk on her plans.

Sam thanked all for making her feel so welcome and then outlined the following:

- Sam is taking over on February 1st and will continue with the Farm Shop as it is – with meat, fresh vegetables, and homemade sausage rolls etc.
- Planning to open up the barn and re-introduce a café with some light lunches and will also be selling produce from the café too.
- Would like to introduce a coffee and chat, so people can get together and play games of scrabble and dominoes etc.
- In addition Sam would like to introduce a re-fill facility for loose food, including dried fruit, pasta, nuts etc. Enabling people to buy exactly the amount needed, reducing food waste, the need for packaging and also saving money. Sam will also be providing a re-fill on cleaning products too and will have the reusable bottles to sell.
- Sam is keen to source locally.

Sam invited questions. Nicky Street asked would she be providing loose dog food? Sam agreed to look into this and said she is always happy for new ideas. Treasurer (Bill Hiscocks) asked what hours the shop will be opening.? Sam confirmed Tuesdays to Sundays 9am – 4pm and 9am -6pm on Thursdays.

Neil MacDougall said that he would put all the hours on the village website and Sam confirmed that she will be all over social media to promote the shop. Bill Hiscocks suggested advertising in the Parish Magazine and will happily provide details of the person to contact. Gill Brasher asked if Sam was the butcher and where would the meat be coming from? Sam confirmed that she will be sourcing the meat from a local butcher.

4. Jubilee Memorial Gardens

Chairman (Christian Lange) provided a review of our historic discussions/ ideas for a Memorial Garden and explained that a recent meeting had taken place in the church, which we would now discuss and put to a vote.

- A slide was shown with the ariel view of where the gardens are behind the church.
- The aim is to have a natural area, providing access to the river with new trees and a bench. A place where people can go and make the church more relevant.
- Anika Lange has put together an idea which was discussed at the church meeting, as it will form part of a national project to clean up the graveyard. Another slide was shown providing insight to a created pathway and new trees, to replace the overgrown brambles etc.
- To address any concerns to the ongoing maintenance, we have already voted and agreed on an additional £250 to the existing £500 already in place. Bill Hiscocks mentioned that we would have to go via PCC to the Church of England for permission to plant the trees.
- Olivia Marchant has kindly offered to buy the bench for the Memorial Garden in Tim's memory and Kate Glyn Owen has also kindly offered to buy a bench in memory of Anne.
- It has also been suggested that it be made family friendly and attractive to young people, with some people for and some against.

- Ian Gibb asked, what would that be? Christian explained that this could be a children’s garden or willow tunnel which would help engage more children to the church.
- Christian mentioned that as some people were not in favour, we were bringing it to the village meeting to establish if there is indeed an appetite to do this.
- If we are going ahead, we need to crack on – potentially beginning on the 11th and 18th of February with a working party.
- As the design isn’t finalised yet – we should get together a team of 4/5 people to design the layout. Gabriele Francis has offered to take the lead on this project.

A discussion then took place. Jackie Fisher commented that having seen the back of the church, she was horrified at all the brambles and thinks it is a great idea! Ian Gibb stated that it’s a great idea to open this up and make attractive for all to use and he fully endorses it. Bill Hiscocks said that he is in favour of something simple and natural and commented that Health & Safety issues would need to be considered with the children and the river. Bill also mentioned that due to the National Program of burial grounds due to take place – we would have to cut back the brambles and tidy up the tomb stones anyway. Neil MacDougall asked ‘how much money is allocated to getting it up and running’? Christian explained that at the moment none, however, apart from labour and the trees to buy – there isn’t really any expense involved. Keith Lovett commented that the design may evolve naturally as the clearing work takes place. Stephen Bush said that he would favour a small and natural and pointed out that wherever the bench is positioned – it will need to be on a concrete base.

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Anne Hughes suggested that the clearing could be incorporated into when the photographs for the National Project are taken of the graveyard. Bill Hiscocks explained that the National Project is linked to Ancestry.com and we have no idea when it will be – possibly summer. Gabriele Francis commented that once the open area is completed it will be easy to maintain, with paths and a natural feel whilst having access to the river.

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Christian then asked for a show of hands for people willing to volunteer – many hands were raised. For the design group the volunteers were Bill Hiscocks, Anika Lange, Dominic Ridley and Gabriele Francis and they will now lead the Planning Group.

A vote was then taken to establish if the village would like to continue with this project. The vote was unanimous.

Janey Campbell-Johnston queried when the plan would be agreed and Christian confirmed that the Planning Group will make the decision, taking into consideration all comments. Neil MacDougall suggested that the Planning Group report back to the next village meeting before implementing. Christian explained that the work will already have been completed by then, as it needs to be started in February. The consensus was that The Planning Group should finalize the name of the garden.

