

MINUTES OF TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF HALESWORTH COUNTY LIBRARY MEETING HELD ON 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017 (postponed from 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb).

**Present:** Alison Britton (Vice-Chair) (AB). Evelyn Lindquist (EL). Natalie Meg Evans (NME). Wendy Boyden (WB). David Olds (DO). Alan Holzer (AH). Mike Stephens (MS). Ali Hopkins (Library Manager).

1. **Welcome by Alison:** Vice-Chair, standing in for Dr Payne.

2. **Apologies for absence:** Dr Andrew Payne (AP). Chair. Sheila Freeman (SF).

3. **Minutes of meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov.** After these had been checked for accuracy it was proposed by WE, seconded by DO and agreed that these be signed by AB as a correct record.

4. **Matters Arising:**

- **Event's Co-ordinator's Report** AB pointed out two errors.

The Magic Shows to celebrate the Library's birthday had raised around £300, not £108. The Quiz Night had "competition" not "opposition" from other quizzes.

- **Item 7. Junior Library refit.**

Apology from AH. The first plans (drawn up by David Hopkins) HAD been sent by Ali to all Trustees and their comments HAD been collated by AH, as follows: Very supportive: Evelyn, Alison, Sheila, Alan, Tamsyn, Natalie, Andrew, Wendy, and David. Umi (since resigned as a Trustee) – raised issues, but did not indicate whether she supported the project or not. Mike. Supportive, but raised the following issues. Ref. Good governance. Financial accountability. SCC approval for significant structural change for a building owned by the Council (planning, building regulations. etc.). Need to clarify whether SCC could carry out any of the work as part of the Council's capital expenditure programme.

Note: The relevant SCC officer for all this is Mr Roy Excell, Corporate Property Advisor to SCC. Ali and Alan know him well. He is very supportive and helpful and has already forwarded a lot of relevant documentation.

AS suggested at the last meeting, another company, **fg**, had been approached and a small group (MS, SF, AB and Ali) was established and met with the representative, Julian Glover, at the Library on 14<sup>th</sup> February. The plans for a so-called "Story wall" had been drawn up following this meeting were circulated and discussed.

There was a feeling that the earlier plans appeared to have been rejected but the Trustees were reassured by MS that this was not the case and that both sets of plans were still under consideration. MS agreed to send some suggestions and queries to Julian Glover to clarify some issues about the new plans. It was also considered sensible to perhaps obtain a third set of plans but the difficulty of finding a suitable company to do this was recognised. (Few companies cover the east of England and most companies do not install as well as supply the furniture).

Points discussed included written comments from SF. She was concerned that we might not be meeting the needs of teenagers and that maybe another section of the library should be designated for them. It was pointed out that there was an area for them on the mezzanine. It was considered that the teenagers liked to be upstairs and that their area should remain there. But in the future, we should consider upgrading the facilities. Additionally, it was felt that the **fg** plans did not offer sufficient extra shelving. The risks issues around fitting the new shelving etc. were raised again. We need to check if Willowbrook can both design and fit?

After considerable discussion of all the matters raised it was proposed by WB, seconded by AB, and agreed that all these be considered in fresh draft plans from **fg** to be presented at a meeting to be held for this purpose.

5. **Finance Report:** MS reported that there was currently £16k in the bank. The application submitted to Halesworth Town Council by AB (in AP's absence) for a grant of £3k had been approved, which means that there is now £19k available.

6: **Report back from Suffolk Libraries Community Forum held in Stowmarket.** MS gave a very full report. Also, see documentation forwarded by him.

7. **Event Co-Ordinator's Report:** (Circulated with 22<sup>nd</sup> November minutes).

AB commented that new ideas were needed for fund-raising, for example, a 'Calendar Competition' (photography) of the kind that Lowestoft Library has just started. She will obtain an entry form for our guidance in considering setting up a similar competition.

**8. Library Manager's Report:** (Circulated with 22<sup>nd</sup> November minutes).

Ali reported that Bungay Library has set up a 'Pens for Sale' scheme which looks to be a useful fundraiser. Proposed EL, seconded WB and agreed that Ali get details of this scheme with a view to our library setting up one itself. Suggestions for Halesworth Friendly message on the pens welcomed.

AB suggested that we might like to consider producing fund raising badges (aimed at young people) such as some of us remember from the past. AB and EL to investigate possibilities.

**9. Membership Secretary and Communication Officer's Report:**

Recruiting Friends: AB reported that there had been no rush to join the Friends in response to the report in the EADT. She had posted a copy of this newspaper article on Facebook where it had been seen by 770 people, liked by 14, and shared by 2. However, it had not resulted in new Friends. Southwold Library has held a series of 'Drop Ins' to recruit Friends and AB will e-mail Charlotte Clark, the library's manager, for details, with a view to introducing these to Halesworth.

It was noted by MS that the Halesworth Facebook page had received fulsome praise from the Suffolk Library Forum. AB reported that the page is currently liked by 372 people, and the Twitter feed has 441 followers.

AB has recently updated the information about the Library on TripAdvisor. The Library is currently number 4 on 'Things to Do in Halesworth', with 18 positive reviews. Number 3 is the Duke William B&B in Metfield which used to be a tea-shop. It is no longer "something to do" and anyway, should be listed under Harleston not Halesworth. EL will point out these problems to TripAdvisor in the hopes that we can move up to number 3, behind Oasis Camels and the CUT!

As suggested at the last meeting, AB had produced a list of the Library events in March. Ali reported that this had been useful and popular. The format can be used to produce lists for future months but work is needed to get posters displayed, especially in the villages (either electronically or on notice boards - or both).

**10. Date and planning for AGM.** After discussion, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May was decided as the date, with a 6.30 p.m. start (no '6.00 for 6.30' confusion!). Sylvia Knights was suggested as the guest speaker and AB will send an invitation. A meeting of the Trustees will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> April to discuss details of the AGM.

**11. Any Other Business Allowed by the Chair:**

EL would like to create a display, using two acrylic stands, which would make the Library look "a little more like a bookshop". The display could highlight, for example, other books written by the authors of the "Top Ten" current novels. People could read these while waiting in a queue to borrow the best-sellers. She hoped this might attract people who might not normally use our library. The display could have other focuses, such as local authors. Proposed N.M.E and seconded DO and agreed that this proposal be given the committee's full support and EL could go ahead and order the necessary stands.

**12. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 5.45pm, in the Library.

Meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Signed:

Chair:

Date: