

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THE BADLESMERE LEES AND HALL COMMITTEE

6.30 pm, Tuesday, 27th May 2025

Committee members present: Chris Moore (Chair), Sue Earl (Secretary), Rick Blackman (Treasurer), Dave Austin, Steve Burt, Ian Earl, Gareth Fulton.

Apologies for absence: Fred Gregory, Charlie Kirby, Ben Pullen, Tom Sisley.

There were no members of the public present.

1 & 2 Welcome and Chairman's report

CM issued printed copies of his Chairman's Report to those present, then read through it. The Report will be posted on the website in addition to these minutes and should be considered as part of these minutes.

3 Financial Statement

The treasurer, RB, gave out copies of the summary of the accounts and the bank reconciliations, pointing out they are for the financial year to 31 December 2023. He explained that apart from the obvious major expenditures made in connection to the Hall renovations (and so transfers from the reserve to the current account), the BPH accounts for 2024 were very similar to those of 2023. He also pointed out how despite the fund-raising events outgoings exceeded income for the BLPC accounts by about £500. In the future there will be no expenditure from the BLPC on the maintenance of the tracks. However, income from the 100 Club no longer meets the cost of mowing the Lees, and this is a matter of concern for the committee.

The summary of the accounts will be posted to the website and should be considered as part of these minutes.

4 Open discussion

Discussions revolved around the financial viability of the BPH (the Village Hall) and the BLPC (the Badlesmere Lees Preservation Committee).

Once the 'covid' grants and other grants are spent the income/expenditure of the Hall and the Lees will revert to something like pre-covid days. The fixed costs of the Village Hall were examined, and it was noticed that the electricity and water bills were high in the 2024 accounts. The former is large because the direct debit amounts had fluctuated without matching the actual usage – this will be self-rectifying in time. The high water bill had resulted from the need to water the new turf laid in 2024.

There are already plans to wild some of the Lees. It was agreed that wilding most of the Lees, while creating paths through the envisaged natural vegetation to allow dog-walkers and horse-riders to continue to use the Lees unhindered, would reduce, or perhaps eliminate, the cost of mowing which is by far the biggest outlay made each year currently.

There was discussion on the merits of attempting to purchase the Lees from the Sondes Estate, though it was realised that this could only happen when the Committee is a registered charity. (The committee has already submitted an application to the Charity Commission to become a CIO – a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.)

5 Election of the Committee

The members of the Committee were unanimously re-elected.

6 AOB

None.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.