

DEVAUDEN HALL - TRUSTEES' MEETING

12-11-2025 @ 7pm

MINUTES

Present: Suzanne Chilcott, Liz Davies, Paul Hickman, Julia Hitchcock, Chris Jackson, Lynn May (Minutes), Richard May (Chair), Jon Penn, Lyndon Rowlands

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the trustees' October 8th meeting were approved unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising not on the agenda

3. FINANCE

3.1. Bank - balances / signatories

Richard reported that the directors of Devauden Festival Ltd are paying back the balance of the loan made by the CIO. That should go through in the next few days, at which point the CIO's bank balance will be £27,294.02 which he feels is reasonably healthy.

Devauden Festival grant from Welsh Government - Joy Scott has to audit the accounts for the grant to be paid and cannot do it until December which is when the grant will be paid. A condition of the grant is that it is spent on the festival and the CIO will transfer those funds to the limited company on receipt.

Richard made the point that the bank balance is always going to fluctuate. The charity had a six figure sum over a long period because successive festivals had made profits.

The trustees held onto the money as there was a proposal to redevelop the hall building which ultimately did not go ahead.

3.2. Top 60 club account

A request has been made to open a separate bank account with Co-operative Bank for the Top 60 club. All trustees will be signatories. Trustees will need a session to sign up to online banking. Richard to organise.

3.3. Book keeping

The charity has signed up to Xero. Joy Scott will overlay an appropriate template for charities. Xero has confirmed that bank statements can be automatically fed into the accounts system and the appropriate form was signed by Richard and Lyndon. Richard

and Jon will be spending time entering data in order to catch up with accounts. Dealing with the accounts in the future will be easier as a result of this move.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RM reminded trustees he will be resigning at the next meeting and action is needed to recruit more trustees. Didn't get any recruits at village social in spite of poster. The poster and accompanying information are on the website and should be widely circulated. Keep posting on Facebook. It was agreed that all trustees should ask friends and neighbours.

During a discussion about how the committee will deal with matters next year, Julia expressed concern about responding to media issues. Lynn May offered her continued support if such matters were to arise. Richard said that a great deal of his time has been spent on banking and accounts. The recent actions should mean that less time will be needed in the future.

Paul Hickman expressed the view that we are moving ahead and he is looking forward to a very vibrant hall.

Suzanne asked about opportunities for trustee training. Richard to explore with the Charity Commission and others.

5. BONFIRE NIGHT 05/11

A letter from Mr Maddocks criticised the bonfire arrangements, with particular reference to parking. No-one in the meeting knew of any other complaints about parking and other feedback was noted to have been very positive. There have been a small number of complaints about the noise of fireworks from horse owners. Chris Jackson noted as a former horse owner that you make preparations and deal with your horses in the same way as you deal with your dog. All present felt that adequate advance notice of the event had been given, but that particular emphasis should be given in future years to the need for horse and pet owners to take precautions. Julia commented that the request for quieter fireworks was part of a bigger debate that is going on at the moment about the issue of bonfires and fireworks

Liz reported that the volunteers organising the parking were very efficient and extremely diligent. She also reported that she had received tremendous feedback from people at the gate as they returned to their cars.

Richard asked Julia to pass on our thanks to the Scouts, who volunteered in healthy numbers and did an excellent job.

Suzanne suggested sending a survey to people who bought tickets online and attended bonfire night, so we could use that information in successive years. Suzanne and Richard will work together to plan such a survey.

Richard reminded the meeting that in 2024 the event was not opened up to general sale because we wanted to keep control and test the level of local demand. The 2024 event did not make money. This year it was opened up to a wider audience, while still keeping a cap on it and the result was a healthy profit of

Paul observed that the evening has previously been one of the hall's biggest earners but the introduction of tickets meant that it could be profitable but still well controlled. The meeting offered their thanks to Paul and Andy on the bar which made £600 profit. Six people on the bar were run off their feet and Paul and Andy felt that lessons were learned for next year.

6. DEVAUDEN FESTIVAL - UPDATE / MEDIA RESPONSE

Richard and Lynn updated the meeting on the media enquiry following a letter they received from Dave Maddocks. RM sent a response and left voicemails for journalists - no further action needed at this time.

Sales of tickets to date are very good. £40,000 sold which is ahead of the game on previous years. As of today tickets can be bought using the Klarma zero %. option, seen as a good development.

Richard has Tim Walker's slides for the people who were unable to attend his presentation and shared some of the key points. Tim showed that the festival has delivered a profit since 2017 (reliable figures prior to that period were not available) From 2017 - 2024, a cumulative profit of £160,000 was made for the hall. Tim also produced a cash flow showing that money had already been spent by the CIO before the limited company was set up and then took over spending. The CIO also received payments from some traders prior to the limited company being established, so a summary of transactions in each direction had been completed.

The final outcome was that the CIO had effectively loaned £25,119 to the limited company. The trustees in the meeting with Tim agreed that the loan should attract 6% interest, which equates to the cost of a startup loan from British Business Bank. The meeting endorsed the earlier decision by trustees.

Richard confirmed there are plans to offer 2026 tickets to residents which will be as cheap as the cheapest tickets. Eligible postcodes will be the same as in previous years.

