



# Petts Wood War Memorial Trust

Registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales number 303032

## PETTS WOOD WAR MEMORIAL TRUST

### MINUTES OF THE 77<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023 IN THE TOWNCOURT ROOM, PETTS WOOD WAR MEMORIAL HALL BR5 1LA

Meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

- 1. Welcome by the Chair:** - The Chair, Andrew Stotesbury welcomed Trustees, Guests and Staff to the 77<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and thanked them for coming. The meeting was informed that a sound recording was being made to ensure a full record of the meeting. The chair explained that the monthly meetings were also recorded. There was no comment to this. (Cllr Simon Fawthrop arrived during the Chair's Address)
- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Mike Ricketts, Lina Karin.
- 3. Verification of the correctness of the Minutes of the previous AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022:** Minutes of the 76<sup>th</sup> AGM were handed to attendees. At Evan Jones suggestion The Chair read out notable items:  
Because income was down due to the effect of Covid the Trust drew on savings.  
100<sup>th</sup> year of the RBL  
The New format of Petts Wood Calling – was amazing  
Covid efficiencies introduced  
Review commenced into legacy issues with accounts ongoing  
Modest refurbishments – Lighting in Hall has been done  
Lee Parks our treasurer registered after 7 years.  
Roger Brown did not seek re-election after 14years a great loss to the Trust.  
Evan Jones, Mike Ricketts and Chris Jones were re-elected

#### **Matters arising:**

Lea had given notice that he would resign a couple of months before the 2022 AGM.

Verification was proposed by Evan Jones and seconded by Chris Jones carried by show of hands and signed by the Chair.

- 4. Chairman's Report:** - Andrew Stotesbury presented the report of the Chair of Trustees.:

Thank you for taking the time to join us this evening;. My report on behalf of the charity will include a brief history of the year, some of the highs, and lows, and our expectations for the coming year.

My year stated immediately after the April AGM where we were very sorry to lose some Trustees as they stood down for various reasons.

Roger Brown after many years of service as Secretary

Lee as Treasurer,

And shortly afterwards Joanne Barber who was looking after our investments and savings





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Ben Col, Lina Karin and most recently Susan Radford has joined the team and is standing as Secretary we still have some posts not filled including Treasurer so may I ask that any questions on our finances could be addressed to me.

Just this week I have been approached by another keen to join the trustee. They are unable to attend this evening so have been invited to our next meeting at the end of July. The trust is only as strong as the team.

I have also to report that our immediate past Chair Evan Jones will be standing down as a trustee following this AGM. Evan has been in the chair ever since I joined the Trustees 9 years ago and has steered the Hall through Covid, Safeguarding the trust's assets with the Charity Commission, general administration and together with Lee's has helped to bring us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with Microsoft 360, Teams, etc. Thank you. These changes have been embraced by all the Trustees.

Elaine our Hall Manager has been joined during the last year by Julie Crockett and Adam Mount our new Hall Stewards. They have already added their personalities and contribution to the running of the hall, events and hirers sessions.

Another indispensable member of the Hall team is our Lead Gardener. Adrian Mapp. Who regularly attends, maintains and keeps our gardens to provide a haven of space for peaceful relaxation and contemplation. This is sometimes not that easy with the varied weather conditions and our two major events that use the gardens, but they are always looking smart for these events and most particularly for the Remembrance Day service at the memorial in the gardens. Where I was again honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of the trustees. (Any other Trustee want to represent the Trust this November?)

Changes can be opportunities. The Trustees has already commended a review into the systems we use to manage our finances and investments, so we were in a great position to appoint Fairman Keeble of 4a Fairway as our bookkeepers. They have been able to support the Trust in our account submittals to the charity commission. (So even though we do not currently have a Treasure the trust has governance through this accountancy company)

The review of our investments that Joanne Barbour was working through has been taken over by Lina and this is reaching a conclusion as we are now in the final stages of appointment of a Wealth Manager to oversee our reserves. Once these are agreed then it is expected to release time for the Trustees to focus on the hall, it's maintenance and future. (Clear the decks so we can manage the exceptions – A lot of Trustees time has been spend sorting Bank-Accounts, investments, etc. I joined the trust 5 years ago to look at future plans but been unable to progress this)

Maintenance has been a big consideration this year.

