

Minutes of St James Village Hall Committee Meeting

3rd April 2024

Present:

Caroline Rodbourne (CR): Chair

Lynda Bradley (LB):

David Jewson (DJ):

Ruth Jewson (RJ): Co-opted Bookings

Gina Banns (GB): Co-opted Minutes

Chris Bradley (CB): Co-opted Digital liaison and potential funding grants

Apologies: None

1. Minutes of the last meeting.

Accepted and signed by the Chair.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

- I. **Jane Bastow resignation** has been actioned.
- II. **Community WhatsApp** has been set up and is working well. At 3rd April, 21 members have joined – c. 25% of the 80 village residences. Agreed that all committee members will continue to promote joining to all contacts they make.
- III. **Committee and Bookings WhatsApp** groups also set up.
- IV. Following a review of **charges** made by local Village Halls, current St James Village Hall charges to remain unchanged for 2024.
- V. **Booking form** is working and is now online.
- VI. **Booking deposit** policy has been actioned and is working well.
- VII. **Bicycle stands** at the Village Hall have not yet been progressed.
- VIII. **Allotment** transfer misunderstanding has been resolved. Mandy has installed her chickens. John Andrews wishes to retain his allotment at a cost of £25 P.A. It is to be confirmed to him that this excludes apple trees between allotments as these are retained by the Village Hall..
- IX. Confirmed that in March **planned work** was done - fence and gate were cleaned, some ivy removed and shed was painted with a first coat.
- X. Wood has been obtained for volunteers to **repair the shed**.
- XI. **Soffits and gable end** work has not started. Tenders to be requested from Crockford, Manning et al.

ACTION

LB

ALL

CR/DJ

CR

DJ

DJ

DJ/CR

NEW AGENDA ITEMS

3. Internet presence

CB updated the meeting on the Orchard website and the potential to expand it to form **an integrated St James village site**. Noted that virtually all local villages have some form of website to promote their village, provide information and act as a cohesive force.

The proposal is to convert the Orchard-only site into one overarching website, giving access to other interested St James institutions in addition to the Orchard e.g. Church, Village Hall, the village itself, local businesses. Each subscribing organisation would be responsible to keeping their information up to date via a nominated person.

The site would be entered via a home page with general information on the village and its history (which goes back to Domesday) and potentially a reminder of key events happening in St James. Those entering could then click through via tabs to pages for individual organisations.

MH Creations, the company which set up the Orchard site, has been approached and is willing to set up the combined website with two potential cost approaches – e.g. building the site for no fee and then charging £100 hosting fee per organisation or charging £300 build cost and then hosting for a combined £150 per annum hosting fee. Both options provide good value for money.

Each interested organisation would have to agree to:

- Provide initial material for their pages.
- Nominate someone to keep pages updated.
- Contribute to costs.

It was agreed to explore and progress as follows:

- Sound out whether communities are interested - specifically St James church – and gain agreement to their responsibilities.
- Confirm that Tanya is willing to act as co-ordinator.
- Survey and report on websites for neighbouring villages.
- Firm up plans and costs for MH Creations to develop the website architecture and build it.
- Develop graphic design proposals if it goes ahead.

CB

CB

GB

CB

GB

4. Financing village developments

4.1 CB confirmed that St James village has some reserves e.g. to help meet costs of a village website.

East Suffolk Council has £6000 earmarked to improve parish infrastructure from its community levy. However, this is tightly controlled and requires the village to be very clear about what it wants to achieve, and to provide matching funds.

There are other funding sources to help with matching funds e.g. Government sources, waste management companies who make specific community grants and local businesses and retailers as part of their CSR activities.

A long list of desired parish activities has been drawn up:

1. **Phone box moving.**
2. **A village website.**
3. **Developing services** between the Hall and the Green and allotments to help run village events.
4. Landscaping the front of the Village Hall.
5. Finishing the Village Green.
6. Church activities.

The first three have been identified as priorities with widest appeal and impact. The combined cost is c. £6,000, requiring £3K to be secured from East Suffolk community funds and £3K matching funds from the village.

