

## Minutes Bexhill Heritage Members Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Bexhill Heritage Members Meeting Friends Meeting House, Albert Road, Bexhill on Sea TH40 1DG**

### **Committee :**

Raymond Konyn (RK) : Chair  
Steve Johnson (SJ) : Vice Chair /Treasurer  
Alexis Markwick (AM) : IT Support Officer  
Simon Allen (SA) : Projects Coordinator  
David Beales (DB) : Planning officer  
Anthony Lightly (AL) : Chartered Building Surveyor  
Jeanette Eason : Committee Clerk

Minutes of the meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were made available to all those attending.

**1. Welcome, Fire precautions and apologies (Raymond Konyn):** Members, guests and two new members were welcomed.

Apologies for absence were received from: Nick Hollington, Peter Halligan and Paul Wright

### **2. Minutes from the August Meeting**

RK explained that copies of the minutes are always posted to the web site for members to view.

### **3. Matters Arising**

There being no matters arising, there were no amendments to be made. RK to sign copy.

### **4. Planning & Development Updates (DB)**

Bellway & Clavering Walk, Cooden – it was explained that BH has maintained a ‘loose’ association with the Clavering Walk Action Group. It was reported that RDC gradually withdrew its objections to the planning application. It is hoped to have a decision from the Planning Inspector in the New Year and that they will object to the development. It is not known what would be worth preserving or what could be damaged. The Old Moat for example, has never been investigated or researched.

DB explained that RDC does not have enough land bank to fulfil current housing needs. The council meeting on Monday did adopt Part 2 of the Local Plan, which is due to be agreed on December 16<sup>th</sup>. The council is in a stronger position to oppose development outside already identified and agreed areas. The preparation for seeking out more housing land in and around Bexhill will continue in the New Year. Bexhill is a target, because areas outside are either part of conservation areas or are unsuitable.

### **5. Project Updates (SA)**

i) No.3 Shelter, Bexhill Seafont - Biggest Current Project. Work started on 27 September, when RDC asked for help. Originally they just wanted help sanding down a little in preparation to be repainted. It was soon discovered that this would be a problem and that since the 1920s the shelter had simply been repainted. As a result much of the detail had been lost over the decades. There was some reluctance, but eventually it was decided to

strip off all the old paint and start again. BH has recorded over 1000 volunteer hours so far. RDC then asked BH to replace some of the roof tiles, which are also unlikely to have been replaced since it was built. It is essential that they are replaced urgently to prevent water ingress during the winter. It also needs felting which RDC has agreed to do. A firm in Battle has been identified to provide the tiles. BH, RDC and the contractors are due to meet for discussions as to what work needs to be done and timescales agreed.

ii) Clock Tower – Planning to make a check of the tower and clock in springtime to make sure it is drying out ok.

iii) Sainsburys Mural, Town Hall Square – Still awaiting response from Sainsburys before next steps can be planned.

iv) Brick Bus Shelter, De La Warr Road – Progressing slowly. A very successful meeting was held with the college who would like to be involved as a project with older students. It was noted that the history of the shelter shows it to have been part of the golf links.

## **6. Treasurers Report (SJ)**

i) It was stated that BH is currently putting together a fighting fund for restoration projects. It may be that future projects will be supported by applying for 'match funding'.

ii) It is hoped to have a BH Get Together on Bexhill Seafront on either the Sat or Sun 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> at the No.3 Shelter, between 11.00 and 14.00. The committee will check the weather forecast nearer the date and notify members of the actual date. It is planned to have a Tombola, Hard Hat trips around the shelter and showing of the work undertaken so far, mulled wine, and a lucky dip for the children. It is also hoped that some music could be set up for the event. Members were asked if they could provide some Tombola prizes which could be dropped off at the shelter prior to the event and when others are working there.

iii) Festive Quiz Night – SJ confirmed he had a few tickets left for any members wishing to purchase after the meeting.

iv) Active Volunteers Meal – on 13<sup>th</sup> Members were reminded that Lynn Markwick would need to be notified asap of their menu choices.

v) Co-oP Special Fund - Members were advised that BH is one of their main charities for the year. If BH members become members of the Co-oP they can nominate for their % of the charity fund to go to BH.

## **7. IT & Website Report (AM)**

i) AM pointed out that there are a lot more photos, videos and info sheets to highlight the fact that it is all the work of volunteers.

ii) There is a new calendar of events on the website.

iii) There is a new newsletter due at the end of December.

## **8. Refreshment Break**

## **9. Civic Pride award Nominations (SJ)**

SJ clarified that any buildings or projects not nominated this year, or if members see anything they feel worthy, can be nominated in 2020. Slides were displayed of the various nominations to enable members to complete their voting forms.

Category 1 – New buildings fitting the criteria: Greys House No. 6 Herbrand Walk.

