

EAST GRINSTEAD MEMORIAL ESTATE LTD

Registered Charity No. 305211 Company No. 468425

MINUTES

DIRECTORS MEETING 04/2018

7pm, Wednesday 12th December 2018
Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre,
De La Warr Rd, East Grinstead, RH19 3B4

1. Present
 - 1.1.Nunn, Russell, Thurlow, Phillips, Fisher, Davis, Yeoman, Funnell
2. Apologies for Absence
 - 2.1.Baker, Graysmark, Stagg, Sweatman
3. Minutes of previous Directors Meeting 03/2018, 29th August 2018
 - 3.1.It was noted that Davis had been recorded as absent and present. He was in fact present. After this change, these were approved as being a true record of the meeting. The Chairman would sign them (and redact as necessary), and post on the web site for members to view, and also in the document archive.
4. Matters arising from Meeting 03/2018 not covered elsewhere.
 - 4.1.None.
5. Membership.
 - 5.1.As at 18:00 today, 35 out of 89 members had renewed for 2019, with, in addition, 3 payments pending. 3 members had resigned, 1 had moved out of RH19, and 2 (a couple) gave no reason. The membermojo system would generate reminders in due course for those that hadn't renewed yet.
 - 5.2.Newsletters had gone out to members on 31st August and 4th December
6. East Court Steering Meeting
 - 6.1.In attendance
 - MSDC
 - Cllr Gary Marsh (in the chair)
 - Rob Anderton
 - Jennifer Hollingum
 - Greg Sweeney
 - Steve Witchell
 - Mark Hayler
 - EGMEL
 - Chris Nunn
 - Peter Thurlow
 - EGTC
 - Julie Holden
 - GUEST
 - Nina Willan - English Woodlands Forestry Ltd (EWFL) - by invitation
 - 6.2.GENERAL

6.3.A very positive meeting. Good turnout from MSDC, with all parties fully engaged. All agreed that positive communication through Press and Social media is very important. Forthcoming work on the McIndoe Path and Holtye Track should be warmly welcomed by local residents and visitors.

6.4.COMPLETED WORK

6.4.1.Swale rebuilt

6.4.2.Tree management in Scout Land

6.4.3.Closer co-operation with ACG (SW meeting them again in a fortnight)

6.4.4.Traveller issue dealt with

6.5.WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

6.5.1.EWFL www.englishwoodlandsforestry.co.uk have been appointed to write a 10 year woodland management plan. NW has visited the woods and gave us a very comprehensive review of what is needed, in what timescale, for each separate area. She seemed very sympathetic to the need to minimise collateral damage and to keep the public onside. The draft plan will come to EGMEL/MSDC/ACG for first comments, and then will have to go to Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and HW AONB so it can get "UK Forestry Scheme" approval. Once achieved this will allow for grant applications. EWFL will aim to sell as much timber as possible to partially offset the cost of management [proceeds to go to MSDC to offset costs]. Nina said that we could expect to see enormous changes to parts of our wood as evidence of Ash Dieback was widespread. This would give an opportunity for replanting though.

6.6.HOLTYE TRACK

6.6.1.Improving the Holtye Track was an essential precursor to management of the northern part of the wood and is expected to be carried out Summer 2019 in readiness for forestry in winter 2019-20. MSDC believe we have a right of way over the Barratts strip at the end of Sterling Way and need us to legally extend this to MSDC and their contractors. We gave them details of our solicitors some months ago but have heard nothing since. Budget is ca. £35k i.e. all of next years SANG budget plus a bit more. No financial involvement from EGMEL discussed. WSCC happy with the PROW situation.

6.7.McINDOE PATH

6.7.1.Work has apparently just started building new steps on the MP to the north of the stream. The work to surface the path will commence in the 2nd week of January. EGMEL agreed to contribute £2k, the remainder coming out of original pump-priming budget. Small rustic fence to protect No. 30 is in the plans -format to be agreed with both neighbours.

6.8.TRAVELLERS

6.8.1.MSDC currently working on plans for more ditch/bund and height restriction for estate road. Extra MSDC budget has been made available.

6.9.YEW HEDGE

6.9.1.MSDC now minded to keep this as part of the Conservation area. Plan to totally overhaul in 2019. [MF said that ACG maybe able to help with this. Liaising with Steve Witchell]

6.10.AMBULANCE TRAINEE STAFF PARKING

6.10.1.Various initiatives have caused this parking problem to keep moving, and they are now using the Pavilion car park. MSDC to officially write to SECAM.

6.11.REVISED GRASS CUTTING REGIME

6.11.1.The 10year plan calls for some areas of parkland to be left uncut. SW to send out a draft of their proposals for comment and implementation next summer.

6.12.NEW SWALE (by Pavilion)

6.12.1.This was finished this summer and had been left to overgrow. MSDC plan to cut back. [MF added that the new ditch/bund needed to be connected to the swale and was talking to SW about this]

6.13.SANG FUNDING

6.13.1.£1m+ now signed up, with £700k+ collected with no budget spent so far. 100+ more dwellings to sign up before SANG is fully committed. Should sustain £28k/annum in perpetuity.

6.14.GREEN FLAG

6.14.1.MSDC keen to go for green flag award for East Court & Ashplats Wood www.greenflagaward.org.uk This would involve annual inspection. Good news.

6.15.EGTC

6.15.1.East Court drive now legally owned by EGTC. They will be looking for a contribution from MSDC for upkeep. JH chasing their solicitor to complete access agreement with us. Still a lot of concern about parking. They are soon going to introduce parking controls. Park Run should be using EGTC car park. Looking to provide 2 bays for catering vans (near the playground). Trying to improve disabled access around the outside of East Court mansion

6.16.NEXT EAST COURT STEERING MEETINGS

6.16.1.Wed May 15th 10am Walkabout

6.16.2.Tues Dec 3rd, meeting at MSDC

7. Finances

7.1.Investment portfolio is being hit by Brexit uncertainty. Current value is £592k, some 5.8% down on the 2017 year-end valuation. Income from the fund though is up from 2.3% last year to 2.5% in 2018. This projects to an income of £14,896 for the whole year.

7.2.Our current account stands at £15.3k. At this time though, The empty Lodge is a drain on revenue, whereas when occupied it was a revenue generator. The sooner we sell it, the better.

8. Property

8.1.The Lodge

8.1.1.As agreed at the last meeting PBA consulting have been in dialogue with MSDC to get an opinion on the possibility of developing the site. The result is inconclusive, but more negative than positive. It was agreed that we cover the potential for a windfall gain from a new owner by inserting a restrictive covenant on development in the sale contract.

8.1.2.Since the last meeting our intention to sell The Lodge has been made known to our members, EGTC, MSDC and local Councillors. We have not encountered any adverse reaction.

8.1.3.The next step is to get a Charities Act valuation from an independent surveyor. It was agreed that this person needed to have no existing links to EGMEL and it was agreed that CN would approach Graves Jenkins in Crawley.

8.1.4.It was suggested that a sub-committee be formed to select estate agents and manage the sale process. CR & MP agreed to help with this, and CN suggested LG as Chair. After the meeting CN also asked SB if she could help.

8.1.5.It was noted that our insurers are getting increasingly uncomfortable with the property being vacant.

8.1.6.CN is liaising with SB re holding a second set of keys.

8.2.College Rd

8.2.1.MP has now finalised the Deed of Covenant with EGTC to give residents of The Lodge pedestrian access 365 days per year and vehicular access at most times, with minor restrictions. It was resolved that CN should sign this on behalf of the Company.

9. Grants and Donations

9.1.ND stated that although our finances were under a bit of pressure at this time, he saw no reason why in 2019 we shouldn't make similar sums available as we did in 2018. CR to present ideas at next meeting.

9.2.MF reported concerns from ACG about future funding and was reassured by ND that funds were readily available as needed, but the process was no more "pull" than "push"

10. Neighbours

10.1. MSDC are going to clear brash from behind Fulmar Drive/Lancaster Drive in conjunction with ACG "over a period of time"

10.2.Nos. ~~30/8/11~~ Pegasus Way are believed to have encroached on our land. Agreed that we should monitor the situation going forward, but not attempt to reverse the current position.

10.3.The "Residents Committee of Bluebell Gate" had approached PT and asked for help managing the woodland between Bluebell Gate and the Holtye Track. Agreed that PT should point them in the direction of Sussex Wildlife Trust.

11. Insurances

11.1.Nothing to report

12. Website and Publicity

12.1.Two new items added to "Latest news". 30/8: Travellers, 9/11: Parking

13. Archives

13.1.SB has informed us that there is a large file on the Holtye Track that needs archiving. AF to sift prior to CN scanning?

14. Any Other Business

14.1.None

15. Dates of Subsequent Meetings

15.1. Directors Meeting: Wednesday ?? February 2019 at Chequer Mead.

