

BADLESMERE LEES AND HALL COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 16 January 2023

Those present: Ian Earl (Chair), Rick Blackman (Treasurer), Steve Burt, Gareth Fulton, Fred Gregory, Charlie Kirby, Chris Moore, Ben Pullen, Tom Sisley. Also Jane Austin (for item #8).

Apologies for absence: Sue Earl, Dave Austin, Katie Potter.

This was the first ordinary meeting since August 2022 (the November meeting having been cancelled). It was a long meeting in a cold hall, but with many decisions and actions agreed. Item #8 of the agenda was discussed at the start of the meeting so JA did not have to wait around.

1 Minutes of the August meeting and the October extraordinary meeting

1.1 The minutes were passed, and will be posted on the village website.

2 Matters arising (excluding those to be discussed in later agenda items)

- 2.1 Aug 2.2. It was not possible to combine the digging of a hole for the village sign and the erecting of posts on the northern layby.
- 2.2 Aug 2.3. Wilding Project – no action to date. GF and SE assigned to progress this.
- 2.3 Aug 2.4. IE has yet to provide his 'do list' to SB, and nor complete the construction of two 'broom cupboards' (see Aug 4.1) – IE to action.
- 2.4 Aug 2.5. Difficulties in registering DA instead of IE with The Circuit meant the hand over was not formally achieved until Jan 2023. DA is now the guardian of the Badlesmere defibrillator. The pads and batteries were recently changed, the Parish Council paying.
- 2.5 Aug 2.6, 2.8. No action has been taken yet on a system for circulating bookings, nor on the acquisition of an electronic key safe. On hold, as low priority.
- 2.6 Aug 2.9. The bonfire will not now be lit until April in case hedgehogs are hibernating within. IE will circulate proposed dates for a Spring Clean-up of the lees.
- 2.7 Aug 2.10. The application to register the lees as a Village Green requires finalising before sending off – IE and CM to meet, and action.
- 2.8 Aug 5.2. A full fire safety risk assessment is still outstanding – IE to action.
- 2.9 Aug 5.3. An EIC (Electrical Installation Condition) Report was commissioned and carried out on 22 September. No items where 'immediate remedial action urgently is required' were listed, however, three potentially dangerous items requiring urgent attention and six recommendations were included. IE requested the electrician return as soon as possible, and will chase – IE
- 2.10 Aug 5.3. IE and SE carried out the PAT testing of all portable appliances and extension leads, including those of the EK0GG, stored and used in the hall, on 22 October, using Tele Products PAT-IT equipment supplied by Dorabridge Ltd (via SB). All work complied with current good practice. Items failing were discarded (all from EK0GG). A record sheet has been stored electronically in the Village Hall database.

- 2.11 Aug 5.4. The inspection of the hall for the presence of asbestos has yet to be arranged – SB/CM to action.
- 2.12 The roles for the day of the 10k Run, held on 4 September, were fulfilled (Aug 8.2) and the immediate tasks (Aug 8.3) were completed in time.
- 2.13 Aug 8.4. Repairs to the North Track were carried out on Saturday 27 August, without the use of a wacker plate.
- 2.14 Aug 9.3. IE has yet to contact Lees Court Estate regarding the posts along the A251 – IE.
- 2.15 Aug 9.4. IE has still to investigate ownership and possible replacement of the footpaths map near the village hall – IE.
- 2.16 Aug 9.5. The village hall received an enquiry from a film company for the urgent use of the hall as a film location for 9-10 days in October. Despite a positive response, the hiring did not materialise (and we missed out on the £10,000 fee that was on offer).
- 2.17 Oct 1.2. In her absence IE provided sheets from SE explaining her proposal that a Red Oak, *Quercus rubra*, be planted where the tree that came down in a storm some years ago stood – in the avenue that parallels the A251 and opposite Falcon Farm. The rest of the avenue already contains different types of oak – Turkey, Sessile, and ordinary. A mature Red Oak is a magnificent tree with a broad lollipop shape, and so would match the existing trees in due course. It has dark green lobed leaves which turn attractive shades of red, orange, yellow and brown before falling in autumn. It is capable of adapting to most conditions and is slightly slower growing on clay with chalk soils. It has good disease resistance. Originally native to the East coast of America, it was introduced to England in the 1720s and is widely found in parkland and estates, especially in Kent and Sussex. A suitable source has been found. The committee agreed to the purchase of a standard tree, 2.5-3.5m tall, trunk 6-8cm girth, as soon as possible as this is the best time to plant – SE to purchase.

