

Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre

Minutes of the Trustees' meeting on Monday 9th January 2012 in the Pavilion lounge

The meeting opened at 7.30pm with Julia Walker in the Chair.

Present:

Julia Walker (Chairperson & PC) David Turner (management committee Hon member & Methodist Church),
Barbara Merritt (Treasurer), Gladys Alexander (management committee member and Day Club),
Jim Fieldsend (Wick'k Players), Jackie Medley (Badminton Group),
Snowy Addison (Snooker Club), Dorothy Anderson (History Soc.)
Stan Bates (Bowls Club) Jackie Fieldsend (WI & Neighbourhood Watch),
Alan Lightley (Carpet Bowls), Michael Medcalf (Horticultural Soc. & URC Church),
Steve Taylor (Secretary & Booking Manager).

Apologies received:

Jim Fied (Tennis Club)

Minutes of the previous meetings:

The Minutes of the Trustee meeting held Monday 5th September 2011, which were distributed soon after that meeting, were approved without further review as there were no matters arising, and were signed by the Chairman.

Management committee reports

Window blinds: Installation is planned for the 3rd week in January. Cost £823+VAT.
Oil tank protection: The contractors have visited the site to plan the approved work to build a protective wall at a quoted cost of £780.
Tree lopping: Due to proceed alongside the Club Room at a quoted cost of £360
Stage clearup: Progress made. Further clearance will be done as management time allows.
Bar area finishing: It appears that Aran Services are busy and the work may need to be completed by MSC voluntary labour. Referred to the management committee to progress.
Storeroom reorganisation: More work to do to accommodate MSC administration materials.
Main Hall pelmet: This is the next stage of the hall refurbishment. No timetable at present.
Main Hall refurbishment: The deep clean and decoration will require more voluntary effort if it is not to cause disruption of the usual weekday hirings.
Stage front & screening; No progress to report.

Chairperson's Report

Julia welcomed everyone to the first meeting of what promises to be another busy year, and presented a comprehensive report to the meeting. A written copy is attached to the file copy of these Minutes. The topics covered included:

- A view on the successes of the past year and the value of the forthcoming 2012 upgrade work.
- A summary of the window blinds progress.
- Hirers' reaction to the radiant heating.
- Possible developments regarding the oil tank protection and concerns over the tank's vulnerability.
- The under-stage ongoing clearing and re-organisation, including the proper storing of the MSC archives, and the safer storing of the ladder and tall steps..
- The matter of the electronic organ originally purchased by the Community Association, but now never used. In the ensuing discussion it was agreed that the organ should be disposed of, preferably by sale.
- The provision of the bar area lights which may now be installed by the MSC.
- A review of the work to be done to complete the Main Hall refurbishment.
- The kitchen upgrade.

Treasurer's Report

The MSC's financial assets are:

Barclays accounts	£31,653
HSBC	£1,011

Total...	£32,664

The Treasurer was thanked for the report which shows a healthy situation which can support the 2012 planned upgrade expenditure.

It was expected that the funds will be depleted somewhat by the forthcoming work in the Main Hall, but a healthy balance will still remain. Income from hire fees will be a major topic at the next meetings. The kitchen upgrade work will probably need grant aid support.

Secretary & Booking Manager's Report

There was a better response in October-November 2011 for the December-January hiring requirements than we had last year. Consequently the Christmas-New Year scheduling was better able to avoid conflicts of use, and time was allocated for the Main Hall maintenance work. The call for December 2012 - January 2013 bookings requests will be repeated in October/November 2012, with time set aside again for annual maintenance work.

There was a request that a guarantee be given that forthcoming upgrade work would not interfere with weekday hirings as had happened, it was claimed, on two occasions over the Christmas-New Year period. No guarantee could be given, but the assurance was given that, provided clubs co-operate with the management committee's requests for future hire requirements when problems of booking conflicts can be foreseen, as around the Christmas period, every effort would be made to minimise any disruption to the usual users of the hall.

Hire fees forwarded to the Treasurer since the November AGM (NB. Not since the 5th September meeting, because the fees forwarded between 5th September 2011 and the AGM have been previously reported), amount to **£1,628**. **£963** is 'in hand' and due to be forwarded within the next few days. Since the AGM, **£30** has been raised from the sale of radiant heating tokens. Invoicing is up to date and, apart from one small sum, all invoices have been settled on time.

The use of the Main Hall for childrens' parties increased during 2011. This is an interesting use of the premises and is to be promoted during 2012, with the locally available indoor bouncy castle as a new attraction. Plans for 2012 hiring promotion include a better advert within the pages of the Scene. Thanks are to be recorded to Jo Mitchell for her help and co-operation in promoting hirers' activities within the Scene. This has helped encourage some repeat hirings during 2012.

Email addresses for the management committee, based on the web site Wickhambrook.org, are being organised with the help of Maria Sumner. This will avoid the use in future of personal email addresses.

Comments, some quite strong, have been directed towards the Booking Manager about hire fees. The problem is mainly due to the imbalance which has arisen over recent years, between a) the frequent, mainly weekly, hirers' charges which have been reviewed every year, and b) the occasional, or annually, set hire fees which have not been reviewed for several years. The latest example of a problem arising from this imbalance is being experienced by the Horticultural Society, which is unsure about the fee it will be charged for a flower show during this summer. This being the final item to report, the Booking Manager asked the Chair if the meeting could now address the fee to be charged to the Hort'l Soc. This was agreed.

