

# BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



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To All Members of the Council, public and press.

8 April, 2103

There will be a meeting of the **Estates Committee** on **Tuesday 16 April 2013** at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:

**1. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

Members are required to declare any interests, requests for dispensation, lobbying or changes to the Register of Interests.

**2. Apologies and absence.**

To receive apologies for absence.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 12 February 2013.**

To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (previously circulated).

**4. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes.**

- 4.1 Minute 2510/4.1 Tree maintenance and boundary treatment to Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard see report on page 3
- 4.2 Minute 2510/4.2 Carbon Footprint/Insulation see report on page 3.
- 4.3 Minute 2510/4.3 Caretaking at Beechen Hall – Two new Caretakers have joined Beechen Hall and training has taken place during March.
- 4.4 Minute 2510/4.4 – Beech Tree in closed churchyard, see report on page 6
- 4.5 Minute 2510/5.2 – Yew Tree and damage to listed wall Boxley churchyard, see report on page 6.
- 4.6 Minute 2511/9 – General budget oiling of seats these have been extended to April due to the cold weather during February and March.
- 4.7 Minute 2511/9 – Hall budget Xplair Fan. Cancelled Members are advised that this has been put on hold due to current regulations regarding the replacement cooker in the kitchen please see item 8.
- 4.8 Minute 2512/11.2 Padded Seats Risk Assessment, see report on page 7.

**To adjourn the meeting to allow the public or press to comment**

**5. Induction Hearing Loop** – see report on page 7.

**6. Sandy Lane land** – The working group have met twice since February's meeting and this has been reported to the Parish Council an update will be provided if there are any further developments.

**7. Assistant Clerk's Report.**

7.1 Hire fees were received for Feb/Mar with a comparison for the same period in the previous year please see report on page 7.

**8. Replacement Cooker and Extraction Hood at Beechen Hall** – Please see report on page 8 and enclosure.

**9. Parish council annual property review**

9.1 Cobbled Path across Boxley Green. Two quotes have been received please see enclosure and report on page 8.

9.2 Report on condition of parish council open spaces etc. see report on page 8.

10. **2013/14 Budget**

To consider the following Items:

**Beechen Hall**

White Lining around car Park – A quote will be available for the meeting.

Leaf Clearing – Information to be circulated prior to the meeting.

Defibrillator – Will be circulated prior to meeting

11. **Review of Policies and Procedures.**

11.1 Business Continuity Plan – Member requested this item and policy is returned to the April agenda. See enclosure.

11.2 Discounts for Children's Clubs – See page 9.

12. **Matters for Decision**

Displaying dog waste signs at WDJO – Cllr Davies has requested this item be placed on the agenda. The office has received new self-adhesive stickers that wrap around lamp posts and these will be brought to the meeting for members to view and decide where they should be placed.

13. **Matters for Information**

None at the time of compiling the agenda.

14. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 13 June, 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2013.

**Clerk to the Council**

## REPORTS AND ITEMS RELATING TO THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING 16 APRIL, 2013

### **Item 4.1 Tree maintenance and boundary treatment to Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.** *Purpose of item for information.*

Cllr Vic Davies and the Clerk, when undertaking a site safety inspection, approached some local residents about the planned boundary work. In view of their concerns and comments about the proposed retail development on Penhurst Close it was agreed that rather than arrange any crown reduction to the trees that this would be left and revisited in a few years. Due to the geography of the area it was felt that noise and light pollution might cause an issue for some properties and as Grove Green Lane is lower at one point this may impact on front room bedrooms. Work to cut back some overgrown vegetation (which is scratching cars) will be arranged for Grove Green Lane.

### **Item 4.2 Carbon Footprint/Insulation.** *Purpose of item for information and for members views for further action.*

Members' requested an updated carbon footprint report (produced below) but there was a specific request on roof insulation and the section dealing with this is follows.

