**THE BASIL IONIDES MEMORIAL CENTRE Framfield Road, Buxted (Charity No 305192)**

**AGM Minutes 8th February 2022 – starting at 2118 hours**

**St Mary’s Church Hall, Church Road, Buxted**

**Present:** Vivienne Blandford(Chair), Nick Bolton, Chris Humphrey, Toby Illingworth, Fiona McQuarrie, James Roberts, Adrian Marshall, and Clerk; Claudine Feltham.

Six members of the public present.

1. **Apologies:** Peter Coxon, John Rose, Kevin Moss, Simon Johnson, Valerie Wilson, and Clerk; Beccy Macklen
2. **Annual Report – read out by Vivienne Blandford.**

The AGM was delayed in 2021 because of COVID restrictions, so it is being held somewhat later than in previous years. We hope to return to having the AGM in the autumn which brings it a little more into line with the financial year reporting. The end of the financial year to which we refer is the 31st of March 2021 but most of the activities mentioned below are those we have carried out since our last AGM, which was a virtual one back in November 2020. The cost of those activities will be reflected in this year’s accounts, ending soon in March 2022.

This year we had to change our method of reporting to the Charity Commission because our revenue was over £25,00.00 in one financial year. However, this amount of income, in one year, is unlikely to happen again as we received the balance of funds from the dissolved charity of the Buxted Community Hall Trust which amounted to £22,535.00. This fund is kept separate from the usual Ionides funds and would be used towards the cost of a new hall, should that project become live again in the not-too-distant future. We also received a backdated payment for rent from the surgery premises as the rent had been subjected to a rent review over several years.

We have conducted the usual maintenance on the Ionides land which includes regular grass cutting, tree surgery when and if required, playground inspections and any necessary maintenance on the play equipment. We also incur regular costs for emptying the dog waste bin and rubbish bin. We now have a contractor we can call on to conduct some of the maintenance required and he carries out regular inspections for us. Although we still rely on members of the public using the land to let us know if they are aware of any problems. This would include any occasions where anti-social behaviour might have occurred so we can pass it on to the police. We thank those public-spirited members of the public who regularly take on litter picking duties.

We were very pleased to implement a COVID memorial, as suggested, and partly funded by members of the public. This has taken the form of planting three mature cherry trees amongst a number of trees that had been previously planted in the Surgery landscaping scheme. We were delighted to be able to incorporate two fine tree guards which had originally protected trees in the Littlewood Lane, Millennium Wood and had outgrown their use there. A bench was also installed just above the planted trees.

Earlier this year the Scout Lease was finally signed off bringing many years of negotiations to a close, and if, someone came forward to look at building a new village hall on the site, we have overcome the lease obstacle and are, not only, holding funds that could go towards the new hall but also have an enlarged car park on site as well. Incidentally, the mud field of last year has settled down and the whole landscaping project a successful one.

1. **Finance Report – read out by Claudine Feltham**

Presented by clerk, Claudine Feltham. This report is to give a brief overview of the current financial position of the Ionides Trust finances for this financial year so far.

Date range: 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

For the fiscal year ending 31st March 2021 we have had to alter the method of reporting to the Charity Commission because our revenue was over £25,00.00.

This was due to the receipt of funds from the dissolved charity of the Buxted Community Hall Trust, which amounted to £22,535.00. These funds have been saved into the CAF Gold account and are not used for day-to-day expenses.

The funds will remain separate and go towards the cost of a new hall, should that project become live again in the not-too-distant future.

The regular rent payments from Buxted Medical Centre, which is sited on the charities land, bought an income of £17,289 – this is paid to the charity on a quarterly basis. The charity also received £11,224 as a back payment in rent as the rent had been subject to a rent review over several years.

Expenditure totalled £22,995, 55% of this was on maintenance costs, and 40% on costs towards extending the car park.

The charities funds are held with CAF Bank, between two accounts, a cash account, and a gold account. Payments for invoices are made by cheque, with two nominated signatories signing each cheque, initialling the stub and invoice.

The opening balance on 1st April 2020 was £46,643.

The closing balance on 31st March 2021 was £74,713.

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**Current financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st January 2022 - read out by Claudine Feltham**

The opening balance on 1st April 2021 totalled £74,714.05. This was divided between the CAF cash account (£27,072.20) and the CAF gold account (£47,641.85).

**Expenditure**

Overall expenditure from the Ionides account between 1.4.21 and 31.1.22 was £6684.

During this period, the usual maintenance of the land and equipment has been conducted. This includes grass cutting, works to hedges/trees, litter picking and safety checks.

