



Highgate Newtown Community Association
Highgate Newtown Mission Hall Group
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Minutes of Meeting held at 66 Goddard Place, London N19 5GS
on Monday 25th March 2019 from 4pm to 5.45pm

1. Present: Sally Donati (chair), Gabrielle Mahoney, Michael Ellman, Mary Fee (notes).
Apologies: Thanos Morphitis, Mary Cane (too short notice), Tamar Swade (went to wrong venue)

2. Minutes of meeting held on **Friday 15th March** 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Formation of Charitable Trust:

3.1 Michael and Mary have been working on the constitution: Michael gave her some minor edits.

3.2 Reviewing email discussion with all trustees, in light of requirements for fund-raising which would need to identify the location of the hall, we agreed the name “Highgate Newtown Mission Hall Group”, which would be in the CIO document, although we drew a distinction between this and the current name of the actual building, which was still “The People’s Gospel Mission Hall”.

3.3 Once we have a final version, **Mary would circulate it** with a link to minutes of meetings, to those who had initially signed up as members to update them on progress.

3.4 Those present added their names to a document signally their consent to act as Trustees.

4. Ownership of the People’s Gospel Mission Hall, referred to below as “the Hall”

We awaited reports from member’s research with the Land Registry and Camden Council.

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

Thanos had produced an initial draft of suitable text, basis for letters/communications, and also suggested using the two photos already incorporated in our header: **'A Hall for the People'**

“We are the Save the Gospel Mission Hall Group (*now Highgate Newtown Mission Hall Group*) and our mission is to save the beautiful People’s Gospel Mission Hall in Winscombe Street N19 5DG from development, and retain it for local people.

This remarkable and historic community hall dates from 1892 and has been a treasure to the community ever since - an ideal venue for a rare variety of activities involving people of all ages. We can't sit by and let it be turned into private flats, nor can the 1600 or so petitioners who are supporting our cause. We want to secure the Hall for community use in perpetuity.

Our vision is a place where local people can meet, learn and enjoy the range of activities that will be on offer. The Hall has a stage and exceptionally fine acoustics which are perfect for music/ drama/ dance performances, rehearsals and workshops. It is the only theatre space for many miles around and also has projection facilities and a large screen for showing films.

We are passionate about keeping this Hall for the local community's benefit and are looking for supporters and partners to help us realise our vision. Whether you are a private benefactor, corporate donor, charitable trust or arts organisation looking for a base for delivering community arts, we urgently want to hear from you.”

6. Organisations as Potential Collaborators

6.1 Noting the ideas that have already been mentioned: a theatre group for ex-prisoners looking for rehearsal space, the Bach Players, Orlando Gough, Highgate Choral Society, the Rector of St Mary Brookfield, 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, and LETSlink Groups who run musical events, and that Acland Burghley School might be a source of potential contacts.

6.2 We also noted Thanos's report that he has written to the Arts Council to ask if they know of any arts organisations looking for accommodation in north London.

7. Ideas for Fundraising

With reference to Minutes 7 of the last meeting, we agreed to ask Tamar to contact her friend Stephanie Bignon Bienvenu and invite her to do prepare a business plan, based on her document. Once we have applied to the Charity Commission using our CIO constitution, Michael can send an "expression of interest" to the Lottery Fund. Sally felt that we also need start crowd-funding soon and will also do some advance work on preparing articles for the local press with this in mind.

8. Future Management of the Hall

Regarding the question of what would be involved in ongoing management of the hall, noting that Sally had suggested R.E.A.C.H. as a source of potential trustees: <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/>

9. Contacts with Camden Council:

9.1 It was apparent that several members of the group were unclear of the layout of the Mission Hall, and it was agreed that we need to be clear on the extent of the property and preferably to arrange an opportunity to view the building, including rooms to which we had not previously had access.

9.2 Thanos had sent the following advice regarding a proposed meeting with Camden Council: I would suggest that you focus on the three issues below at this first meeting. The question of any financial contribution from the Council should probably wait until the group is clear about the potential sources of funding and what 'matched funding' arrangements may be possible. Also, it looks like the council will not wish to commit to any financial contribution at this stage. Here is my suggested 'agenda':



