

**THE MERRY BELLS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
ON THE 8TH FEBRUARY 2024
HELD IN THE ANNEX**

Present:

Mr T. Blightman	Mr. I. McGregor
Mrs J. Slade	Mrs L. Tully
Mr I. Germain	Mrs. F. Fox
Dr. J. Guy	

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr. J. Morrison

2. Agree the Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes were agreed as a true record

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The defibrillator sign outside the Merry Bells is still required.

ImcG has kindly dealt with the bench plaques

It was confirmed that Cornfields have had 4 boxes of the beer.

4. Treasurer's Report

Two sheets were handed out, as there was a re-working of the December Accounts, with Sheet 1 now showing a small loss of £40 for the month of December, which still resulted in a Surplus for the year of £14,161. But as explained, with the audited Financial Accounts there will be some further adjustments. For example, the rental income of £650 for one of the offices, two thirds (£433) may be moved to 2024. There may also be other expenses accounted for in 2023.

However, on the reverse side of Sheet 1, we compared 2023 results against 2022, which was extremely positive, with an increase in Total Income from £39,185 in 2022 to £44,115 in 2023. At the same time Total Expenditure of £29,954 in 2023 was reduced from £41,622 in 2022, largely due to legal fees and exceptional repairs, which resulted in a Surplus of £14,161 in 2023 compared to a Loss of £2,437 in 2022. There was a brief discussion about potential 2024 Exceptional Expenditure to 'justify' this increase in funds and we have begun with a brief explanation in the current issue of the Wheatley Newsletter.

The second sheet showed the Management Accounts for January 2024 and the results again were encouraging, with a Surplus of £2,769. The Total Income of £6,043 was mainly due to the first Quarter's Rents of £5,250, although it was considered that the Hirings' Income of £793 was especially encouraging for January. Our Hirings' Income for the last Quarter in 2023 averaged about £1,200 per month.

The Total Expenses of £338 produced a Gross Profit of £5,705, which after Overheads and Exceptional Expenses of £2,588 meant a Net Profit of £3,117 and following Depreciation of £348 meant the Surplus of £2,769.

TB advised that SODC had sent a demand for business rates, for which in previous years we had had 100% relief. He has submitted an appeal and is waiting to hear more.

5. Maintenance Report

The Steps in the Car Park have now been painted. The lock into the Library has now been fixed. The heating system has hopefully been resolved. After investigation a faulty valve had malfunctioned which has been replaced.

A trial of 2 hours before a meeting is being tested. A survey suggested that 3 larger radiators would help with the heating in the main hall. One of the heaters still needs to be repaired. **TB** waiting for the part to arrive.

Unfortunately the DVD is not working David Harvison is investigating.

It has been reported that the wall in the Car Park facing Church Road is crumbling. Also a tile has slipped on the Merry Bells Roof. All require investigating and quoting. The post in the car park remains a problem and maybe an overhanging lockable gantry would be an option. The urn in the kitchen has developed a leak and needs to be replaced.

TB has finished all the PAT testing.

6. Correspondence

Unfortunately a complaint from a resident was received. It seems that a particular booking for a party, which is required to finish at 11 pm, seemed to have been very noisy and children playing outside until midnight. This is not acceptable and the hirer has been informed. It was felt that for parties booked for the evening at weekends, a deposit should be taken.

It was also suggested that a camera could be installed in the Hallway operational for evening bookings.

7. Bookings Update

The Bookings still remain in a good position.

8. Monthly Calendar

The Library lease is due for renewal in June 2025. The rent has been unchanged since 2010 and will be reviewed in discussions with OCC which will have to take place as this is quite a delicate situation as regards closure. Something the village do not want to lose as there has been a Library of some sort in the building since its opening in 1888. A letter inviting a meeting will be sent.

The leases for the Parish Office and Identity Hair are also up for renewal in April 2024. A 10% increase was discussed but no decision was taken, pending investigation of comparative costs per square foot elsewhere, for discussion at the next meeting.

We should also conduct the annual review of our policies at the next meeting.

The insurance for the building is up for renewal in July **TB** to obtain quotes.

This year's AGM is planned for Thursday 6th June, followed by the regular committee meeting. The Main Hall is unavailable that evening and so the AGM will take place in the Coffee Room; if an unusually large number of people attend and cannot be accommodated, the meeting would have to be adjourned.

9. Any Other Business

The 50 Years celebration of the Coffee Room was a great success and enjoyed by many old and new residents of the village.

The W.I. has asked if it would be possible to replace some of the large tables for 6 smaller size. This to be researched.

11. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 7th March 2024 in the coffee room