**1.11 Ceiling insulation.** The hall, foyer and toilets suspended ceilings were replaced in 2011 and extra insulation was added at the time. There are a few areas where the insulation is less (ceiling over the original office and office store room, kitchen and store rooms). These areas are either a little difficult to reach or it may not be possible to take the rolls of insulation through the current loft hatch. *Clerk note: kitchen, chair store and committee room - a person can with a little difficulty gain access through the hatch but the space between the top of the cupboards and the ceiling is very restricted so loft insulation rolls won't fit. It may be possible to have the quilted metallic style insulation as this can be unrolled and gradually fed through or access gained via removing main hall and committee room tiles ceiling tiles etc. Office (part) and office store - access by the main loft can accommodate old style and modern metallic style loft insulation.*

#### **Recommendation – members' views are sought.**

It is suggested that members' are faced with the following options concerning roof insulation. Do nothing. Issues caused by this lack of action – heat loss through inadequate insulation above the remaining areas.

Lay metallic style insulation or part lay old style insulation. Issues identified; whilst caretakers may be able to lay this insulation immediately adjacent to the boarded areas there are large areas of the loft that cannot be reached without boards or crawling ladders so consideration will need to be given to employing a contractor. Some areas that need more insulation have suspended ceilings whilst others do not. The Clerk suggests that it would not be sensible (as it may cause damage and will certainly cause a lot of mess) to interfere with ceiling tiles and the existing insulation.

#### **Carbon footprint and environmental impact of the Parish Council 2013. Briefing Note.**

The following is an update to the 2012 Carbon Footprint briefing note. Members' who have access to the internet might find the website at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) very interesting.

The following table shows the index used to gauge the implications for any work.			
1	Very easy.	AA	Financial savings anticipated.
2	Easy but needs a little thought/discussion with staff.	A	No or very little increased financial cost.
3	Some planning needed but achievable.	B	Additional financial cost that must be considered.
4	Difficult.	C	Larger budget implications that needs investigation.
5	Extremely difficult.	D	Large scale financial cost that with

			planning might be achievable but cost vs. benefit must be carefully considered.
		E	Large scale expenditure that might not be commensurate with any environmental return.

If members wish to take on a project that has a 4, 5 or D, E scale then it is suggested that thought should be given to obtaining professional advice.

<b>Beechen Hall.</b>		
<p><u>1.1 Cleaning materials.</u> In the past 15 years nothing has particularly changed about the materials used. Custom and practice and personal preference is normally what dictates what is purchased. A recent review of the hall cleaning regime means that methods, times and therefore the amount of cleaning are up to date and relevant to hall usage.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – no further action but office staff to be asked to be aware and where possible to purchase less materials and more eco-friendly substances.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<b>A/B</b>
<p><u>1.2 Double glazing.</u> The hall windows are already double glazed but in comparison to modern units are outdated. When replacement is due the Council should consider installing the best it can afford.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – action when windows need replacing.</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<b>C/AA</b>
<p><u>1.3 Paint products</u> (the exterior and interior are regularly repainted). Environmentally friendly paint is available but in 2008 it was considered that these were not of a standard that would suit the wear and tear of the hall. Prior to the next purchase of paint a review of environmentally friendly products will be undertaken. However it may be a false economy to use a product that needs replacing more frequently. Expense may also be an issue that needs considering.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – office to consider product when next organising the work.</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<b>C</b>
<p><u>1.4 Lighting (internal).</u> The hall refurbishment in 2011 resulted in all main areas being fitted with modern units incorporating low energy tubes. The kitchen is fitted with a sensor so that the lights only turn when it is in use.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b></p>		
<p><u>1.5 Lighting of the outside of the hall.</u> For security reasons the outside of the hall is lit overnight. This will need to be reviewed by the Estates Committee and prior to any decision experiments will have to be taken regarding adequate CCTV coverage etc.</p> <p>Soffit and fascia lights are low energy bulbs and are on a sensor so that they only come on during the dark.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – experiment with outer lights being turned off and review the quality of the CCTV images.</b></p>	<b>2/3</b>	<b>AA</b>
<p><u>1.6 Car Park Lights.</u> These were installed in 1995/96 and so are outdated. These could be replaced with:</p> <p>Up to date lights (low energy) but it is not clear whether the present columns can be adapted or will have to be replaced.</p> <p>Columns combining energy supplied via a solar panel and wind turbine are becoming available. It is not clear whether these are effective or suitable for this site.</p> <p>Car park lighting is on sensors so that they only come on when it becomes dark.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – members to consider what action to take or what options to be investigated.</b></p>	<b>3</b> <b>3/4</b>	<b>D/E</b> <b>D/E</b>
<p><u>1.7 Hall heating.</u> The heating system in the hall is gas and a new system was installed in 2009. The system is served by 2 boilers with the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming on when there is an increased need. One of the boilers is turned off over the summer to save energy. The hall is zoned so that the office/foyer area can be separately heated if the hall is not in use. Radiators have individual thermostats in addition to the main control thermostats (there are 2).</p> <p>The heating zones are on timer switches so that the hall/offices are not heated if they are not occupied.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b></p>		
<p><u>1.8 Hall hot water.</u> This is supplied by 2 emersion tanks and is also on a timer.</p>	<b>4/5</b>	<b>C</b>

