

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - MUSEUM COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Museum Committee  
held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020  
at 2.30 pm via Zoom conferencing.**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs A Donoghue (Chairman), C Simmonds, J Jones and A Sharp. Mr A Barwick (Curator) and Mr R Gordon (Friends of Henfield Museum- FoHM)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs R Grantham (Administrator) and Mr S Robotham (Assistant Curator)

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Ms A Roberts and Mr L Jago (unable to join due to technical difficulties).

#### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

Approved, to be signed at a later date due to current restrictions.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

#### **OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

##### **a) TV Programme – The Repair Shop – Update**

The Chairman confirmed that applications are now closed and there has been no contact from the programme yet with regards to featuring the Edwardian pram.

##### **b) Noticeboard in Bus Shelter**

The Chairman reported that the noticeboard is ready to reinstate, but that as this requires two people, will need to wait until current social distancing restrictions are lifted.

##### **c) Museum website**

Mr Gordon confirmed that the framework for the site had been set up together with a contact email address and that he has been building up sections and adding content. He demonstrated the new site via Zoom screen sharing. He then invited comments on content and layout. All members praised the new site and agreed it is a valuable resource particularly while the Museum is closed. The Chairman asked if there could be a section encouraging potential new volunteers and showing what they could get involved with and how to get in touch. The Chairman then asked about ongoing maintenance of the site and when it will be ready to launch. Mr Gordon confirmed that the site will be ready in a few weeks and that he is happy to maintain for the time being and train others if and when it is required. He also suggested that he would welcome others to send him content to post.

**Action Point: Members to send relevant content to Mr Gordon to post.  
Mr Gordon to confirm when the website is ready to launch.**

d) Roving table displays

The Chairman confirmed that the school had declined the offer to have the roving table display and that it is currently located in the foyer of the Haven, which is perhaps an advantage as there is still plenty of people using the building as it is the co-ordination centre for the Henfield Helpline. Mr Gordon confirmed that he is sharing items related to the display on social media. The Chairman asked whether there were any concerns regarding fading of items. The Curator confirmed that they are all photocopies of original documents. It was resolved to leave the display in the current location for the time being.

**Action Point: The Chairman to inspect the display to determine whether the items are fading and whether the display required further action.**

e) Borrer letters transcription

Committee members confirmed that they have been working on transcribing the documents sent to them by Mr Gordon, albeit some have been very difficult to read. Mr Gordon confirmed that around one quarter have so far been transcribed and therefore hoping the project will be complete by the autumn.

f) Byshopp mark purchase

This has now been purchased and is in the possession of Mr Gordon, who would like it to be on permanent display. The Chairman suggested a celebratory re-opening of the Museum in order to publicise it, this will be discussed at the next meeting in August. Mr Gordon also confirmed an anonymous benefactor has offered to fund future purchase of more Byshopp marks.

**Action point: Discuss re-opening of museum at next meeting.**

g) Parish Council website

The Chairman confirmed that the relevant policy and process documents have now been added to the Parish Council website and that it will continue to also include agendas and minutes for meetings. It would also include a link to the new more comprehensive Museum collection focused website.

## 5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded members that the Museum has been closed since the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and that the Curator is visiting periodically to carry out necessary checks.

The Chairman then reported that Henfield Hall has submitted a planning application for an extension at the rear of the building for the benefit of the theatre company. She commented that the Hall are aware that the museum also need storage and have done for many years, and that she felt that this was perhaps a missed opportunity to discuss the proposed extension as a multi-use space. She asked whether members felt that the Museum Committee should approach the Hall committee in order to discuss the matter. Cllr Jones clarified that the extension is intended to be used as a workshop for scenery and props and that it is being funded by a grant as well as a proposed contribution from the theatre group. The theatre group has also proposed paying £250 per month rental for the space. Cllr Sharp suggested that the proposed extension may not be suitable for Museum storage and that the space underneath the stage may become available for storage once the extension is built. Mr Robotham commented that it would have been more appropriate to consider all of the groups that may need extra space. Mr Barwick expressed concern that the proposed extension will prevent any further development for storage at the rear of the building and wondered whether plans could be adapted. He and Cllr Simmonds also stated that they were surprised that the Museum was not consulted. Mr Gordon commented that the Museum is a free to enter public service and that the Hall shared a common culture and history. Cllr Jones offered to discuss the matter with Peter Shepherd initially, in particular to ask whether there may be a possibility of including some storage for the Museum. The Chairman concluded by saying that she was disappointed that there had been no dialogue internally and hopes that there is a collective solution to suit a wider community need. She will also raise the matter at the next Henfield Parish Council (HPC) meeting.

**Action Point: Cllr Jones to discuss the Hall extension with Peter Shepherd and feed back to the committee. The Chairman to raise the matter at Henfield Parish Council meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.**

**6. FORWARD PLAN FOR 2020**

a) Access database and scanner

Cllr Simmonds has researched further and found that a suitable scanner to purchase would cost approximately £4,500. Alternatively, the scanning could be outsourced for between £1.50 to £3.00 per document. Mr Barwick confirmed that there are at least 9,000 items with a similar number of negatives, therefore he felt purchasing could be the preferred option, however with that volume the scanning could take several years and require many volunteers. The Chairman suggested the possibility of borrowing from another museum and that Amy Roberts could be a useful contact. Mr Gordon suggested contacting Brighton or Worthing museums and also mentioned that it may be possible to purchase a used scanner as other museums may be looking to upgrade.

**Action Point: Cllr Simmonds and Mr Barwick to research borrowing a scanner or potential to purchase a used scanner.**

b) Museum leaflet

Mr Barwick confirmed that the new leaflet design is ready. The Clerk circulated quotes for printing prior to the meeting. Following discussion, it was resolved to delay printing and to discuss again at the next meeting. This is due to the Museum and the venues that would normally display them being closed due to Covid 19. There would then also be an opportunity to update the leaflets if any changes are needed.

**Action Point: To review leaflet distribution at the next meeting in August.**

c) Year of Natural History

The Borrer letters were discussed under item 4. Mr Gordon also reported that the Heritage Trails project is progressing well.

The Chairman confirmed that these three items can hopefully be concluded at the next meeting, at which point a further three items from the Forward Plan can be agreed for progression.

**Action point: Identify next action points from Forward Plan and agree at next meeting in August.**

**7. CURATOR'S REPORT**

a) Acquisitions

The Curator circulated his report prior to the meeting. All acquisitions were approved by the committee. The Curator also highlighted from his report that he was disappointed at the lack of volunteers that resulted from the Annual Parish Meeting and that he intends to promote further on social media. The Chairman commented that the launch of the new website will also bring an opportunity to recruit new volunteers.

**Action Point: The Curator to utilise Museum Facebook page and website to publicise voluntary opportunities.**

b) Disposals- Mr S Robotham

Mr Robotham confirmed he has a list of 10 potential disposals and that he will contact other museums initially and report back on items at next meeting.

**Action Point: Mr Robotham to progress disposals by contacting other museums and report on progress at next meeting – August.**

c) Review of Policies, circulated prior to the meeting.

i) Emergency Plan

Cllr Simmonds commented that it should not be assumed that fire alarms will connect directly to the fire brigade, there is still a need to dial 999. The Chairman also stated that some of the named individuals on the list of emergency contacts are ex-councillors. She

asked whether they are still willing to be included on the list. The Chairman also commented that there are specific duties allocated to HPC, the Hall and the Curator and that these need to be clarified and signed off by those responsible. It was resolved to leave this document in a draft format until these issues can be resolved and to prepare for sign off at the next meeting.

**Action Point: The Curator to clarify Henfield Parish Council responsibilities with the Clerk and Henfield Hall, and to contact named emergency contacts to ensure they are still willing to be included on the list. Mr Barwick to also add Mr Gordon as a contact on this list. The Emergency Plan to then be updated and re-circulated for sign off at next meeting in August.**

ii) Instructions to Volunteers

The Chairman stated that it may be necessary to amend these instructions when the Museum reopens, or to add special temporary instructions due to restrictions that may be in place. It was resolved to leave the document in a draft format until the next meeting when there may be more guidance as to how and when the Museum can re-open.

**Action Point: The Curator to review instructions in light of guidance at time of re-opening.**

## **8. FRIENDS OF HENFIELD MUSEUM (FoHM) – REPORT FROM ROB GORDON**

Mr Gordon reported that he has identified several potential acquisitions, including a film poster that he has already purchased featuring Fredda Brilliant. He commented that there is a lack of physical items relating to Borrer, but that some greenhouse pipework had recently been unearthed during building work taking place at the location of Borrers greenhouse. He has taken some photographs of it and is hoping that this will be donated to the Museum. Cllr Simmonds offered to clean it if required.

Mr Gordon then reported that there has been good engagement on social media recently and that he has recently received some information regarding a collaboration project with Horsham on Twitter. He also stated that FOHM are interested in collecting Covid 19 experiences from local residents. He is hoping that BN5 and the Parish magazine will promote this project further. The Chairman commented that there is currently an opportunity for lots more people to engage online including school children and that this may translate to visits to the museum in future.

## **9. FINANCIAL REPORT – REPORT FROM THE CLERK**

a) Progress Report – 2019/20

There has been no expenditure or income for the last quarter.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 2.30pm via Zoom conferencing.

**Action Point: The Clerk to ensure that the Zoom meeting is set up with a meeting ID and password in addition to a link.**

**Meeting Closed 4.30pm.**