Devauden Hall Committee Meeting Notes

13 October 2026

Present

Trustees: Liz Davies, Lyndon Rowlands, Alun Jones, Julia Hitchcock, Jon Penn.

Committee: Richard May

Apologies: Suzanne Chilcott and Rich Harrison.

1. Nomination and election of Chair and Vice Chair

Lyndon Rowlands was the only nomination for Chair and the Trustees supported him being confirmed into the role. It was also agreed that Alun Jones would be Vice Chair. The Committee discussed expectations of the Chair role, particularly the importance of representing the collective view of trustees rather than committing the Committee to a position without prior discussion.

The discussion led into the question of use of the Hall car park by customers of the reopened pub. The Committee agreed its position should be that the car park is **for Hall and grounds users only**. Appropriate signage should be put up and a friendly letter sent to the pub explaining the position and welcoming opportunities to work together. **RM agreed to draft the letter and design a sign**.

2. Approval of last meeting minutes

The previous meeting minutes were considered. There was also discussion about the AGM minutes. RM agreed to review the AGM minutes to ensure that finances for the 2025/26 reporting year stand out clearly. RM will send the proposed changes to AJ who will circulate an updated draft by email for Trustee approval.

3. Matters of conflict

No matters of conflict were identified in the discussion recorded.

4. Review Action Log – Paper 1

The Committee reviewed the existing action log. Key progress included:

- **Cherry trees:** carried forward, with November mentioned in relation to the anticipated timing.
- **Cae Ni fence:** LD had made contact with MCC about the trees/vegetation with confirmation that they are the Hall's responsibility. Monmouthshire CC suggested contacting a local contractor, Tom Preece in relation to the trees. Liz has approached him and we await a quote. Depending on whether that quote is satisfactory, Matt Clark may also be contacted. The Committee also questioned whether replacement of

the fence was necessary at all and agreed to consider the position once further information was available.

- **Cae Ni closure:** the required notice has been prepared, allowing the existing action to be closed.
- **Safeguarding posters:** information/wording is to be provided so that a suitable poster can be produced.
- **Debit card:** JP had not yet progressed this and agreed to enquire once workload around final accounts is complete.
- **Bookings pack:** remained outstanding as RH was not present.
- **DBS checks:** JH to progress DBS arrangements and liaise with RH regarding his DBS status.
- **Safeguarding policy:** discussion confirmed the policy was broadly in place.
- **Policies for review:** trustees were asked to read the draft trustees' Code of Conduct, with approval to be progressed by email. A simpler Code of Conduct for Hall users was also proposed.
- **DCC grant for refurbishment of John Wesley Statue:** remained open. The Committee discussed seeking further support from the Community Council.
- **Bills/services in RM's name:** the Committee agreed this did not need to remain as a standing action and could be dealt with as individual bills/services arise.

5. Finance & Accounts

A number of operational finance matters were discussed. The process for submitting expenses was clarified. Work to update bank signatories was continuing, with outstanding forms still required from two Trustees.

The new accountants had advised that Xero was not particularly suited to the Hall's accounting arrangements. The Committee agreed it should be discontinued, subject to making the necessary arrangements.

The new electricity arrangements had resulted in a substantially reduced charge for the relevant supply. The historic electricity contribution associated with the mast was also discussed and it was agreed that this needed pursuing, potentially by letter if telephone contact remained unsuccessful.

The Hall's heating-oil level was discussed. It was agreed not to order immediately and to keep the level under review rather than make this a recurring Committee-level decision.

6. Top 60

The Top 60 records had been brought up to date and payments were now being monitored against the bank account. Former participants whose payments had lapsed had been contacted. There remained approximately 10–12 available numbers.

It was agreed to promote the available numbers, including through social media and potentially the shop, and to include information on vacancies in the regular update.

7. Events

Festival
The first instalment of the Festival donation had been received. The timing of the remaining payment was discussed alongside the Festival company's financial position and preparations for the next Festival. The Committee noted the public commitment made at the AGM regarding the remaining donation and agreed that patience was appropriate while arrangements for the next Festival were finalised.

Fete
It was confirmed that Pete Gardiner (PG) intended to lead arrangements. The Committee felt planning needed to begin earlier, with clarity about objectives, budget and the financial arrangements between the Hall, Church and other parties. **It was agreed that LR would invite PG to the next committee meeting so that Fete planning could be** discussed.

Pop-up Pub
There will be no pop-up pub in November because of the proximity to Bonfire Night. Future arrangements will be considered afterwards.

The Committee also discussed the waste generated by the fish and chip operation and the associated work for the Hall. No firm change was agreed.

Bonfire Night
SC provided a note to the for the meeting due to her absence. Preparations were reviewed, including traders, catering, bar arrangements, volunteers, set-up and floats.

The Committee discussed reusable cups and agreed to charge for cups **and not use a refundable deposit arrangement. LR to liaise with Andy Owen on this**.

The extent of dog fouling in Cae Ni was considered a particular problem before Bonfire Night. The Committee agreed that the field should be temporarily closed to dogs, with notices at the field and messages on social media/the website. An inspection of the field was to be undertaken to assess the scale of the clean-up required.

Other events
A possible approach to Devauden Arts Club about collaborating on a future summer music

event was suggested. Potential winter events, including a curry/quiz-type evening, were also discussed for future consideration.

The Christmas event has been confirmed for **19 December**.

LD referenced a subsidised coach trip to Bath which will be taking place on **10 December**, leaving Devauden at 9.00 am and Bath at 4.00 pm, at £15 per person. Tickets are available from the shop. **The trip is part subsidised by afternoon teas and Liz asked if this could be promoted. This was agreed**

8. Hall Maintenance

The Committee agreed that the Hall required a thorough clean. A community "big clean" is to be arranged for a suitable date towards the end of November, before Christmas decorations are put up.

A leak in the ladies' toilet roof was reported. A roofer was expected to inspect this, and the Committee awaits a quote for any work that is needed.

9. Policies & Administration

Much of this item had been covered during the action-log discussion. The Committee discussed improving the organisation of policies and governance documents and progressing approval of the trustees' Code of Conduct. A simpler Hall-user Code of Conduct was also proposed.

10. Complaints – Cae Ni Field dog fouling

This had been substantially covered under Bonfire Night. The immediate response was to close the field temporarily to dogs and publicise the reason for doing so, while considering longer-term measures to encourage responsible use of the field.

11. AOB

A free 18-foot Christmas tree had been sourced through Pete Gardiner. Arrangements for erecting it were being explored, with the expectation that the Committee would provide the lights.

Previous Community Council contributions towards the fireworks and pensioners' Christmas lunch were discussed. It was agreed that the history of those contributions should be checked and the position pursued as appropriate. **LD agreed to take forward this action.**

12. Forward look at agenda

Items identified for the next meeting included:

- fete planning;
- Christmas activities, including the pensioners' lunch.