<p>These are the originals installed in 1994 and so there may be better versions on the market. <i>Clerk note: a person can with a little difficulty gain access through the hatch but the space between the top of the cupboards and the ceiling is very restricted so any tank will either need the cupboards removed or access gained via removing main hall ceiling tiles etc.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation – no action till there is a need to replace or members’ indicate that they wish to replace the tanks.</b></p>		
<p><u>1.9 Water.</u> The hall does not have a ‘grey’ water system to flush toilets. This could be investigated and whilst it would have a saving in the water bill there are structural considerations for the hall. There is only occasional use of a hosepipe at the hall.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b></p>	<b>5</b>	<b>D/E</b>
<p><u>Insulation</u></p> <p><u>1.10 Hall walls.</u> The walls are insulated.</p> <p><u>1.11 Ceiling insulation.</u> The hall, foyer and toilets suspended ceilings were replaced in 2011 and extra insulation was added at the time. There are a few areas where the insulation is less (ceiling over the original office and office store room, kitchen and store rooms). These areas are either a little difficult to reach or it may not be possible to take the rolls of insulation through the current loft hatch. <i>Clerk note: kitchen, chair store and committee room - a person can with a little difficulty gain access through the hatch but the space between the top of the cupboards and the ceiling is very restricted so loft insulation rolls won’t fit. It may be possible to have the quilted metallic style insulation as this can be unrolled and gradually fed through or access gained via removing main hall and committee room tiles ceiling tiles etc. Office (part) and office store – access by the main loft can accommodate old style and modern metallic style loft insulation.</i></p> <p><b>Recommendation – members’ views are sought.</b></p>	<b>4</b>	<b>AA</b> <b>B</b>
<p><u>1.12 Recycling.</u> The parish office recycles paper, cardboard, glass and tins that are generated by the office. Only cardboard from hall events is collected for recycling. Hirers are requested to take away tins and bottles for recycling. The Estates Committee has declined to have recycling banks in the hall car park (security and cleaning issues). If the Parish Council offers to recycle tins and bottles there are staff and cost issues.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b></p>	<b>4</b>	<b>C</b>

<b>Alternative sources of electricity.</b>		
<u>2.1 Solar photovoltaic panels</u> (convert sunlight to electricity). Rejected in 2013.		
<p><u>2.2 Wind Turbines.</u> There are some operational limitations to wind turbines that are often not recognised. To get optimum return from a wind turbine it must be in the correct position, should be subject to a regular and steady wind from a specific direction and it requires regular maintenance which can be quite costly. In high winds it must be placed in a ‘stop’ position. Theoretically this could produce more power than the hall needs and there might be a financial return. Planning permission is required and for it to give a return on the costs of installation and maintenance it would have to be a fairly large turbine. Smaller wind turbines can be installed on buildings but these need investigation before any comments can be made.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none as it is considered that the site at Beechen Hall is not suitable for a number of the above reasons and also due to the closeness of a number of residential dwellings.</b></p>		
<p><u>2.3 Ground Source Heat Pumps.</u> These take heat from the ground which could be used to heat/supplement the heating in the hall. The area of land that would have to be excavated would be roughly the size of the car park.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b> <i>Clerk’s comment. Due to the recent change in the heating system and cost it is considered that this is not feasible</i></p>		
<p><u>2.4 Biomass.</u> Organic matter that can be burnt i.e. wood fuel burner. As the use of the hall is not constant any heat generated during a non-use period is wasted. Staff would have to stock the boiler on a regular basis, lack of space etc.</p> <p><b>Recommendation – none.</b> <i>Clerk’s comment. Due to the recent change in the heating system and for the reasons given above it is considered that this is not</i></p>		

<i>feasible,</i>		
2.5 Solar water heating. The principle was rejected in 2013.		

