

HAYDON BRIDGE AND HAYDON PARISH DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024

Present

Mark l'Anson (Chair), Will Rutherford (Vice Chair), Ian Foster, Siobhan Stephenson, Phil Hartley, Kate Minto, Michael Sadgrove, Peter Fletcher, Esmond Faulks, Christina Taylor, Joanna Thompson

24.01 Apologies and welcome

Apologies were received from Jo Bates and Henry Swaddle.

Joanna Thompson was welcomed to the meeting as a representative from the Parish Council.

24.02 Declarations of interest – MS declared an interested in agenda item 8 – John Martin Interpretation Panels – as he is a member of the Diocesan Advisory Board dealing with faculties. MI declared an interest in item 11, Community Foundation funding application.

24.03 Minutes of the meeting held in 15 November 2023 - The minutes were approved

24.04 Matters arising not already on the agenda - None

24.05 Plaques

Work of the village plaques group: A paper had been circulated, which had also gone to the PC January '24 meeting. EF reported that the PC was much in favour of this initiative and indicated some funding might be available in the future. It was hoped that funding could also be sought from the Shaftoe Educational Foundation as this initiative has a clear educational focus. DT Directors also expressed strong support. Individual buildings in the category A list are not being named yet to avoid speculation and it is thought premature to publicise this initiative until the plans were further developed.

The next stage is to agree a process, and approach 'A' list locations via the owners or governing bodies. It is hoped that a small group of plaques could be up in the next 18-24 months.

Eileen Charlton Memorial plaque: MS reported that he and KM had redrafted and improved the proposed text for the plaque. The next stage is to talk to Eileen's family to get their agreement and then arrange for the plaque to be put up on the south side library wall.

24.06 Current and future operation of The Bridge

Notes of the library leaders meetings of 27/11/23 and 29/01/24 had been circulated. KM reported that progress on the library refurbishment was progressing well. The slatwall has been installed (some more shelving to come), and once books and sales items have been moved, the 3 metal mobile shelving units will be removed by the county council. This will free up room for the new seating area and for the meeting table and chairs to be moved. The aim is for the library to feel much more open. New computer and printer have been purchased and IF has secured free Microsoft software. Further work is needed to agree a solution with Davey Edwards to the counter top but helpful feedback has been received from MI's son. One option is to move the sink to the other side by the wall.

We are waiting for a date for the toilet floor and blown concrete to be renewed and for Dennis Oliver to install the new lighting consumer unit.

At present there are 4 library sessions and a volunteer recruitment session is being planned so that a 5th session can be re-introduced on a Thursday or Friday.

Story time is starting again and there will be a travelling poetry event.

PF reported that he had talked to Tula (who leads the Monday team which administers the bonus ball) about regularising some practices. At present we keep (with people's permission) phone contact numbers of some but not all bonus ball players.

Decision: it was agreed that phone numbers be collected (with permission of each bonus ball player in order to comply with GDPR) and that a system be introduced so that bonus ball winners are informed if they have won (either by phone or lodging winning numbers on the notice board or Haydon Bridge Matters). If anyone does not claim their prize within 6 weeks the money goes as a donation to the library. We will also publicise any unused numbers to try and achieve total take-up

MI reported that the till balanced at the end of January and that electricity use is down 25% due to the use of the Hive.

The difficulty some people are having opening up the library with the key entry was raised. A complaint has been received from the NCC person who delivers and collects books on a Friday.

Action: it was agreed that IF talk to Safe and Secure about purchasing more fobs as these seem easier to use than the keys

PF did an update on the leak in the station yard outside the back door. He has had direct contact with the key players. Both Northern Rail (in January) and ArchCo (July 2023) have reported the leak to Network Rail. ArchCo are getting clarification as to whether responsibility for the station yard rests with Northern rail or Network Rail. Northern Rail (who also lease railway buildings) made it clear that it is ArchCo's responsibility as the landlord of the Bridge, to resolve this on behalf of the DT as tenants. PF also has a meeting with Northumbria Water on 7 January to get their view.

Action: It was agreed that PF should continue to work on this and that the option of withdrawing part or all the rent from ArchCo should be kept open, to be decided at the discretion of MI and PF

MS also reported that a wall is falling down on the road to the rectory. The road used to be part of the station yard years ago. It is not clear who has responsibility for taking action on this, but it is not a DT matter.

24.07 Neighbourhood Plan items for decision

A written paper of discussion and decision items was circulated with the agenda.

1a – secure funding for initial feasibility study for community led renewable district heating scheme

Following the tender process Reheat have been appointed to undertake the feasibility study and the set up meeting for the Steering Group will be on 14 February.

2 – Historic Environment

MS and PF provided an update to the written paper to say that after advice from Sarah Brannigan at NCC the idea of updating the Village Design Statement (action 2a) will not be progressed, since to get any update adopted would require the main NP to be consulted on again and updated as a further version.

In relation to updating the Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACAA) (Action 2b) Sarah Brannigan has given us the name of an NCC officer to contact to assess the possibility of progress on this. A decision on action or not will be made after that.

Action: MS to contact Sarah Rushton from NCC about updating the CACA

3a - village enhancements

The PC approved Carole Price's proposal for planters at the junction of Ratcliffe Road and Church Street, which would be funded by the PC and Alan Sharp's member fund.

3b – Developing projects to enhance habitat to increase bio diversity

An update was provided on progress at the Nurture Garden.

Haydon Action for Nature and biodiversity (HAND) proposed planting a community orchard on the wide verge on the N side of Ratcliffe Road by Langley/Greenwich Gardens, based on groups of trees at intervals along the verge.