3 Accounts

- 3.1 Balances in the bank accounts on 31 December were as follows:-
- | | | | | |
|------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| BPH | current account | £4161.94, | reserve account | £26868.92 |
| BLPC | current account | £13557.06, | reserve account | £2267.62 |
- 3.3 Notes concerning the values above:
- £1500 was transferred from the BPH to the BLPC in November (donation to the village sign funds, see May minutes 3.5);
 - the invoice from CS Willett (£3480.00) for the village sign though paid online in December has appeared in January's transactions;
 - the December prizes from the 100 Club did not appear in the bank's transactions for 2022 (£262.50);
 - various other small transactions, both debits and credits, reaching the bank accounts in 2023 will be attributed to 2022;
 - the true balances, subject to independent confirmation, will most likely be for the current accounts: £4131.94 for the BPH, and £9814.56 for the BLPC.
- 3.4 The committee is very grateful to Yoshi Euridge for independently checking the accounts for 2022.

3.5 The 100 Club. A total of 79 tickets were sold in 2022, bringing total sales to £1185.00. The prizes therefore totalled £592.50. These were eleven monthly prizes of £30.00, with December's being £150.00, £75.00 and £37.50. After paying expenses of £45.82, the balance to the BLPC was £546.68. These figures will be reported to Swale BC as required by the Small Society Lotteries Licence the committee holds.

The winners this year were:-

Jan-Nov draws: Dave Austin, Katie Potter, Inigo Pullen, Marcus Whately, Mark Monks, Chris Moore, Linda Kirby, Charlie Payne, Fred Gregory, Rufus Pullen, Andrew Gregory; Dec 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes: Phil Scutt, Phil Thompson, Lisa Burton.

IE and RB were declared by the committee as the two designated people for the purposes of the Lottery Licence, specifically for the signing of the annual Return Form. Lorraine Blackman is again willing to organise the selling of tickets, and intends to be mailing/delivering them this week.

3.6 Badlesmere 10k Run 2022. The final profit of this past year's run is about £1132, subject to the selling of the remaining unused food items currently still in the freezer. 119 runners took part, down on what was expected but mirroring the lower turn out seen at many outdoor events since the end of the Pandemic. Too many refreshments were bought causing a loss in this department. However, the event was well received, as usual, by those who took part, with numerous positive comments being heard. Photos, some placed on the village website, illustrate this admirably.

4 Start of Year Decisions

4.1 Dates of meetings for 2023: Third Monday in April, July and October, and/or other dates as necessary.

4.2 The contractor for the mowing of the leas in 2022 will be invited to mow in 2023.

5 Governance

5.1 In November CM took part in an online session run by Rural Sussex (sister organisation to ACRK) that outlined the pros and cons of becoming a CIO (charitable incorporated organisation). At present we are an unincorporated charitable trust. Becoming incorporated would limit the liability of the trustees, and allow us to pursue more and bigger grants, employ people, and enter into commercial contracts, but in turn would require us to be more exact in how we spend our income, our accounts needing to be formally audited (at considerable cost in comparison to our normal turnover). As recommended by the Halls Adviser from Rural Kent in 2015, the committee chose not to go down the route of becoming incorporated for the time being. RB pointed out that he had added trustee liability to our insurance cover this year. IE raised the issue that we are without custodian trustees (two will be necessary when a new lease is negotiated in 2027) and will seek suitable candidates.

6 Village Sign

6.1 The hole for the village sign was dug on 10 November with the base and concrete also added. The post was erected on 3 December in time for the sign itself which finally arrived on 14 December. Several members of the committee were able to be present when the sign was affixed to the top of the post by the manufacturers, and stood back to admire the result, tinged with a sense of relief that it had at last happened.

- 6.2 A plaque celebrating the sign's design and construction has been ordered by CM. CK will attach it just before the 'unveiling', see 6.5 below. Lees Court Estate are to be contacted to see how they would like to contribute towards the sign, knowing they wish to as they did for Sheldwich's – IE.
- 6.3 The mound of earth at the base of the post, excavated soil from the digging of the hole, is to be moved away with the aim of filling nearby dips. SB to ask Andrew, who dug the hole, if he could do this.
- 6.4 Daffodil bulbs are to be bought and planted around the sign – IE/SE.
- 6.5 The sign cannot exactly be unveiled in the literal sense; it has been standing in all its glory since December, getting very positive comments especially when viewed against a clear blue winter's sky. However, a celebration of its erection is deemed appropriate. Various occasions were considered with the final decision as follows: to have a ceremony at the sign, in May on the weekend of the forthcoming coronation, attendees retiring to the Red Lion afterwards where a tab will be put behind the bar. The Sunday (7 May) was chosen, but IE is to enquire at the pub as to their preference (in case it causes problems with their dining schedules) pointing out that those attending are likely to stay in the pub garden. £250 will be put behind the bar, and added to if this is not sufficient for all to have at least one drink of their choice.

