



Highgate Newtown Community Association
People's Gospel Mission Hall Group
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Minutes of Meeting held at 66 Goddard Place, London N19 5GS
on Friday 15th March 2019 from 4pm to 5.45pm

1. Present: Sally Donati (chair), Gabriele Mahoney, Michael Ellman, Tamar Swade, Thanos Morphitis, Mary Fee (notes). Apologies: Mary Cane.

2. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 25th February 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Formation of Charitable Trust:

3.1 Michael had initially formed a CIO association, but in order to be able to handle the funds required, Thanos then advised forming a Trust - which can later be converted into a membership organisation at one meeting, see: <https://www.gov.uk/setting-up-charity/structures>.

3.2 Mary advised that in her communications with Andrew he has made it clear that HNCC has Trustees but no members, which is why they were not obliged to consult centre users over the redevelopment, and this issue needs to be borne in mind when drafting the CIO.

3.4 Michael has already hand-drafted a constitution for a Trust based on text provided by the Charity Commission. **Mary would work from his edits to create the document we require.**

4. Ownership of the People's Gospel Mission Hall, referred to below as "the Hall"

4.1 Although it was understood that the People's Gospel Mission Hall had been part of a legacy from B Coutts, making it available to the local community, it became part of the redevelopment plan as Camden Council had claimed ownership, the Trustees having handed it over to them several years ago in order to settle overspending. An extension had been added to accommodate the Fresh Youth Academy, who were managed by Camden Council. Although the Hall had been incorporated into the site, HNCC had only recently gained access to use it for occasional exercise classes.

4.2 On the question of researching the history of ownership of the Hall, Sally will contact the Land Registry, assuming the property's address is 17 Winscombe Street – not marked, but this is the missing number. She had phoned Coutts, who said they wouldn't have paperwork about it. Sarah Harrison had told her that the Library's Deed of Covenant has a different set-up as it's a dedicated building for a library. Sarah had also recommended a local historian, but he has not replied. She would also try the properties department at Camden Council – Mary Cane had told her it's not straightforward to find Deeds of Covenant, as they get allocated to different departments, eg Youth Department rather than property, and wondered if she should ask Luke Joyce. Gabriele says Gavin next door works for Camden Council, a Town Planner, and he might be able to tell us who to ask, and **Michael would contact him.** On the question of whether there is any record of legacy by B Coutts, Sally says this is not going anywhere, and Tamar says might need to use the Freedom of Information Act – **she said will ask Gavin.** She said that Catherine Sykes in Pilates Group will be happy to do research, interested in Coutts, will put her in touch to check for any Deeds of Covenant.

5. Vision for uses of the People's Gospel Mission Hall

5.1 It was agreed that we need to build a positive vision of activities benefiting the community, and that it would be strategic to make them unique and complementary to activities that the HNCC would be aiming to focus on the newly refurbished building, which would presumably be similar to those it has provided in the recent past, ie activities for the elderly, youth and under-fives.

5.2 Mary suggesting doing a structured neighbourhood survey to establish concrete proposals for future use of the hall, but Tamar said that people who signed her petition had positive memories of what went on there before, and she could write down what she recalled of these. Meanwhile it was clear that the Hall's main attributes, ie its excellent acoustics, as well as its screen, point in the direction of Music, Drama, and Film showings.

5.3 For the initial stage we would need a core script, describing the project, **and Thanos offered to produce an initial draft of suitable text, to be included in news updates and fund-raising letters.**

6. Organisations as Potential Collaborators

6.1 We thought about how organisations might want to be involved, as users (booking the space), and partners (running classes), especially any who might be looking for premises, who would need security of tenure. Thanos said that organisations showing an interest would vary from those who say they might book space in the future, and those want to find premises now, so that fund-raising would be need to be two-pronged: investment (donations) and in the long-term, ongoing bookings.

6.2 Mary pointed out that some of the organisations who had rented space at HNCC and are now settled in new premises would be unlikely to want to return to either venue.

6.3 Michael asked how we could generate a list of possible organisations who might collaborate with us. **Thanos offered to contact the Arts Council** to see if they know of local organisations, then asked if any of us have ideas, of groups they want to be involved with, or if we knew of any philanthropists, who are interested in an art forum?