Decision and action: There was strong support from Directors and it was agreed that this should go to the PC for approval at their February or March meeting and then on to NCC for approval from highways

Enhancing wildlife corridors: CT and SS set out a proposal for commencing work on this and would feed back progress at future meetings. It was noted that there might be funding potential from carbon offset funds to support this initiative.

4b Community led housing (CLH)

PF said that there had been no progress on the East Land Ends and Strawberry field sites since the last meeting. He had fed back to NCC and Castles and Coasts DT interest in community led housing (CLH) on the East Land Ends site, subject to grant funding being available, and other CLH coming to fruition on the Strawberry Field site.

PF reported that the DT had been asked by some members of the PC if we might be able to purchase Haydon Lodge (which is on sale by NCC) and convert it into flats. PF and MI had discussed this and let the PC know at its January meeting that it was too big a project for the DT at this point in its evolution.

5b and c – developing services for the community

SS asked if anyone knew how to access free or cheap decking as a flooring for a Yurt which has been purchased at the Nurture Project. **Action: Directors to give ideas to SS**

5f WeFibre and High Speed Broadband

PF reported that WeFibre had agreed to provide free broadband for the Bridge and that the order was placed on 4 January.

Action: PF to follow up to ensure installation asap

Because of this PF has taken no further action with WeFibre about the lack of progress connecting outlying areas of the parish such as Lipwood and Chesterwood.

7a Haydon Bridge to Hexham cycle route

PH reported that the grant application to the LEP for feasibility funding had been turned down. The LEP had 30 applications and funded 11. But they have said that they are supportive of both the Haydon Bridge to Hexham route and another cycle hub application from Hexham and may have more funding in May.

A further funding application has just been submitted to the North of Tyne mayors Fund.

The clean up day of the old A69 east of the village as a short cycle path planned for 30 December was cancelled until further progress is made with the landowner (Rodrega Straker) or her land agent.

7c Cycle racks

MI reported that a 3 bike rack has now been installed outside The Bridge. A solution to the possible site opposite the Co-op has still to be realised.

24.08 Other existing projects

John Martin Trail Information Panels: MS reported that Marcus Bryon had agreed to move the panel and had given a quote of £200 (inc VAT) plus £84 for repairs to do the work.

Decision: MS to authorise Marcus Byron to go ahead based on cost agreed

John Martin Mask/sculpture.

Decision: it was agreed that this should be put on the south wall near the information panel at the start of the John Martin trail. WR and PH to action this in consultation with HS

24.09 Communications

Changing the hosting of the website and renewing website

The current website host is retiring and MI, HS and IF have nearly completed the process of changing the hosting over to the DT, apart from some files still to complete with full information.

No progress has been made on upgrading the website and PF reported that his approach to Julie Gibbon from the Haltwhistle partnership for pro bono help was unsuccessful. It was agreed that:

Action: HS and IF to prepare a short specification for potential website designers about the design concept, based on DT Directors doing the content work and updating

The next step would be to approach potential designers to get quotes, with the cost being shared between the DT and PC.

The Bridge social media feed: MS reported that there were 92 followers of the X/twitter feed and 64 facebook followers. He stressed that he needs more news stories to post

Action: Directors and library teams to feed MS with possible news stories

SS to meet with MS to look at how she could help the social media feeds continue when MS has to take time off for his operation

Future of the Haydon News (HN): PF reported that he had talked to Pauline Wallis as agreed at the last meeting. She explained that despite trying every avenue it had not been possible to find a new editor and that the HN would finish and the remaining funds be distributed to bodies that could support future communications in the village.

PF raised the possibility of trying to build a simple online monthly or bimonthly newsletter that might include library activities; village events; churches information, and local business information. This could be distributed via Haydon Bridge Matters which now has 5,000 followers, with perhaps a few paper copies left at Claire's and the Co-op. It would be important in the next volunteer recruiting round to try to identify one or two people with communication skills who might be interested in getting involved in this.

DT Directors agreed that this was an idea that was worth exploring further and that it was important to try to retain the balance of the Haydon News funds for use in the village for communication initiatives and potentially to support the updating of the website.

Action: PF to go back to Pauline Wallis to update her on the DT discussion and to suggest a joint meeting between Haydon News and DT reps to see if a way forward could be found. JT, KM, MS, SS, and PF agreed to attend such a meeting and discussion

24.10 Governance matters

a) *Co-opted directors:*

Decision: It was agreed that Joanna Thompson should be co-opted as a Director, as a representative of the PC; PF to add her to Companies House and the Charity Commission as a Co-opted Director

b) *Financial controls policy*

Decision: the Directors reviewed and approved an updated version of the financial controls Policy PD04

c) *Food hygiene policy*

Decision: the Directors reviewed and approved an updated version of the food hygiene Policy PD13

d) *Public liability insurance*

PF reported that Arch had sent a notice requiring all tenants to upgrade their Public Liability Cover from £2m to £3m. Current DT cover is £2m. He has approached Hiscox to ask for a cost for this.

Directors queried whether this increase was required for an organisation of its size

Action: PF to circulate the notice from ArchCo to all Directors and further consultation would take place before a decision on this.

24.11 Finance and grants

a) Library upgrade Grant funding from the Community Foundation:

PF reported that he, KM and IF were undertaking the purchases and commissioning the work in line with the budget and referring to MI with any queries. A schedule of spend against budget will be provided for the next meeting.

b) Financial report: MI circulated a financial report, which projected end of year figures to the end of March 2024. There is likely to be a small paper loss linked to depreciation. It was noted that the Luncheon Club had a substantial surplus. **Action: MI and PF to talk to Carole Price**
The question was raised as to whether we could earn interest by putting monies in restricted funds on deposit. **Action: MI to look into this**

24.12 Any other business - None

24.13 Date and time of next meeting – Monday 29 April 2024 at 7pm. PF gave apologies.