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5. Village Precept

Treasurer (Bill Hiscocks) outlined that we needed to set the precept and that it has been set at £2000 for the last few years and recommended that it remains at that. A slide was shown with all the figures included which we need to vote on and agree before the 18th January 2023. Please see village web site for slide.

Bill Hiscocks proposed a vote, which was taken and the poll result was 100% in agreement.

6. Village Fete / Coronation Plans – 6th May 2023

Chairman (Christian Lange) provided an update on plans to celebrate the forthcoming Coronation on Saturday 6th May. A meeting took place on the 8th of November last year with a good turnout. The pros and cons were discussed and the following was agreed.

- The party will be on Saturday 6th May 2023
- It will take place in the garden of the Boot Inn, beginning at 4pm until late.
- Everyone is to bring their own food/ picnic etc.
- There will be BBQ with a small charge, to raise some money.
- There will be the village marquee with lighting.
- Entertainment for children – races etc to be planned.
- Entertainment for adults – music/dancing
- We will have a low-level auction to raise some money.
- Afternoon teas will be provided.
- Volunteers are Fiona Bailey and Gillian Bibby for the teas, Christian Lange for the entertainment, lighting etc, Keith Lovett for the BBQ, Carolyn MacDougall to liaise with others for children’s entertainment and Bill Hiscocks for the accounts.

Christian explained that it will be minimal organising and we will plan nearer the time – Christian then asked for any comments?

Janey Campbell-Johnston asked if we knew the time of the Coronation? Bill Hiscocks thinks it will take place at 11 am and will last 2 hours. Christian explained that this is why we have planned for a 4pm start.

7. Village Marquees

Neil MacDougall provided a quick update. He and Keith have been looking after village marquees for the last 8 years and the container for the last 3 years. They will now be retiring and passing the responsibility over to Derek Kelly, who has kindly volunteered to take it over with the maintenance and organisation. Neil commented that Derek will need some support with the maintenance and asked if anybody would like to volunteer to please contact him.

Chairman (Christian Lange) then made special thanks to Neil and Keith for everything that they have done over the years with the marquees and a round of appreciative applause followed.

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8. Planning Applications

- Chairman (Christian Lange) read out an update from Kate Glyn-Owen regarding Magna House. Following discussions with neighbours, they are now downsizing the initial plans. They are currently waiting for the architect to draw up the new plans and it has been established that the planned changes will only impact on immediate next-door neighbours. Any queries, please contact Kate Glyn-Owen.
- Planning Application for Rotten Furlong. Greville Bibby provided a presentation with slides with the plans to change the current garage at Rotten Furlong into a 2-bedroom bungalow.
- Greville thanked everybody for the opportunity to share the plans and provided a quick overview of what they were hoping to achieve within the next 6 -12 months.
- Chairman (Christian Lange) then explained the process for Wiltshire Council and that we would discuss now. A discussion took place and Greville kindly answered various questions regarding the dwelling and the covenant.
- Christian then asked for a feel for village support by the raising of hands, for him to reply to the council. There was overwhelming support and a great show of hands (with three abstentions – and no objections)
- For any additional information please contact Greville Bibby. There will be an update at the next village meeting.

9. Any other business

- Alice Ridley raised the question of access of the walk to Winterbourne Stoke and have we ever looked at moving the path back?
- Christian explained that it had been previously rejected, although still worth exploring. Neil MacDougall explained that he had previously contested it with the Druids Estate Manager 'John Elliot' and the answer was still no.
- A discussion took place, regarding the right of way and the consensus was that we should drive this 'really' hard, pushing on the road safety, providing the data on speed from through traffic etc. It was agreed we would try again.
- Alice Ridley said she was very happy to take this on as 'a fight on behalf of the village' and will liaise back with Christian when any formal letter is needed.
- Gabriele Francis raised the question of the safety of the stones on the road by the campsite.
- Keith Lovett mentioned that he thought they had already been told to move them.
- Stephen Bush mentioned that he heard the Parish Steward had already instructed the stones removal.
- Bill Hiscocks suggested that we take photographs.
- It was then agreed that Christian would write a letter to the Council and we would also submit supporting photographs.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Chairman (Christian Lange) and Co-Chair (Sarah Humphreys) stated that the next village meeting will be held in May 2023 and will be the AGM– with a date to be confirmed.

Christian reminded all that this was his and Sarah's last full meeting as chair and that Julian Glyn-Owen, has kindly stepped forward for the role. We will then go through the democratic process at the AGM, so anybody else interested should please give notice to Christian and Sarah.

11. **Conclusion**

Chairman (Christian Lange) then thanked everybody for their input and then the meeting closed at 20:23 hrs.