7. PLAYGROUND - NOISE COMPLAINT / REPAIRS TO BASKET SWING

The meeting discussed the noise complaint from a neighbour about the zipwire. MCC's Environmental Health Officer directed the charity to a supplier who quoted £2300 to install a 'silent' carrier. Richard has told the EHO it is not affordable. and the meeting agreed.

Basket swing - Pete Chilcott offered his services to put metal around the base at cost (approx £100) but will need help with digging out base and filling in with concrete. The meeting expressed their thanks to Pete and approved the actions. Lyndon and Rich Harrison will support the repairs.

8. HALL MAINTENANCE -

Rich Harrison's report had been circulated on email and the contents noted by trustees. Particular issues that need attention were identified. The thermostat in the hall, managed by HIVE, isn't always connecting with the boiler. Chris advised that you can buy a smart booster plug for £42 which plugs into socket and it boosts the signal. He will send a link to RM. In subsequent discussions, it appeared that the hall setup is not the same as Chris's. Further investigation is needed.

We still haven't resolved whether we are generating income from solar panels. Rich H to progress.

The trustees also asked Rich H to check if Tracey has sufficient time to clean all areas of the hall. He agreed in subsequent emails to take a closer look at the time available and the tasks needed. He will report back.

The outside light needs fixing as does the door to Ferard Room. Rich H to action.1951

9. POP UP PUB AND BAR PRICES

Pop up pub - Richard suggested starting in January but Paul says he and Andy think it should start in March when the weather improves. Possibly first Friday of the month. It was pointed out that the first Friday in April will be Good Friday and if we changed to the last Friday, that would coincide with Devauden Festival in May. Paul to come back with suggestion.

Bar prices - Paul said the bar is key in making a profit for the hall. In the past the instruction was to make 50% mark up. He tabled suggested new prices in the light of

increased costs and a two tier system - one for village and one for wider audience. The trustees approved the changes and thanked Paul and Andy for the initiative.

10. RECENT EVENTS

10.1. Village social Take 2 - 25/10

The Village Social did not make money. Trustees who attended agreed that it was a great evening that people enjoyed. Paul said that last year's social was more successful. and there was discussion about possible reasons, which included the fact this year's was held in half term. The 'regulars' in village came about 7.30pm. The organising team advertised widely, leafleted every house. When village was surveyed this was one of the things they asked for. Suzanne proposed a vote of thanks for great event and asked Paul and Andy to pass on the tanks to others who volunteered. The trustees accepted that this year's event cost money to run, but felt that should not be a deterrent to future plans. Paul agreed, saying it is all about making the hall as vibrant as it has been in previous years.

Richard commented that we need to find a way to create activities that appeal to a different, wider audience and Lyndon suggested that a few months of a pop up pub might give a good idea of what the village wants.

11. FUTURE EVENTS

11.1. Doxie events 23/11/25. Doxie are running a Christmas Fair and will include a stallholder selling mulled wine. They have secured appropriate licences.

11.2. Senior Citizens' lunch - 07/12/25

Organised by Peter Gardiner and Bonnie Carpenter. Paul and Andy to run bar.

11.3. Children's Christmas show - 12/12/25

Suzanne has been posting on Facebook and 6 tickets have been sold so far. Flyers are available and Suzanne has plans to carry out door to door distribution. Paul offered the services of himself, Andy and Huw to leaflet the village. All agreed that it is usually the last couple of weeks before an event that tickets start moving. Paul and Andy to run the bar - including mulled wine and possibly mulled cider. Lynn will buy children's gift boxes.

11.4. SARA - Devauden Races - 04/05/26

The races were run on first Bank holiday in May through Chepstow Park Wood - 5k and 10k. It does take a great deal of organisation and SARA asked to take it over to make money for themselves. We and they will be asking for volunteers for help. There is a

website domain devaudenraces.com which will be available to them. Richard will ask Benjamin Buckle of SARA to take over the domain

11.5. Devauden Festival. Dates for 2026 confirmed as 22/05/26-24/05/26

11.6. Village Fete - Date for 2026 confirmed as 11/07/26. Pete Gardiner has offered to lead, trustees will need to support him.

12. POSSIBLE FUTURE EVENTS

12.1. Liz advised that Annie Massey had suggested a monthly lunch club in the hall and was asking for suggestions for preferred dates. Richard suggested asking Rich H for suitable dates.

12.2. Suzanne been contacted by a group performing a show based on Greek ancient myths, which is part of the Night Out. The meeting was not sure it would sell as well as the Shakespeare option previously discussed. If you put on a show that people know - Mid Summer Night's Dream - you are more likely to get families but their only available date is August 7 next year. Suzanne to explore alternative dates or troupes and report back. The ensuing discussion included thoughts on car parking and Lyndon felt that we should investigate tracks to cover for wet weather.

13. NATIONAL LOTTERY WALES EGIN GRANTS

Julia has not been able to pursue this until now but will contact Georgina and Rich H to move forward.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates were agreed as December 10 and provisionally the 2nd Wednesday of each month in 2026.

15. AOB

Richard advised that the Christmas tree on the green would be set up on November 29.

Matt Clarke can do 27th/28th - to be advised if he is needed when the tree is on site.

Tree will cost £200 - requested to be 15 feet. Same date for tree in the hall - volunteers needed.

Need people to get bouncy castle out on Nov 28/29. Rich can put it back.