- **Purpose of Meeting:** To establish a partnership between Camden Council and the Mission Hall Group that will enable the charity to retain the Hall for community benefit in perpetuity
- **Agreement to allow purchase:** We have had a very positive response from Councillor Anna Wright which indicates that the Council is willing to allow the Mission Hall Group to purchase the Hall. Is this sufficient confirmation of the Council's formal position? Does it need to be confirmed in writing by the relevant Director?
- **Time period for raising funds:** Councillor Anna Wright indicated in her email that we would be allowed 4-5 months in the lead up to tendering the project to raise the required funds. We would wish to request for this to be reconsidered in order to give us as much time as possible to raise the necessary funds. Our understanding is that Mission Hall will be used by the contractors as a base for their workforce during the demolition and construction. We assume, therefore, that the actual conversion of the Mission Hall would not take place until well into the contract period. We would ask that the Council confirms with the successful contractor exactly when they would need formal notice that they are proceeding with the Mission Hall conversion in order to provide as much time as possible for us to raise the necessary funds.
- **Price of purchase:** We have heard the figure of £1.5m mentioned as the sum required by the Council. We noted that in the papers to the Planning Committee, the conversion costs were stated as £700k. Does this mean that the estimated selling price for the two houses is £2.2m? Would it be possible for the tender process to acknowledge this issue and request the tenderers to submit a price for the entire development as agreed by Planning and within that a clear price for converting the Mission Hall? In that way, we would know the exact conversion cost when the successful tender is accepted. Would the Council then be willing to get an up to date valuation of the two town houses, so we can be sure of the real amount required by the council? We are conscious of rising building costs and falling property selling prices and would wish to have the most accurate and realistic fundraising target for the Hall.
- **Meeting Outcome:** We would appreciate if the above matters could be confirmed in writing as prospective funders will need some proof that the council is allowing this proposal to be pursued.

Minutes of follow-up Meeting held at Harry Rice Hall, Hargrave Park, N19 5JN on Thursday 28th March 2019 from 11am-11.30am (after Pilates class).

1. Present: Sally Donati (chair), Michael and Sue Ellman, Mary and Alan Cane, Tamar Swade, Mary Fee (notes). Apologies: Gabrielle Mahoney (who has kindly agreed to act as Treasurer), and Thanos Morphitis (who is acting as Advisor rather than a Trustee).

2. Outreach: Tamar had just given a verbal report to members of the Pilates Class on progress so far and asked for ideas for fund-raising, which she noted and **would report back to the next meeting.**

3. Formation of Charitable Trust:

Michael had added some items previously in the Appendix about digital meetings to the Constitution, and had also added names of the initial Trustees to the document, as follows:

Sally Anne Donati, 2 Bellgate Mews, London NW5 1SU - for 4 years

Mary Fee, 12 Southcote Road, London N219 5BJ - for 4 years

Mary Gabrielle Mahoney, 14 Goddard Place, London N19 5GS - for 3 years

Tamar Natalie Swade, 4 Clevedon Mansions, Lissenden Gardens London NW5 1QN - for 3 years

Michael Peter David Ellman, 66 Goddard Place, London N19 5GT- for 2 years

Mary Cane, 80, Burghley Road, London NW51UN - for 2 years

Continuing from previous meeting;

11. Future Steps:

10.1 Once the CIO has been formed **Michael can go ahead with setting up a bank account.**

10.2 Tamar had sent Mary three PDFS of the petition forms, from which she would do her best to **transcribe the email addresses.**

10.3 Mary wondered if we would be able to follow up on those who had signed the digital petition.

10.4 Whilst accepting progress so far, Mary was concerned as to whether a charitable trust was the best model, as there was no stake-holder element, which she understood had been implemented with other buy-outs, she had a colleague who had been involved in a local project to save a pub, and members suggested that she **seek advice from him on this and report back.**

12. Contact Details:

It was agreed for future reference that we needed to have each others' phone numbers, as follows

Sally = 020 7267 8548 - 07768 205 062

Tamar = 020 7261 0474

Michael = 020 7281 7944

Mary F = 020 7607 7852 - 07966 216 891

Mary C = 020 7485 8233 - 07973 227 578

Alan C = 020 7485 8233 - 07850 113 311

(Michael would get Gabrielle's to add to the list):

13. Next Meetings:

Sally and Tamar, working from advice emailed from Anna Wright and Thanos Morphitis, had continued negotiating with Louise Trawavas to organise a meeting at Camden Council, hopefully including Anna Wright, Sian Berry and Luke Joyce and the dates so far agreed are as follows:

11.1 Preparatory meeting with Stephanie at Michael's place: **2.30pm Wednesday 3rd April 2019**

11.2 Meeting at Camden Council offices: **11.45am to 1pm Thursday April 2019**

MF/mf

Draft at 30/3/2019