

BADLESMERE LEES AND HALL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 18 March 2025

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

1 Apologies received from: Dave Austin, Rick Blackman, Charlie Kirby.

2 Approval of minutes

2.1 The minutes of the January meeting were approved.

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

- 3.1 (3.1) Footpaths cabinet: The proposed changes to the map have been incorporated into its design. The Ramblers' Association will now print and install. The committee has offered to assist, if necessary.
- 3.2 (3.2) Northern layby post(s): With concern as to the location of the water main along the A251, discussion reverted to the idea of placing a tractor tyre in the layby, filling it with soil and planting flowers in it. BP to place the tyre in the layby.
- 3.3 (3.3) Speed calming signage on the north track: project on hold.
- 3.4 (3.4) Posts (South Track). CK has moved some of the metal posts (so that they are near the trees), and sourced wooden posts, placing these in the open stretches .
- 3.5 (10.1) CK has been busy clearing brambles and scrub in the copse. The Spring Clean-Up of the Lees is now scheduled for Saturday, 29 March, all volunteers to meet up at 09.30. BP to supply vehicle and trailer; SB to send out reminders.
- 3.6 (10.1) Mowing of the Lees will be required soon. IE to arrange. GF said that FiPL [Farming in Protected Landscapes] funding might be available to improve the natural features of the Lees. GF to investigate. Numerous ideas were mentioned including dew ponds, and bat boxes. It was agreed that the whole of the Lees will be cut at the first mowing of the year, to give an initial 'blank canvas' for future choices.

4 Accounts

- 4.1 A summary of the 2024 accounts and the bank reconciliations were briefly discussed. The accounts and all relevant documents are now with Yoshi Euridge for checking.
- 4.2 The current balances in the four accounts as on 18 Mar 2025, were:
BPH: current = £2 524.35, reserve = £22 211.88;
BLPC: current = £1 940.55, reserve = £1 949.20.
The major differences in the figures from the last meeting were due to transfers to/from the current and reserve accounts (so that the current accounts start the year with £3000 (BPH) and £1500 (BLPC) as per Reserves Policy – Policy to be reviewed at the next meeting), and the transfer of the Optivo Community grant received in June 2023 from the BLPC account to the BPH accounts since the grant was for Hall works.
- 4.3 Flyers for the 100 Club have been sent out (by Lorraine Blackman), and membership is slowly building.

5 Lees: North Track

- 5.1 Work was again carried out on the North Track in February, organised by GF. The costs were split equally between the residents, of which the Village Hall counts as one and paid its contribution on 1 Mar. After much discussion it was agreed that the cost of future repairs should continue to be divided between the residents (including the Village Hall) with the Village Hall also contributing to the purchase of materials up to a maximum of £250 in any one year. This figure will be reviewed annually.
- 5.2 CM will approach Southern Housing again to seek a contribution to track maintenance since residents of the Leavemere Bungalows also use the track for access but are not included in the division of costs described above.
- 5.3 CM will contact the Estate to seek clarification on their contribution to the maintenance of both tracks and regarding the returned 'Leavemere pond'.
- 5.4 The hippo-bag of 20mm shingle, currently on the verge opposite Leavemere will be towed across the Lees until next to the Village Hall (BP, at the Spring Clean-Up).
- 5.5 Concern was expressed that the water hydrant manhole next to the triangle has disappeared under type 1 material that has migrated westwards. IE to investigate.

6 Hall Refurbishment Works and the Car Park Extension

- 6.1 CM has received a quote for the toilets refurbishment that matched SB's '4 plus 1' design, which amounted to £38 000. Although this did include moving (or removing) the stage and sanding the floor, it is far more than we can afford. SB's design would also mean the loss of part of the main hall (in the right hand corner) to the toilets complex, which, many thought, should be avoided if at all possible.
- 6.2 IE has come up with two alternative designs that should be considerably cheaper and possibly viable (and were circulated with the agenda). No loss of the hall space was required although a corner of the stage would have to be sacrificed. Three 'ordinary' toilets and one disabled (meeting Doc M regulations) were fitted in the current toilet zone, with access to a central lobby from the main hall in the top right corner. The existing 'ladies' and 'gents' toilets would be hardly changed, but in version 2 the current 'unisex' arrangement would revert to the ladies' and gents' arrangement of old. Although no urinals would exist in either version (they have been out of use since the Covid pandemic) the overall number of cubicles would increase from three to four. It is important to note that the fire exit remains in its current position, which will also help to reduce costs. Version 2 was accepted and CM will seek new quotes for the new proposals.
- 6.3 SE sought reassurance that the floors in the new toilets would be upgraded to make cleaning easier, and IE pointed out that the ceiling will also need of attention.
- 6.4 The location of doors and their direction of opening will need to be checked against appropriate regulations and amendments made if required.
- 6.5 With access from the main hall via the current door to the toilets lobby, the storage area will become 2 m wide (and 2.33 m long) unless the location of the entrance door to the toilets has to change (see 6.4).
- 6.6 There is one major challenge (whichever design, or version, is followed), that of the plumbing in of the waste pipe from the disabled toilet to the existing waste drainage system. SB will ask a contact for his opinion.

- 6.7 There is also concern that a new power supply to the toilets zone may be required, and that this may prove difficult, or impossible, with the current distribution board. IE to investigate.
- 6.8 Car Park Extension. Two quotes have been received, at £8500 and £3800. The former relates to an extensive design and the latter to one much simplified. In light of the need to keep the car park 'temporary' like the track, it was agreed that only levelling of the ground and the laying of type 1 material is necessary. It was agreed that no funding could be allocated until the hall (toilets, floor and lighting) refurbishment had been completed, and sufficient reserves remain.

7 Community Events

- 7.1 VE Day 80 (8 May): beacon to be lit (CK to be asked to fill as usual), 1940s music to be played (DA to be asked to arrange, in addition to a PA system), CM to inform the village (as a BYO food and refreshments event).

8/9 Governance / Safety and Crime

- 8/9.1 Nothing to report.

10 Date of next meeting

- 10.1 Tuesday, 13 May, to coincide with the AGM. The AGM will start at 6.30 pm.

11 AOB

- 11.1 Hall maintenance update: Hirers EKOGG reported in February that damage by water to some of their layouts, including electronic components, had occurred. Inspection gave condensation as the likeliest cause however to exclude fully the possibility that it was rainwater, IE used expanding foam between the corrugated sheets of the roof wherever ingress seemed at all possible. To continue to allow airflow but prevent access by little creatures rodent mesh was added under the roof in the far corner. Since the roof/ceiling of the store is not insulated, any moisture in the air is likely to condense when the sheets are cold. With tea-making a notable feature of EKOGG sessions and no extractor fan in the kitchen, the store is likely to contain moisture-laden air which will get sealed in when they leave. IE has recommended that they keep the store room door shut as much as possible (once kettles are in action) and have the kitchen windows open. EKOGG, for their part, have covered the vulnerable layouts with plastic and are considering insulating the ceiling.
- 11.2 One of the fluorescent lights in the kitchen failed in February, and was replaced with the LED equivalent. It was decided to replace the other at the same time.
- 11.3 BP informed the committee that Allen and Margaret Skinner (of The Old Rectory Orchard) would be celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary on 19 Mar. The committee agreed to send flowers (CM) and a card (to be delivered by SE).
- 11.4 Badlesmere Parish Hall is been successfully registered as an official NHS Meeting Place, in that our existence has been recognised by them and could be of use to them being approximately midway between Ashford and Faversham/Whitstable.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 13th May, after the AGM.