Horticultural Society flower show fee

It was explained that the Horticultural Society would need the use of the hall during a Friday afternoon and during the next day (Saturday) from 9am to 6pm.

[Booking Manager's note: In an email on Tuesday 10th January, the Horticultural Society confirmed the Flower Show dates and times to be Friday 13th July from 3pm and Saturday 14th July from 8am to 6pm. That is a total of (around) 12 hours which, at an hourly rate would be £120, or as a weekend rate £100]

The hire fee for 2011 had been set on a one-off basis at £45. This figure followed several fee changes in previous years ranging between zero and £75. It was also noted that a Friday occupation of the hall would preclude a £40 hiring by Mis-Fits. The Booking Manager explained that he would refrain from voting on any proposed fee as he was often under pressure from hirers to allow 'waivers' or 'special rates' and therefore needed to be independent from any fee-setting role. On a proposal from David Turner, seconded by Dorothy Anderson, the fee for 2012 was set at £70 by a majority vote of 11 to 1 abstention by the Horticultural Soc representative. Anticipating the fee-setting exercise normally undertaken around March – April, the Booking Manager stated that a detailed listing of all recent hire fees would follow this meeting's Minutes, so that the Trustees could have a full and well-informed discussions in March and/or May, and set appropriately balanced hire fees from 1st June 2012.

Trees

It has been noted that the flowering cherry tree near the Main Hall car park fire exit is too close to the exit door. It was agreed that the relocation of the tree should be undertaken, even if it means replacing the tree at a better location.

The condition of, and the problems with, the kerbside ash trees on MSC land adjacent to Cemetery Road were discussed. The trees causes annual blocking of the roof gullies and one, which blocks the view for vehicles leaving the car park, is a frequently noted hazard to vehicles. No decision was arrived at.

Items from the Parish Council

A Jubilee Commemorative tree is on offer to the village and a location for planting being sought. After considerable thought and discussion no suitable location on MSC land could be identified and the matter is to be referred back to the PC.

The Parish Council had invited the MSC to share in a proposed local tree inspection. It was agreed that this should be done. The secretary is to contact the PC to confirm this.

Sonia Upton's field gate. There has been peripheral involvement and co-operation by the MSC in the matter of the new gate to replace the one which was damaged by a falling tree. The topic requires no further MSC action.

A clothes bank is on offer for siting alongside the MSC car park. Unlike the daily use of the paper, bottle and tetra-pak banks, it was generally felt that a clothes bank would not be used frequently and would therefore be of little benefit. The matter is to be referred back to the PC and raised in the Scene for wider public reaction.

The heating in the Pavilion lounge has been criticised as being too noisy during PC meetings. The PC has enquired if wall-mounted heaters, similar to those now installed in the Main Hall, could be installed in the lounge. It is thought to be unlikely that they would be permitted due to the dimensions of the room, however enquiries about the practicality and cost of wall-mounted heaters are ongoing. This is to be conveyed to the PC.

Supporters Association

It is recorded for the Minutes that a list of CA volunteers is now on file, and that, on behalf of the MSC Trustees, Julia has sent appreciative seasonal cards to everyone on the list. Gladys was thanked for collecting the information and preparing the list.

Future projects

1. Footpaths. Problems and inadequacies with the footpaths around the MSC premises were discussed. The matter is to be dealt with by the management committee to ascertain practicalities and costs. It was suggested during the discussion that the car park kerbs could be painted white as a safety measure. This idea received general approval and is also passed to the management committee.
2. Pavilion toilets. The Booking Manager explained that the Pavilion toilets, which were originally provided for the football and cricket club changing facilities, were no longer suitable for the corporate training sessions and similar types of hirings which are increasingly being made for the lounge. The management committee was tasked with addressing this as a matter of urgency.
3. Kitchen upgrade. The ceiling is increasingly covered in mould. There are high level and largely inaccessible dust traps. The floor has not been repaired as required by an Environmental Health inspection several years ago. Some food preparation equipment is stored in the open. The hot water supply is far from adequate. The work surfaces are not well laid out. The cookers are in inconvenient positions for users of the bar area. Space is taken up by the broom cupboard. Would-be hirers are put off by its present condition. These and many other criticisms of the kitchen have been voiced by many people for many years. It was proposed and agreed to launch a kitchen upgrade project, for work during 2013, after full consultation with all kitchen users.

The meeting was informed that there had been some premature talk about a kitchen upgrade which had caused consternation and inevitably some antagonism among some users of the kitchen. This is unfortunate as ill-informed gossip, especially when presented as plans already laid without the relevant people having been consulted or involved, creates immediate negative reactions, and this undermines the enthusiasm of those few volunteers who are prepared to organise and shoulder the workload. For volunteers it is uncomfortable at best, and for some impossible, to work in an atmosphere of ill-informed rumours, suspicion and carping. If the management committee is to undertake this major project, with the willing co-operation of all kitchen users and with their constructive opinions given freely and taken into account, it is important that the subject is not contaminated beforehand, or the project even brought to an end, by mischievous speculation, by jealous sniping at the volunteers, or by negative and ill-informed gossip.

Oil Buying Consortium

The meeting was informed about the promotional information available regarding a local oil buying consortium which promises to make considerable savings for domestic users. Posters are being displayed on the MSC's external notice boards, and this will be an agenda item at the next Trustee meeting.

AOB

No AOB items were recorded for these Minutes.

Next meetings: Management committee: Monday 6th February 2010 Trustees: Monday 5th March 2012

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed

Date