You may recall that we had an exceptional hot summer last year. This was and has been established as a possible cause of some subsidence that effected the kitchen area of our main hall and some of the toilets in the entrance annex. This did cause a bit of alarm at the time. The Trust responded by an initial visual survey with a Charter Civil Engineer which immediately established that the overall structure was NOT at risk. It also seemed unlikely that the dry weather was solely the cause. An insurance assessor visited the Hall and requested a full drain survey of the Hall. This was undertaken but with uncertain outcome but a much better understanding of these services. The survey was not comprehensive as a section to the road was not carried out by the company. The situation was regularly monitored but no significate changes have been noticed. Currently the situation is stable. (Cllr Simon Fawthrop arrived) This did however put on hold the refurbishment of the kitchen area. This will all become a future project along with doors, locks etc to sort(We are keeping the situation monitored.):





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Also to add to this our insurance renewal added a condition that a full tree survey needed to be carried out. This has been done. Several trees have been identified as in need of removal and others need crown reductions, thinning or other works. The Trustees are currently reviewing this report and will be contacting the Council as many of our trees have a TPO.

If they do have to cut down then perhaps there is a community project that could benefit from the wood? (eg Sparrows Wood worked with Bromley College to create new signs)

The Trustees have invested into the Hall, the new LED luminaires has helped reduced our electrical costs and provided better lighting. This brings us onto the cost increase in Power and Gas, also an expected rise in Water rates. The trust is looking into ways to mitigate these. There has been ongoing dialogue with our water provider that is not as yet resolved. Statutory Services is a challenging area atm.

Many here will be aware that there is a rental flat as part of the premises. This provides the Trust with a vital regular rental income but has required an upgrade to meet regulations, and replacement of appliances and maintenance. Example: The access stairs are about to be repaired.

During the past year the gardens and hall have been subjected to some vandalism, and anti-social behaviour. Mostly below our insurance threshold.

Hall was vandalised and we had an aggressive break in with not only Hall assets being stolen or damaged but also one of our employees had personal items stolen. We understand the culprits have been arrested but we were disappointed with the response and follow-up by the Police.

This happened around the time we welcomed the Petts Wood Residents Association AGM to our Hall. The Police were made aware of the issue but their response was disappointing.

The Hall has been retained by Bromley Council for Voting. It is an ideal venue and certainly provided a safe space for the recent council election where Covid was still a concern.

There was a very successful Petts Wood Calling in August 2022 and more recently a well attended May Fayre 2023. The Hall is now looking forward to the next Petts Wood Calling, on August 6<sup>th</sup>.

As you have heard it has not been an easy year in some ways, we thank the understanding of our hires and with new Trustees and Stewards and some interesting new Hirers coming on boards we look forward to consolidating and improving our facilities and services for the local community still further.

Questions on the Report:

The hall currently has no rainwater storage – Cllr Fawthrop recommended installing water butts for watering the gardens! 1000lts cost ~£79 each and ~£79 transport. The council concentrates on Domestic, so it will be down to us to investigate this. The gardens are dry in the summer, and often suffer from some flooding during the winter. Also suggested to consider spiking the ground.

Elaine raised - The Lych-gate sign has been requested to be refurbished by Carole Noland. This might be part of a project for the trees that might need to be cut down. It is part of the halls history so will need to be respected. Roger suggested it could be refurbished. This will be added to the to do list, but it cannot be a high priority. Perhaps ask the St. Francis new Repair





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Café' General support from the floor, please send suggestions of assistance to Elaine our hall manager.

## 5. **Presentation of the Financial Report for the years ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022:** Because the trust currently has no Treasure Evan Jones read out this report:

The financial statements are currently with the Independent Examiner. When these are available, they will be posted on our website. They will also be available on the Charity Commissions Website. The charity improved its financial position through 2022.,. An Income of £92,000 up from £77,000 in 2021 and £67,000 but significantly lower than before Covid. When it was around £109,000. The charity is still being very prudent with it's spending. Even though it is expected to record an operating surplus of around £15,000 this need to be view in context with a negligible deficit in 2021 and deficit of £12,500 in 2020 so in effect over the last three years the charity has just broken even. With the Pre-school that had been operating form the Hall for many years leaving this at the end of 2022 the charity will also see reduced income in this financial year. All hire for the five months to the end of May 2023 comes to £21,500 compared with £37,000 for the same period last year. The charity is still able to operate as reserves have been cautiously built up before covid. The trust holds sufficient cash reserves to cover a years operating costs in addition to long term investments saved toward the replacement of the buildings when they reach the end of their useful life. The trustees have withheld investing form renovating some of the facilities such as the kitchens and toilets for the past couple of years and have decided it is also sensible that these are on hold for 2023 as well. By keeping expenditure to a minimum even with the loss on one of the charities largest hirers the charity expects that the income will broadly match it's cost. Although the loss of a large hirer in one way presents a challenge it also presents opportunities for a number of local business and organisation to take advantage of the facilities of the Memorial Hall. As new hirers come into the charity, they will not be receiving the discount arrangement that has been in place over many years. Even if just half the time slots were booked then the income would recover to present levels. As in previous years the charity has benefited form steady income from renting, the flat above the Towncourt Room. There have been no significate costs associated with this since the necessary renovation works in 2019, this means that the rent goes to supporting the charitable activities. Since 2019 it has been this additional income that has helped to ensure the charity has broken even and will do so for year period to the end of 2023. The trustees have adopted a low-risk approach to the finances of the charity. In addition to cash-in-the-bank the charity also has several bonds and long-term saving accounts. With rising inflation and interest rates not keeping pace and a significant administrative overhead of managing multiple accounts the trustees are exploring alternative options to obtain the best return for the charity. As part of this the trust has begun initial discussions with investment fund managers to invest in low-risk ethical investment that may be suitable for the charity to achieve appropriate returns.