6.4 Ideas that came up were: a theatre group for ex-prisoners looking for rehearsal space, the Bach Players, Orlando Gough, who says its wonderful for choirs, Highgate Choral Society, the Rector of St MaryBrookfield, successor of Guy Pope? Sally wondered about people who were brought up in the area, who might have an interest in looking back, eg Arkela (Naomi Daly), Miss Dynamite, a pop group called Madness (leader Suggs, who now lives in Brighton), and a group of musicians who operate from Millfield Lane - Acland Burghley might be a source of potential contacts.

7. Ideas for Fundraising

7.1 Tamar said that her cousin, a film-maker, had used "Go Fund Me" website – which tells you their method and suggests a draft text, eg you have to offer to give money back if not successful: <https://www.gofundme.com/> and **offered to get her advice to create a business plan.** Thanos said we could also obtain pledges for a certain amount from organisations. Tamar also mentioned a friend of hers, a French lady Stephanie Bienvenue, who would be able to coordinate things and help with digital marketing and **would contact her.**

7.2 Regarding fundraising from Charities, suggestions were: Help the Aged, Age Concern, Charities Aid Foundation. Michael will ask Lottery for £1.5m, can have a meeting with them, sometimes they go for matched funding, Tamar wondered if Oliver Lewis might try to fund it. Meanwhile, she **will contact Highgate Society.**

7.2 In addition to contacting organisations, Sally suggests sending the fund-raising letter (including Thanos's core text) to people who have signed Tamar's petition – Tamar had had the original documents with email addresses of those who had signed the petition, and **she would work out with Mary how best to transcribe the email addresses**, for use when we were ready.

8. Future Management of the Hall

8.1 Mary pointed out that when talking to potential users of the hall, that we needed clarity on what it would consist of in terms of floor area, and the fact that the extension that formed the Fresh Youth Academy, with its office space, kitchen and gym, is very likely to be demolished in favour of one of the blocks of flats, so the restored Hall would consist of the main space (with three small rooms off) plus the corridor leading to the main entrance on Winscombe Street at one end and the toilets at the other, and a small office space above, which was accessed via steps from the back of the hall, and this needs to be clarified with the Project Manager at Camden Council.

8.2 We also thought about what would be involved in ongoing management of the hall, and Sally suggested R.E.A.C.H. as a source of potential trustees: <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/>

9. Contacts with Camden Council:

9.1 Tamar had received a communication from Councillor, Anna Wright, which gave helpful advice. She mentioned £1.5m and that the amount of time we've got is the period while they go out to tender. Thanos said that if builders are using it as a base they will leave it until last, which will give more time to raise money. Until you get the tenders in you don't know how much it will cost to convert, and the estimate of how much you are going to sell it for. Michael thinks less, as house prices have dropped. We don't know what would be cost of conversion of Hall.

9.2 On the question of the cost of £1.5m, Thanos said the fact that the Hall has planning permission for housing has raised the valuation above what it would have been worth otherwise. That's the problem about raising money for hall, which is the challenge, that's why the vision and partnerships are so important. When writing to Council, we should ask how much they might contribute, they have said they intend to raise £4.9m on the project, so might they contribute 10% (ie £450k).

9.3 It was agreed that the next step would be to ask for a meeting at the Mission Hall, at which we would ask if Camden are trying to help us by leaving it as long as possible - which would help to establish what the boundaries are. Tamar is in touch with the Fresh Youth Academy worker, Sha, - **she will contact him to arrange our next meeting there, and invite Anna Wright**. Mary said she had received a sympathetic letter from Keir Starmer, and wonder if/when we should we involve him.

10. Future Steps:

10.1 Michael advised that we need to wait to do bank account until the CIO has been formed.

10.3 Regarding publicity, it was agreed that we should defer this until we are clearer, and rather than just writing to the local papers we should get proper articles written with photos, to maximise impact - Sally has good contacts with journalists at the Ham & High.

11. Next Meeting: Sally Donati will use a doodle calendar to establish core dates from 25th March.

The meeting ended at about 6pm.

ME/mf – Draft3 - 18/3/2019