In addition to the maintenance costs £1824 was spent on the COVID memorial

as suggested, by members of the public. This involved the planting of three mature cherry trees along with a bench. Members were pleased to be able to incorporate two fine tree guards which had originally protected trees in the Littlewood Lane, Millennium Wood and have outgrown their use there.

**Income**

Income to the Ionides accounts is from the Doctors surgery rent. This is received quarterly and amounts to £11,373 so far, this financial year with one further payment of £3790 due before 31.3.22.

The combined accounts bank balance on 31st January 2022: £79,256.58

**Charity Commission return and audit – to note submissions/outcome of audit**

The Ionides Memorial Centre accounts for the period of 1.4.20 to 31.3.21 were approved as a true record and the submission of accounts, outcome of the audit and the Trustees report to the Charities Commission were noted. This was proposed by James Roberts and seconded by Fiona McQuarrie.

Vivienne Blandford thanked Claudine Feltham for her assistance with the submission of the accounts.

No questions from members or public were raised.

**Ideas for future expenditure:**

Vivienne Blandford suggested that it would be useful to have a proper pathway from the car parking area up to the Scouts hut area. James Roberts agreed that this would be a good idea.

Members were advised to contact the Clerk with any Ionides agenda items so that they could be resolved and minuted.

Nick Bolton suggested that funds could also be used towards funding a fete to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee and will submit this as an agenda item for formal consideration.

Fiona McQuarrie requested that the new hall could be reconsidered.

**4. Any Other Business**

Matthew Dobson from 1st Buxted Scouts introduced himself (Group Scout Leader) and Fraser Eastwood (Group Chairman) and read the following (as previously circulated to members.

Buxted Scouts is a thriving group with over 150 young people

• Scouting is offered to all ages (6-18 years) from Beavers, Cubs, Scouts through to Explorers

• Scouting has played an important part in the Buxted community for over one hundred years

• The Scout Group has been operating without a break since 1909 and is still going strong!

• The Group acts as an educational charity and the primary objective of the Trust is the instruction of young people in the principles of discipline, loyalty, and good citizenship

• We are supported by an executive committee, whose members are experienced and highly skilled leaders with considerable knowledge and expertise in scouting

• Leaders are in turn supported by experienced Trustees and parent representatives who work together closely to provide strong governance and oversight

• This ensures the smooth and efficient running of the Group and the safeguarding and wellbeing of the children

**The Opportunity**

• Demand for scouting continues to be high and the Group plays an active part in the local community

• A second Cub pack and Beaver colony were formed in 2019 and our waiting list continues to grow as children are attracted from local villages

• This has created a challenge in terms of the limited space available particularly during the Autumn and Winter months

• The executive committee (Exec) has implemented improvements to the premises (new heaters, new technology/presentation facilities, etc) to ensure that the children can enjoy their activities in a safe, warm, and suitable environment

• However, it is clear from the ongoing demand and interest in scouting from the local community, that the current size of the premises is a barrier to taking on more children

• The executive committee agreed that now was the time to begin investigating the possibility of creating a new hut within the boundaries outlined within the new lease, which could solve this issue, and ensure that scouting in Buxted can continue to thrive for future generation

The Scouts had engaged with an Architect who had produced a design that fitted, 70% of which fitted within the leased area.

The new Scout hut could possibly be used by other community groups, however, is currently in high use.

Vivienne Blandford requested to see the plans in full, and suggested a meeting take place with members of the Ionides Trust and the Scouts to discuss this further. Toby Illingworth agreed with comments from Vivienne Blandford as felt the design was not so clear on the plans we have received so far.

Nick Bolton asked if the Scouts were looking for approval? Or funding or both?

The Scouts responded that when they were further down the line, they would wish to come to the Ionides Trust again, and in further detail. They were currently considering different funding opportunities including lottery funding.

Fiona McQuarrie wondered if the Scouts and the new Community Hall could be a joint venture. The Scouts responded that they were not against this in principle, but Scouts would need to have high use of the building.

Nick Bolton said ideas for shared facilities, like kitchen, could be considered. James Roberts suggested that they speak again with their Architect.

A member of public commented that when the new community hall was previously considered the Scouts group were adamant that they wanted their own base and did not want to be a joint part.

It was noted that funds donated by the dissolved Buxted Community Hall trust to the Ionides trust could only be used for a new community hall, and not a Scouts Hall.

James Roberts suggested that an initial chat with the Scouts happened as soon as possible to consider potential options. Members agreed for James Roberts, Nick Bolton, and Fiona McQuarrie to arrange the meeting within the next couple of weeks.

The Scouts mentioned that they had some benches made from fallen oak which could be used on Ionides Land. Location of these could be discussed at the next joint meeting.

**Meeting closed at 2151 hours**