

BLACKBOURNE & WESLEY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Blackbourne, Elmswell IP30 9UH

Report to EPC on a Committee Meeting held on 8th May 2019

The continued relatively trouble-free progress towards a start on the works at Wesley was noted with satisfaction by Members keen to see the new community hub facility taking shape. It was noted that the preferred Contractor is identified with some peripheral issues to do with the asbestos removal, party wall agreement and the Performance Bond to be settled. EPC has delegated the Clerk and Chairman to sign and authority is to be sought for the borrowing approach at the next Council meeting. A start date of 17th June seems likely.

The accommodation of the Wesley user groups at Blackbourne is now being more gently introduced in light of the slightly later start date and all seems to be going well with co-operation on all sides. Members are aware of the efforts of Ann Brett, the Assistant Clerk, in juggling times, dates and rooms towards as painless as possible a process and still with an eye to satisfying the demand from non-village users so as to maintain income. The lorry container is comfortably absorbing long-term storage to free-up usable space within Blackbourne itself.

The Meeting expressed overwhelming enthusiasm for investigating further the possibility of acquiring the Railway Tavern site for community use. Views were expressed to the effect that the advantages to the Wesley project in terms of shared play space and parking are obvious whilst the viability of retaining the village's 2nd pub given the mushrooming population in the village seems to be in little doubt with advice from CAMRA, MSDC and other community pub groups on offer towards determining the best operating framework. An overriding factor remains the possibility of the establishment of an Elmswell Community Land Trust to provide genuine affordable homes for people with a strong village connection and ring-fenced in perpetuity against any Right To Buy. It was noted that such a CLT could build elsewhere in the village on a similar basis once established, redressing the balance against the devious means by which commercial developers avoid building such housing wherever they can find a way round it. EPC was urged to proceed with a professional valuation towards encouraging a negotiation and the determination of a firm offer price.

Meanwhile, all present accepted the importance of confirming what is perceived to be wide public support at the Annual Parish Meeting, now called for 28th May.

The successful appointment of Paul Hammond as a weekend / relief caretaker was welcomed as it not only relieves pressure on existing staff, but allows for greater security of the site, particularly the locking of the car park gate.

The Chairman undertook to investigate the possibility of a dog faeces collection-bag dispenser at the Blackbourne entrance as a step towards educating owners whose carelessness and irresponsibility continues to present a dangerous and objectionable result for other users, particularly youngsters and very young children playing on befouled grass.

The Chairman undertook to cost the reinstatement of an automatic door to the Jubilee entrance. The original was removed as a nuisance as it was PIR activated. Any new device would be push-pad operated only.

Peter Edmonds
Secretary
16.05.19

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