<b>Parish office</b>		
The parish office attempts to be more environmentally friendly making sure paper, is recycled etc. The parish office personnel attempt to reduce the environmental impact by not printing off e-mails, turning off lights when not in use, complete as much work as possible via e-mail, turn off computers at night, use scrap paper rather than note pads etc. Used batteries are disposed of responsibly etc.	<b>1</b>	<b>A AA</b>

<b>Grounds Maintenance of open areas.</b>		
The parish council pays for the maintenance of areas of land. This is reviewed every 2/3 years and the actual maintenance is considered so there is no unnecessary grass maintenance. The Orchard will be having 'grass meadow' type maintenance on some of the area.	<b>1</b>	<b>A AA</b>

<b>Burial Ground</b>		
The parish council does not have any restrictions on 'green' burials (cardboard or wicker coffins)		

<b>Other Parish Council commitments/issues</b>		
6.1 The parish council supplies grants and could consider taking a positive stance where circumstances occur. The following are some examples:  Support less use of cars and make life easier for people to walk and cycle. Support public transport.  Support other local organisations/village halls by sharing information or encouraging them to review/change their methods, install solar panels etc. Supplying financial support or grant application support (if requested).  Encourage the community by setting an example, spreading information via the council website.  Planting trees and sympathetically managing land has a number of social and environmental benefits.  Work closely with the planning department and support its strategies for low energy houses etc. New government guidelines are being bought out concerning community power schemes and LPA will be expected to work towards on-site renewable energy.		
6.2 Street furniture or other equipment Only use wooden products that are from a sustainable source. If using plastic attempt to relocate a recycle plastic product.		

**Item 4.4 Beech Tree Boxley Church Yard. Purpose of item; information**

This has continued to be monitored by the Clerk. Arrangements are being made to have a revisit with the tree surgeon as he considers that there is no disease issue concerning the tree. The cost of removing a dead branch (planning permission is not needed for this) is also being sought from him.

**Item 4.5 Yew Tree and damage to listed wall at Boxley Churchyard. Purpose of item; information**

An application for permission to fell the tree has been submitted to MBC. Once this has been obtained a quote will be obtained from the contractor who carried out tree maintenance at Bechen Hall

**Item 4.9 Padded Seats Risk Assessment.** *Purpose of item for information and decision.*

Age Concern has supplied further information on the seats, which were purchased in the year 2000 from a reputable firm. Thus the seats have to comply with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 and the subsequent amendments in 1989 and 1993. Two issues have arisen from the regulations.

1. There are no labels on the furniture specifying what the fire retardant level is.
2. Fire retardant is affected by cleaning and general wear and tear.

In view of No.2 above, it is suggested that flame retardant spray plus protective clothing etc. is purchased and the chairs are sprayed. This will probably cost in the region of £75.

**Item 5. Induction Hearing Loop.** *Purpose of item; information*

Feedback has been received from a couple of members and so the following briefing note has been produced to allow members to discuss and give guidance on how to progress the issue.

The parish council has to conform to the Equalities Legislation and it has its own policy concerning not discriminating against or providing a less favourable service to people with disabilities.

The parish council has on three occasions discussed this issue but has never progressed it; at each discussion details of possible equipment and costs have been provided to members but it is likely the complexity of the problem (especially as the parish council uses so many venues) has stopped any further action being taken.

The situation has again been raised as the Estates Committee wished to install a hearing loop at the hall but made no plans to purchase a sound system.

Members' views are sought on what they wish to do next, and it is considered that the following information might be helpful.

- Since the last visit to the issue technology has progressed and it might be possible to obtain a smaller system (transportation and setting up was a previous problem) that is more suitable.
- A sound system being used in the committee room may impact on hirers in the hall but then again the speaker system could be used on a quiet setting and hearing aid wearers would still be able to pick up the system on the T setting.
- Companies could be bought in to advise on possible systems however the requirements of the parish council will need to be specified to the companies.
- A T loop potentially allows anyone close by to overhear on what is being discussed and so members will need to be trained in its use and this type of weakness.
- The Finance Committee will have to be approached to release more funding or to take on the project.

