

The Blackheath Village Society

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at “Theobalds” on Wednesday 15th April 2009

Present:

Paul Brodie	Dave Grisley
Nick Harrison	Peter Herbert
Alistair Taylor	Patrick Venning
Sheila Webster	Richard Williams

1. **Apologies:** Steve Brockwell, Jeannie Davies, Nick Morris.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 7th January 2009 were approved.

3. **Matters Arising**

(a) Flooding and Ditches

Nick Harrison reported that there was an opportunity to create a soakway adjacent to the lane that runs to/from the cricket ground at an attractive cost since contractors doing work for the cricket club had confirmed that they would be prepared to carry out this work whilst at the cricket ground. It was recognised that this work would benefit the village in that it would hopefully reduce the carriage of stones and other matter down Blackheath Lane to the crossroads and beyond. However, the committee felt that it should not rush to commit BVS funds to such a project until the matter could be more fully aired at a future meeting.

(b) Village Audit

A detailed report will be made in due course but there is nothing further to report at this stage.

(c) Trust Deed and Trustees

Nick Harrison and Richard Williams have considered the matter further and have come to the provisional view that it would be beneficial to re-structure the BVS as a company limited by guarantee rather than simply as a trust. The new body would have the same charitable basis as the existing trust but would have further possible advantages such as the ability to protect committee members and others against legal liability and would have the ability to hold real property. Various detailed questions have been put to the Charity Commission and a response is awaited. Once these responses have been received and evaluated, a further report will be made to the committee for consideration.

Action: Nick Harrison and Richard Williams

4. **Treasurer’s Report.**

Patrick Venning had circulated in advance his report dated 9th April which confirms that the BVS continues to be in good financial health and that in

particular there are sufficient funds to underwrite the organisation of the 2009 Fair.

5. 2009 Fair Arrangements

Dave Grisley reported that the arrangements for this year's Fair were progressing well and Paul Brodie reported that the owners of the Barnett Hill Conference Centre (the Sundial Group) had agreed to provide sponsorship in the sum of £750.

Dave also reported that the company which had provided some of the hired equipment for the Fair in previous years had ceased to trade but that there was an opportunity to purchase some of the equipment (the Adult Striker, Hoopla and Cork Gun stalls, the Children's Slide and the Bouncy Castle) from them at a price less than £2,000. Since this figure was similar if not less than the normal hire cost it was agreed that this was a good investment and Dave was authorised to negotiate terms for their purchase. Nick Harrison also confirmed that the equipment could be stored in a shed that he had dismantled but which could be re-installed near the Cricket Pavilion. Nick Harrison, Peter Herbert and the Cricket Club were thanked for their generosity in that regard.

Action: Dave Grisley

6. Barnett Hill Planning Application

The committee considered various representations which had been made to the chairman by e-mail over the past week or so, and also looked at all the comments, both for and against the application, which have been posted by Blackheath residents on the Waverley website.

In general, the BVS does not involve itself in planning applications, unless they are ones of major significance where there is a consensus that the interests of the village would be adversely affected (as for example with Star Energy's first application). In the present case, there is no such consensus; nevertheless it is clear that there are some within the village who are extremely concerned about the Barnett Hill application, including in particular its potential impact on traffic volumes, especially in the event of a change of ownership and further development of Barnett Hill in the future.

Given the absence of a consensus, the committee did not think it appropriate to lodge an objection in principle to the application on behalf of the BVS (in any event, such an objection would in practice carry little more weight than an individual objection). Instead, it was agreed to raise the concerns of villagers directly with the owners, the Sundial Group, and to discuss with them what assurances and/or binding conditions could be put in place as part of the grant of any planning permission, to deal with those concerns. Alistair Taylor agreed to contact the Sundial Group in this regard.

The committee were of the view that, on the basis of past dealings with the Sundial Group, with whom the village has generally enjoyed a good relationship, this approach is likely to be productive and that the question of what if any formal submission the BVS should make to Waverley about the application will depend on the outcome of the discussions, which will take

place over the next few days. If necessary, Waverley will be asked to extend the deadline for comments to allow this process to be completed.

Action: Alistair Taylor

7. Any Other Business

It was agreed that whilst the use of the village email circulation system had provided many benefits it was necessary to establish some ground rules as to the extent that it should be used for private purposes (e.g. notification of items for sale etc) rather than for general village purposes. In order to maintain that distinction, whilst at the same time assisting villagers in relation to private matters, it was agreed that another page should be added to the village web site on which private matters of this nature could be posted and accessed by villagers. Specific arrangements would be discussed between Paul Brodie and Simon Jones and details would be communicated to the village in due course.

Action: Paul Brodie

10. Dates for the Diary

- 1). Village BBQ – **Sunday 31st May**
- 2) Next committee meeting – **Tuesday 30th June**

Richard Williams
Secretary