Draft numbers are available. But will be issued via the Charity Commission.  
Questions: None

The Chair added: In the meantime, without a Treasure with the assistance of the independent Book-keeping service Elaine the Hall manager our Staff are being paid.





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## 6. Election of Members for the Committee of Management:

The current Management Committee consists of:

Elaine Byrne (Hall Manager)  
Ben Colenbrander  
Evan Jones (leaving the Trust)  
Lina Karim  
Chris Jones  
Susan Radford  
Mike Ricketts

The following are to be confirmed as Trustees

Ben Colenbrander, Lina Karim and Susan Radford  
All proposed by Andrew Stotesbury seconded by Chris Jones.  
Each was approved by a show of hands.

7. **Election of Examiner:** Simpkins Edwards, completed the independent examination of previous financial statements and the Committee wish to continue using their services. Proposed by Andrew Stotesbury and seconded by Chris Jones and carried. No objections.

## 8. Any Other Business:

CCTV. Needs replacing as the unit was stolen after forced entry. Especially as there has been recent remnant of parties taking place in the gardens, considered locking gate, but we do not want to turn the gardens into a fortress. So enhancing the camera is being looked at, we want to safe guard the gardens. Any CCTV need to be collected and used this has not always happened.

Fuel cost: Ben Boilers do they need replacing? We are looking at maintenance contracts but they but there has been no response form the companies approached. The boilers are incredibly old. Possibly over 30years, built to last but a new efficient one could provide saving. Consider Air-Source heat pumps (at least consider) We have three!! Perhaps it will come to new boilers with associated maintenance contracts. Funds allowing. This is on the to-Do list.

Solar Power? on the roof be used with Solar-Cells. Good question. This could be looked at. Not sure the roof will have the structural capacity. The Cllr was asked if there are grants. 15 years return on investment. For the Hall the power requirements is huge. Conservation Zone, Planning Permission required. Shade from trees, Perhaps solar tiles? Possible consider battery recharge at night and use stored in daytime? Somewhat also depends on unit cost for electricity. The trust is happy to receive any proposal.

If buildings are to be upgraded, then the above could be waited on until then.

General discussion about what is happening about the BIG project. If not broke don't fix it.





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Again, library option raised. The Trust has decided that we do not want to go into partnership with the council or a developer. But suggestion that we could be offered to manage potential council assets transfer. The trust will consider if formally approached.

Liability for Trustees. It is suggested that this is checked. Particularly as the building risk possibly increases owing to age. A gap analysis will be undertaken. To get a definite understanding of the position. The hirers also have insurance but this is unlikely to apply to the ad-hoc hirers. Again a full gap-analysis needed.

Consider an up-dated risk-register.

A question was raised about fire-alarms. This will be checked and the fire risk assessment checked.

Roger made a comment on the condition of the trees and the shading on the grass. The tree report might give an opportunity to thin these in particularly around the RBL memorial area. It is understood that there is a conflict between trees vs grass. Different grasses have been tried. Astroturf is ruled out! The council is not keen on taking down trees, but some of our trees are affecting the drains. The council will offer advice they can be contacted directly. Share the report with council – a second opinion. The trees do have to be managed as in an urban environment. Possible consult a National Trust- Mel Wright. ranger via the residence association. Check report for the Oak Moth. Report was received 4 weeks ago.

Elaine Byrne thanked for providing the refreshments served after the meeting.

The formal meeting closed at 9.14 pm.