**Item 7.1 Hall Hire Fees for February/March and a comparison on previous year. -**  
*Purpose of item for information*

(Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
Casual	£1,869.00	(£2,281.09)
Regular	<u>£5,413.53</u>	<u>(£3,532.62)</u>
Total	£7,282.53	(£5,813.71)
Cumulative figures for		
Casual	£14,934.72	(£12,188.22)
Regular	<u>£23,231.92</u>	<u>(£18,844.34)</u>
Total	£38,166.64	(£31,032.56)

**Item 8. Replacement Cooker and Extraction Hood at Beechen Hall** *Purpose of item; for information and decision*

Beechen Hall has recently experienced problems with the gas cooker and the main oven is unusable, as it does not regulate the temperature properly. The gas hob still operates perfectly well. The oven, which was installed in 1994, is now obsolete making the purchasing of parts impossible. It has now become necessary to replace the oven, however members will have been notified previously that current legislation BS6173 <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais23.pdf> stipulates that appropriate extraction should be installed in conjunction with a commercial gas appliance.

After discussion with the chair and vice chair of this committee it was agreed that the office would contact three companies to provide a quote for a 'like for like' oven and appropriate extraction hood/unit. However, this has highlighted further issues. The installation of an extraction hood is likely to require planning permission as well as building regulations. As there was no clear direction from MBC if planning permission was required it was agreed after consultation with the Chair to proceed with MBC's pre-consultation advice at a cost of £60.00 to ascertain this fact. This advice can take up to 15 days, and it is anticipated that this will be available for the meeting.

As members will know planning permission can take up to 8 weeks. Additional problems identified so far are:

Age Concern prepares and cooks hot meals twice a week. In the short term they are trying to readjust their menus so that they use just the gas hob or deliver cold buffets.

Casual hirers booking on Saturday and Sundays may wish to use the cooker.

The office has managed this so far by talking to hirers to establish their requirements but with wedding receptions approaching using outside caterers this could have an adverse impact. It may be possible to hire a cooker during the period of obtaining planning permission, the office will investigate this and present any findings to the meeting or if members agree between meetings through the Chair and Vice Chair.

Quotations will be available prior to the meeting, however Members will be required to consider a recommendation to the finance committee for the release of funds to cover this

**Item 9. Parish Council annual property review.** *Purpose of items; for information and decision*

purchase.

**Item 9.1 Cobbled path Boxley Village Green.** The ground/mortar between the granite cobbles has deteriorated to the extent that areas now need urgent work to rectify trip hazards. A local builder has suggested that the cost for repairing the whole path will be in excess of £1,000 as it is a 'hands and knees job to do it right. A further quote had been obtained from Goodsells as members had requested. Both this and the original quote exceeds the limit of the Chairman and Clerks delegated power to agree and whilst smaller areas could be identified for work it is likely that the remaining areas will need restoring in the next couple of years. No specific budget has been identified for this work but as it is an impending health and safety issue the Finance Committee contingency fund will have to be used. Are members happy for the whole path to be restored?

**Assistant Clerk's recommendations to allow the office a little more time to obtain a further quote and to consult with the committee out of meeting to establish the way forward.**

**Item 9.2 Report on condition of parish council open spaces.** The Clerk undertakes an annual and also ad hoc inspection of the parish council's property. A log of any visits is kept and any issues highlighted are then notified to the Estates Committee etc. Currently outstanding is a visit to Impton Lane and a couple of seats. A resident has contacted the office



with a concern that there may be a developing tree issue at Impton Lane and a site visit is being arranged.

The playground safety checks are treated separately to the general check and have a different procedure and timescale for these visits.

Due to litter issues at Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard arrangements have been made to replace an existing bin and install a new bin to the left of the new seat. The funding for this comes from the Diamond Jubilee budget for 2012/13.

**Item 11. Review of Policies and Procedures–** *Purpose of item to review and recommend any changes*

**11.2** Discounts for Children's Clubs– Members currently offer 25% discount to all children's clubs that use Beechen Hall

Members will note from the overall income on the Hall hire for the year 2012/13 has increased by 23%, mainly from regular hirers do not qualify for this discount.

**Assistant Clerk's recommendation no change to this policy.**