7 Badlesmere 10k Run 2023

- 7.1 The date for the 2023 10k Run has been set as 10 September. IE to agree this with the Lees Court Estate and Phil Scutt. SB and RB to continue as the main organisers. CM will take over from IE as Chief Marshal, and will assist with the publicity especially in respect of social media. CK offered to help SB and RB/LB with the distribution of flyers at local Fun Runs and other events. New medals will be ordered, with a change of design, and enough for further run(s). The route will be the same as on previous occasions although a clockwise route has been proposed to give it a change. The horrible last hill is unfortunately unavoidable. Increasing the numbers partaking is the challenge, all down to the success or otherwise of the publicity.

8 Mediaeval Fayre 2024

- 8.1 Jane Austen, supported by IE, SE and CM, is keen that Badlesmere Lees hosts another Mediaeval Fayre. JA was invited to the meeting to outline her proposals and seek support from the full committee. It was decided:
 - a) that the proposed date be Saturday 25 May 2024 (to give more time to search for and book re-enactors, band, etc., to determine possible costs, and seek the involvement of others, such as stall holders both selling and informative);
 - b) to have the philosophy of spending more (than in previous years) to make a better show, thus laying down the foundation for a greater footfall in the future (i.e. accepting the possibility of little profit this time);
 - c) to go ahead only if a large group of people were to be involved in the organising;
 - d) to set a budget at the outset.
- 8.2 Initial actions would be:
 - a) to research the costs and availability of re-enactors – JA/IE;
 - b) to analyse past fayres at Badlesmere Lees to give a baseline for costs – IE;
 - c) to supply the costs of other performers/groups particularly those that entertain

children – CM.

The findings will be presented to the committee as soon as possible.

9 Hall Maintenance, Projects and Safety

- 9.1 Little has been done on the tasks and projects already identified, though emergency repairs have been dealt with, such as the burst pipe in the kitchen during the very cold spell before Christmas.
- 9.2 With view to spending the funds we now have (some of which have a limited shelf life) an order of priority of tasks yet to be tackled, both (big) maintenance jobs and projects, was determined:
- a) to repair the leaking roof (ridge tiles give insufficient overlap, and problem around the central vent/chimney);
 - b) to repair where the floor joins the southwest wall;
 - c) to renovate the floor in the main hall;
 - d) to construct a ramp and lay an entrance drive (from the track);
 - e) to landscape the area at the rear of the hall and reinstate the soakaway;
 - f) to refurbish the toilets (to give four unisex cubicles in whatever space is needed without extending the building);
 - g) to create a storage facility, even if temporary in nature, to increase the current amount of storage and offset any loss caused by the refurbishment of the toilets;
 - h) to improve the lighting in the main hall.

Work to be organised and coordinated by SB and CM, starting with finding a jobbing builder(s) to quote for some of the jobs listed above. Some approximate costs were considered in the committee's deliberations in order to ensure all would be feasible.

10 Track Repairs

- 10.1 The North Track has suffered more than usual (presumably from the extra rain falling after a very dry summer) and is in a poor state, again. Tarmacking was considered too expensive an option, even if it would be allowed. Ploughing up the current surface and re-grading with a distinctive gradient or camber before rolling is the preferred option, but was considered not possible until dryer weather prevails. The immediate filling of the worst holes was agreed. BP to source 10 tonnes of type 1, the cost to be split seven ways, i.e. between the residents and the village hall. All who can help with the work should, the day(s) to be arranged once the type 1 has been ordered. The hiring of specialist equipment will also be considered.
- 10.2 The South Track is in a reasonable condition and the stock of road planings enough for the immediate future.

11 AOB

- 11.1 IE and RB have received notification that ACRK (Action with Communities in Rural Kent), a charity that has offered help and advice to rural communities, and village halls in particular, and known universally as 'Rural Kent', is being wound up. All useful documents and advice sheets will be downloaded from their website before it disappears in February – IE.
- 11.2 Sue Higgs, a member of Selling church, visited to learn about our heating system.

11.3 SE, our secretary, is to be congratulated on having qualified as a Community First Responder with the South East Coast Ambulance Service.

11.4 A Wine & Wisdom evening is tentatively planned for the end of November – FG.

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, 17 April 2023, in the village hall at 7.30 pm.