Only nomination in this category. New build of modern design using locally sourced stone.

Category 2 – Public Art or Displays, stimulating interest in Bexhill Heritage or demonstrating civic pride.

- 1) Motoring Heritage Gallery – Sackville Bistro
- 2) Barraclough's Opticians – Western Road
- 3) Butterfly on the Wall – Wickham Avenue

SJ took time out to discuss and clarify the voting sheet.

#### Category 3 – Building or Public Open Space

- 1) Seafront Shelter No.2 – It was explained that this one is older than No.3 shelter and had lots of iron and rust issues to deal with. It was recognised that RDC had done a good job using the cream, green and red of the Bexhill colours. The colour scheme was researched by Alex Markwick. Lucky that this shelter did not need a new roof.
- 2) Wickham Bistro – New owners wanted to get back to heritage detail, all fittings on doors are brass along with lighting. Coloured glass in windows was also uncovered and is best seen from inside.
- 3) Wetherspoons, Western Road – slide show that the decoration on the walls replicate what would have been there when it was a cinema and playhouse. Good interior refurbishment, using lighting and carpet colours of the era. It also has old reels and a projector plus period film posters on display.
- 4) No. 10-12 Parkhurst Road – It was recognised that the new owner had reinstated the sash style windows, used lead externally on the tower and also used galvanised (not plastic) downpipes all in keeping with its original look. In addition they had also picked out and fully restored the relief.

The voting slips were collected in and the winners of the various individual categories announced. The results for the **overall** winner were as follows:

#### **Seafront Shelter – 22 votes**

Butterfly on the Wall – 9 votes  
Wetherspoons – 6 votes  
Greys House – 4 votes  
Sackville Bistro – 3 votes  
Wickham Bistro – 2 votes  
10-12 Parkhurst Road – 0 votes  
Barraclough Opticians – 0 votes

SJ stated that it is hoped to have a formal presentation at some time to the overall winner, which in this case was RDC. It may be possible to invite the winners and /or nominees for the individual categories too, subject to confirmation.

#### **10. AOB, Open Forum, Q & A s, members Suggestions & Ideas**

Comment : There was recognition of the Committee and their efforts given that BH now has more than 300 members. Also, appreciation for the Pop Up Shop in Devonshire Road, which sadly did not last long. Currently there are discussions with the minister for the Methodist Church in Sackville Road. It is due to be closing for worship around August 2020, due to diminishing congregation numbers. It has been suggested that perhaps the church building could stay and be repurposed for community activities.

Comment : One member notified the meeting that there had been some vandalism to the De La Warr Bus Shelter – spray paint.

Q. Shelter No.2 - Are there any plans for more seating to be installed? RK explained that when RDC finished the repainting, they did not bolt the seats down and they are being moved around. Since then various members of the public and BH have been returning the seats to the shelter. RDC have been asked to bolt them into place asap.

Comment : It was noted that Graffiti needs to be kept down and dealt with as soon as possible. Don Cormack indicated he would be willing to paint over any areas when necessary.

Q. Is Bexhill twinned with anywhere else? It was understood that Bexhill was twinned with Bayonne as a result of WW1. There is also a good story that Bexhill sponsored a village.

Q. Cemetery Lodge query – Rachel Hills : Suggestion that it could be refurbished and land around it used to provide carbon neutral sustainable projects, skills training and accommodation worked by local people maybe homeless or recovering from addiction issues. Also the gardens and shed/barn could be useful as a learning centre, given there is no other facility in Bexhill for such work. Suggestion based on a similar project at Ore Farm.

SJ responded stating that the Community Land trust (CLT) and RDC wanted to demolish and clean up the land. BH commissioned an architect to review and provide an alternative use, which could result in the lodge being converted into 3 x two bedroom affordable houses. The CLT are now more amenable to the BH suggestion. RDC may not push ahead with demolition. BH and CLT aiming to work together to provide homes. There is obviously money/costs involved. SJ agreed Rachel's suggestion has merit. Perhaps BH could put that idea into the mix, especially if it could be done using self-build/ building skills could be utilised. Currently there is a campaign to return Cemetery Lodge and external property to provide affordable homes. There was a query that if they are affordable homes, will they be rented council stock or possibly sold under right to buy? SJ to take that issue to the next meetings with CLT.

RK noted that there has been a reprint of the tri-fold Bexhill Heritage Membership form, which now also has a separate calendar of events for 2020.

RK made a plea for assistance from the membership. BH always needs help to support the refreshment team at busy meetings, also assistance with various committee roles or admin, such as Secretary, Membership Secretary, Projects Team, Planning Team.

Any members willing to offer a few hours help, in any capacity, per month will always be very welcome.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 21.00

**Next BH Members Meeting will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7 p.m. at Friends Meeting House, 15 Albert Road, Bexhill on Sea TN40 1DG.**