



BEAMINSTER MUSEUM TRUST

Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting

Held on Tuesday 23th January 2024 in the Museum

The Chairman welcomed everybody and reminded them that in accordance with the Constitution, as Friends of the Beaminster Museum, they are the electorate of both the Trustees and the Management Committee, and their support was essential for the functioning of the Museum charity.

Apologies: Apologies for absence had been received from 16 Friends

Present: 22 Friends were present, and Vicky de Witt of the Museums Association.

- 1. Minutes of the last meeting:** The Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting held on 24th January 2023, having been duly proposed and seconded, were approved. There were no matters arising not otherwise covered in the Agenda.
- 2. Chairman of the Trustees Report:** Having reminded the meeting of the present Trustees and the requirement for re-election after a three year term, Alec Crawford (AC) summarised the Trustees responsibilities to the Charities Commission and their responsibilities in respect of finance and the buildings, AC was pleased that the accounts for the year ended 4th November 2023 had shown a small surplus and that with the completion of the expansion project, the accounts showed that the project had been completed within budget. AC drew attention to two major projects in hand in respect of the buildings, involving the stained glass windows in the front wall of the building which required considerable attention likely to cost £25,000 and solving the problem of damp, work on which was being done in house with minimum expenditure. Finally AC drew attention to the Trustees responsibility for maintaining the Trust's Policy and Governance Documents which form an important part of the regular Accreditation review which can be expected in the next year. The Forward Plan, part of the Governance Documents, has been passed to the Management Committee to keep under continuous review .
- 3. Management Committee Chairman's Report:** Matthew Kirkman (MK) thanked a number of Friends who have made significant contributions to the success of the Museum in the past year including Richard and Helen Smith, Bid and Alistair Wheeler, Gill Samson, Chris Ward, Linda Le Breton and Peter Reynolds.
MK outlined plans for displays for the 2024 season including 'A Stitch in Time' as well as refreshing the clocks display and agriculture and revamping digital displays.
MK thanked the Collections team for their work in continuing to improve the quality of the records and emphasised the continuous fight against excessive humidity levels in view of the possible effect on sensitive material on display. He also outlined work being done by Bournemouth University on revising the popular view of the Iron Age to Roman transition in West Dorset in which the

Museum has been involved with a hope that any finds from further excavations at Waddon Hill might be donated to the Museum.

In respect of the Beaminster Festival we are currently advised that the Museum's involvement may be limited to a couple of digital art displays. It is planned that in addition to the normal opening time of the Museum, it will be open every afternoon during the week of the Festival.

MK mentioned various DIY projects which will be on going including the installation of a self service card donation point, completing the UV and IR film on the Rose Gallery windows, completing the damp proofing and installation of the Toilet and minor damp work in the kitchen and Chesterman Room.

In the longer term MK summarised the repairs that are necessary to the stained glass windows, dating from 1825, which will cost some £25,000 of which it is hoped to obtain a grant of £5,000 from Dorset Council and then seeking funds from various other sources that provide for architectural heritage and former ecclesiastical buildings so that the Museum's exposure is limited to £5,000 from existing funds. Work will not commence until the full funding is in place. Furthermore it is planned to strip out the kitchen next winter in order to better address the damp on the rear wall.

In order to improve the visitor experience and make the entrance to the Museum more welcoming, it is hoped to revamp the entrance, at least providing a clear glass door in place of the present tinner double doors and Jonathan Fairchild has agreed to lead on this project initially to produce a series of different approaches.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** Linda le Bretton reported that a legacy of £5,000 had been received from the estate of the late Dr Mary Trenchard and other donations, enabling the purchase of two new display cabinets. A grant of £410 had been received from the Dorset Museums Association towards the purchase of computer and digital equipment and events, including a very successful bric-a-brac sale, form an in important part of income. Thanks to the legacy the income and expenditure account showed a surplus. The final payment of £1,184 had been received from the National Lottery for the expansion project. Colin Schofield, having agreed to stand and having been duly proposed and seconded, was elected as Accounts Examiner.

5. **Election of Trustees, Officers and Management Committee:**

Trustees:

The trustees are elected on a three year cycle for up to three cycles.

Alec Crawford, Marcus Chambers and Matthew Kirkman were up for re-election, plus Jonathan Fairchild having been co-opted during the year, and were duly proposed and seconded.

Management Committee:

The management committee are elected annually.

The following having agreed to stand for the Management Committee and having been duly proposed and seconded, were unanimously elected for the following year:

Chairman: Matthew Kirkman (Acting Curator.)

Hon Treasurer: Linda le Bretton
Hon Secretary: Alec Crawford
Members: Bid Wheeler
Richard Smith
Janice Pryke

6. Any other business:

In reply to a question concerning the Memory Café. the Chairman advised that the Beaminster group was in abeyance but as soon as they were active again the offer of the Memory Café would be repeated. In respect of the Winter talks the Chairman confirmed that for the 2024-25 season consideration would be given to holding some talks in the evening and, possibly on a Sunday.

Sally Wakefield endorsed the thanks to Chris Ward for her work on the Stewards Rota, and Douglas Beazer endorsed thanks to Pete Reynolds for his DIY work.

7. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 2.00pm in the Museum.