**Belford Community Group Meeting**

**Monday 17 June 2019**

**Apologies for absence:** Ian Hodgson

**Present:** Pauline Tucker (Chairman), Dave Ogden (Treasurer), Phil Dodd (Secretary), Val Barnsley, Ruth Dodd, Dennis Cromarty, Doug Renton, Susan Husband, Amanda White, Fiona Renner – Thompson, William McLaren, Karon Ives, Brian Rogers, Steve White, Jodi

**Minutes of the last meeting:** Agreed by all and signed by Pauline

**Matters Arising from last meeting:** The issue of payment for the Reading Room bills (mainly electricity) has still not been resolved due to these bills not being shown to us. William agreed to follow this up. Everything else is to be covered by other agenda items.

**Update from Brian Rogers re Woodland and Village Hall:**

**Woodlands:** Brian had a meeting with Frances Povey from the NCC on Friday 7th June. A volunteer’s code of conduct is to be introduced and we will either have to work with the Council and do what they want or basically remain as we are (with Brian Rogers and John Hare as supervisors and the Community Group as insurance providers). It was felt that the latter proposal would suit us best. All volunteers would have to fill out a straightforward form and risk assessments have already been considered.

The strimmer certificates for the key volunteers are not up to date, so for the moment no strimming can be done. However, it was decided that Kirkley Hall were the best people to provide training and places for Brian and John have been booked at £185 per person in the autumn. The certificates last for 5 years. Strimming has just been completed, so we should be able to manage without further strimming until the autumn.

**Village Hall:** There is a meeting tomorrow to look at the questionnaire returns re the Village Hall, More discussions to then take place and a way forward decided.

**Arts Festival:** Jodi attended the meeting and gave a very clear and comprehensive view of where we were up to with the festival. Groups of volunteers have different roles, the programme is really full and 56 artists/makers are attending. Copies of the programme were shown.

Sarah Riseborough is working on a project “A Handmade Life”. This will focus on handmade objects used in real life and involve people showing these objects and talking about them. This will be an interactive museum throughout the festival and involve people from Belford and the surrounding area.

Val wondered whether this might involve children in the storytelling and might be staged in the Bell View garden.

There has been discussion of the programme on social media and publicity throughout Northumberland, e.g. in Hexham. Funding remains a struggle, but the sale of raffle tickets is helping and other fundraisers have been tried. The Co-op bid has been put in and the Catherine Cookson bid is to follow shortly.

20 volunteers have already signed up and a second recruitment meeting is to take place tomorrow. Amanda was thanked for her efforts in publicising the festival on both Facebook and Twitter.

The website is 50% completed, posters and leaflets have been printed, banners are up and there is to be a discussion with volunteers on putting up signage to all the events.

Businesses and the public are to be asked to evaluate the success of the festival, and volunteers are to be fully briefed on the vision of the festival.

Food remains an issue and it was felt that local food providers need to step up their involvement or perhaps in future, caterers from outside the village may be invited to participate.

An attempt is to be made to improve the Bell View minibus service to take people from one venue to another throughout the festival.

**Finance:** With an income this month of £3220.45 and outgoings of £790.55 everything remains in a good state. The shop and the gym are largely responsible for this. We have the usual expenses and some money will be going out for the Arts Festival. Dave is to meet our new accountant soon and Fiona is to try to get more local groups to apply for funding, as well as taking on the role of following up where grants have been issued.

**Shop:** Continues to perform well and thanks to all involved.

**Markets:** The last market was another success. The team of helpers always ensures a hassle free event in setting up and taking down. Next market as part of Arts Week

**Museum:** There have been some donations from the Erskine Hall, as a result of the church and hall being closed. Two village walks have been organised by the Museum and will take place on 14th and 18th August (both at 2.30)

**Gym:** Michael Gilroy from the council is to meet the Trustees to discuss the fuel bill situation. We now know that Opus energy is the provider, so some progress here. We are standing firm in our determination to see the actual bills before paying anything.

Steve is doing a good job in collecting memberships.

We need to think about how the gym might be part of any new hall, but feel that we should continue working on moving forward with the current building as a new village hall may be many years away. It was also thought that when the issues with the current building have been addressed we should re-launch the gym with an open day event.

**Woodlands:** Doing well and attracting many appreciative visitors.

**Any other business:** Bell View sent us a letter saying they are looking at older residents housing needs. They would like a representative from the BCG and Sue has agreed to attend.

It was decided to ask for volunteers on Facebook, to look after the planters outside the Co-Op, but we have now heard that the Co-Op and the School will be doing this.

We are still looking for new Trustees and the new vicar has expressed an interest.

We are going to get a few quotes to see if the Shop and the Museum can get better heating. Amanda will speak to the person who did Chatton Village Hall and ask him to come and take a look.

**Next meeting: Monday 29 July 2019 at 6.30**