

## **Bexhill Heritage Members Online Meeting Wednesday 7th April at 7pm.**

### **Committee:**

Raymond Konyon	(RK)	Chair
Steve Johnson	(SJ)	Vice Chair/Treasurer
Alexis Markwick	(AM)	iT Support Officer/Historian
Simon Allen	(SA)	Projects Coordinator
John Swap	(JS)	Membership Officer
David Beales	(DB)	Planning Officer (By phone)
Anthony Lightly	(AL)	Chartered Building Surveyor
Don Theobald	(DT)	Events
Jeanette Eason	(JE)	Committee Clerk

### **1. Welcome and short ice breaker (RK and SJ)**

RK asked the committee members to briefly introduce themselves to the members attending.

### **2. Declarations of interests – none except that RK is a Trustee of BOTPS**

**3. Apologies** – Anne Anderson, Carol Cook, Diana Hughes, David Hatherell, Angela Hart, Carole Green

**4. Approval of minutes of December 2020 Meeting** – agreed and to be signed off by RK.

**5. Matters arising from the February Members Meeting** - None indicated.

### **6. Planning and Development Updates (DB)**

National Planning – Government is pressing ahead with most radical changes for many decades, including the classification of land. Have been over 40k responses to the consultation to date. The responses have been sufficiently varied that the government feel able to continue with plans. On positive note more guidelines include the necessity for 'beauty' in the built environment, to produce good places to live and work. Lots of MPs in southern constituencies made representations.

Review of Planning Dept RDC to be announced soon. Peer reviewed against similar sized councils.

Spindlewood Development – reversal of RDC decision. The Planning Inspectorate agreed to a full public enquiry. Needs full examination and cross examination of surface water concerns. No date yet.

Clavering Walk – wrestling with full implication of planning application. Allowed on appeal. Showing 85 houses of nearly 100. Has similar issues with surface water and drainage at Spindlewood. BH no longer needs to be involved with matters re development, but still involved with the protection of the scheduled monument of Cooden Moat. RDC still reluctant to get involved.

Town Centre retail RDC and Covid – how the impact has affected the area and what remedial actions suggested.

### **7. Projects and Update (SJ/SA)**

Bandstand - RDC having difficulty with officers needing to dedicate time towards the Bandstand Project, so that BH can get started. Now have an architect on board (Heritage Architect Ian Exley) –

site meeting at Bandstand. SJ not expecting BH to start work in 2021. Lots of other prep and structural work required before BH Volunteers can get started.

Sainsburys – BH delay to chasing until June 2021 due to Covid. Have had some dealings with HO staff. Councillor contacted Sainsburys HO but similar lack of response. Sainsburys owns the footpath, so will need to give BH permission.

Bexhill Flag – tried to get made locally but costs approx. £45. Suggest perhaps someone who is good with a sewing machine and good at working with flag type of fabric, to see if BH can make them ourselves.

K6 Telephone Kiosk – when we can travel a bit further, there is a plan to take make a proper assessment.

West Parade Clocktower – SA plans to visit to and assess what can be done to improve state of clock and mechanism.

DLW Road Bus Shelter SJ – land owned by the Queen via Crown estates. Shelter originally the commemoration of a former mayor, who was a former employee of Earl De La Warr.

RSL Tower – RK outlined the original idea and various proposals from members and committee re the use of the recovered RS Lighthouse Tower section, due to be removed by Trinity House. Nothing further to report. Suggestion has reached a committee meeting by TH Board, and they need to review and assess all the implications. Very positively received and would want RDC agreement, which BH has already canvassed. Awaiting news from TH before the project can be progressed further.

Supplementary information – RK explained the “Project Development Plan” is a ‘compass’ of BH work, and if any member has a good idea for a project please let BH Committee know.

## **8. Financial Report (SJ, AM, JS)**

SJ shared screen of accounts information – for financial year ending 31 March. Current income £15k. Fortunate in receiving grant income of £3k+, from various sources including Co-op. Gift Aid £1600 received from members ticking the box. Membership fees £3k. Membership is bedrock of BH income. Expenditure £1300 – spring and early summer 2020, payment of incidentals for the projects. The music system that went into the renovated Shelter was funded through donations. Car stickers available when we can have a meeting. All charities need money to run and support, but thank you for member generosity for fees, donations and work towards projects.

Rachel Hills asked if any of the funds from grants restricted? No restrictions and no use by dates. Good news.

Membership Report (JS) - Quiet at moment due to covid. Hoping to have pop up stalls on seafront from next week.

IT/Historian (AM) – Also quiet at present, but if members not comfortable with paying online AM confirmed he is still visiting church to collect official correspondence sent or dropped into St Barnabas church, BH official address.

**9. Talk: 2021 Civic Pride Awards** - Raymond Konyon, Chair. There was a call for members to consider nominations for this year.

There was an on screen presentation of the CP Awards 2021. For those attending by phone RK explained what was being shown on screen. Also aims of the scheme to empower the community to value local environmental space, history, culture, character and identity.

It will be formally launched at BH AGM with forms and details available from June onwards – via website or as a paper version.

There was an on screen review of the 2019 awards (presented March 2020). Photos of winners and commendations in the various categories, It was sponsored by Redwell Estates, who has offered to do same for 2021. Votes only from BH members.

Once nominations received from members, criteria for consideration will include philosophy behind restoration or conservation, original character, research to ensure period detail, techniques adopted etc. within the three categories.

Committee considering a 4<sup>th</sup> category – not decided yet. Maybe include Bexhill shop fronts, some of which have fine original features.

Next stages – June 2021 launch AGM. BH members only. Autumn Shortlist. December - Member Vote then January 2022 announcement of winners and presentation in March and Civic Pride Award Plaques – hope to get back to normality and coffee mornings etc.

## **10. Q & A Session**

Lynn Markwick – Do we know anything about vandalised globes on DLWP? SA – not known but assumption they will be restored. Cost a lot of money to replace and toughened glass canopy over one of the entrances of another organisation also damaged. Also, BH aware Sea Road frontage has recently crumbled into the road. AM showed photos of some damage to a property. Believed to be as a result from adjacent building works. Fortunately it is a Victorian house, and restorable. House in recognisable local design style.

Sue Burton – complimented BH work and management. How many members currently have and covid impact of working of charity? JS confirmed there are 347 current members, plus small number in grace period and hoping for them to renew. SJ impact has been much less due to grants. RK also mentioned cautious approach of management and trustees – very few overheads. BH overheads – very light do not have property, rates, policies and SJ wealth of experience from professional background to guide BH.

RK - Hope the relaxing of covid will allow some pop up BH stands. Working well with RDC and hope to continue with new Bexhill Town Council.

AM – corrected earlier item from quiz – and showed a photo of the 'fountain' memorial to Cooch Behar, in front of the coast guard cottages, moved to Egerton Park, then moved to the cemetery due to being badly weather worn. Has since disappeared.

Members were also advised that Bexhill got a mention in the New York Times. There is a link to cycling and super photography, which includes the two shelter scenes from around Bexhill.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Date of next members meeting: this will be the AGM in June. Date TBC.