Noted that Suffolk ACRE is now CAS – Community Action Suffolk – and has money for Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector organisations in Suffolk via Funding4Suffolk. It has distributed £105,000 in grants in the last quarter.

CB to keep the Committee up to date on financial sources and how to access funds.

4.2 Potential new St James project

The pricing review of neighbouring villages has shown St James to be lacking a smaller, more intimate meeting room for small events, coffee mornings, meetings and family parties.

The committee agreed an additional annex or build-on room for 25-30 people is a desirable village amenity, particularly with the higher use of the hall for sports which prevents meetings etc. taking place.

Agreed this will be considered further and particularly when any car park plans are implemented e.g. charging point siting.

5. Electric charging points.

The Suffolk CC communal charging point scheme has reached its second phase. St James has been longlisted to take part and an application has been made showing the village's suitability. The council is including longlisted villages in a tender, the outcome of which is expected on **18th May**. Following this:

- **Two legal agreements** will be sent to villages, setting out responsibilities, profit share mechanisms and similar commitments. The **Land Lease & Access agreement** in particular will need caution.
- The successful contractor will **survey sites** to ensure they are practical e.g. ease of connection to mains supply.

Note that Phase 1 villages had to commit to maintaining and repairing equipment and legal fees were sizeable. This has apparently been corrected in Phase 2.

CB to update on whether Phase 1 obligations have changed for Phase 2 applicants, and likely legal costs and commitments.

The Committee to think carefully about charging point siting in view of potential building needs, parking impact, length of commitment (5 years?) and likely income.

Investigation of how people charge electric cars to be undertaken to understand potential usage of village charging points.

6. Booking report.

Bookings are on the increase and the booking system and cleaning coordination are working well. There is both a hard copy booking diary and WhatsApp confirmation.

CB

CB/
Committee

CB

CR

GB

6.1 Two further booking opportunities should be promoted i.e. making people aware that they can book table tennis, badminton etc., when their families visit and making holiday cottage owners aware of facilities and providing booking details for visitors.

ALL

6.2 Noted that two issues arose with the C of E recent camping booking. Litter was left on Hulver Farm fields. A council tenant living next to the perimeter of the camping field objected to noise of tents being erected at 7PM as he has a neurodiverse child.

In future when significant events are booked with many cars being parked, a notice will be put up on the Village Hall notice board so neighbours are aware.

CR

7. New chairs for the Village Hall

A report on potential comfortable upholstered chairs suitable for stacking was reviewed.

It was agreed that the mid price range at around £50 per chair would be pursued. A few sample chairs covering the chosen shortlisted styles along with a price reduction to cover some VAT costs to be requested from **GOPAK and similar** suppliers. Up to 100 chairs are needed.

GB

It was proposed to retain the old chairs for outdoor events and house them e.g. in a small shed or extension of the existing shed.

DJ

8. AGM & Events calendar

8.1 AGM is booked for 22nd May at 7PM. 2 weeks' notice of the AGM is required with 1 week for nominations. Fliers to be prepared by LB for postal delivery prep by LB, CR and DJ. Committee nominations to be made by 15th May and can be posted in the Hall letter box. Village Hall.

LB
LB/CR/DJ

8.2 Summer lunch is booked for 4th August. Notification to be placed on the notice boards and similar.

LB
CR

8.3 Quiz night is TBC.

CR

8.4 Tea & Tarot organiser is no longer available.

8.5 Games Evening TBC.

CR

8.6 Cheese & Wine tasting to be progressed with a Halesworth supplier for an early evening slot in preference to the proposed afternoon timing. The proposal is for the wine merchant to pay £25 to host the event. Cheese and refreshments will be provided by the organiser. There will be an entry fee which will hopefully cover Hall hire cost.

CR

9. Treasurer's report.

CR confirmed Village Hall accounts as of 3rd April totalled **just under £20,000.**

- Main account including Covid grants : £14,674.46 but will be **£13,796.99** when insurance payment is deducted.
- Project interest bearing account : **£5,226.35.**
- Cash in hand : **c. £700.**

Next Village Hall Committee meeting.

Proposed for **20th May 2024 2PM** prior to AGM to plan it in more detail. Venue TBA

ALL