

MINUTES OF MEMBERS MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY ON TUESDAY 22ND JUNE 2021

PRESENT

Robert Excell (Chair)	Individual Member
David Muston (Vice Chair)	Calverton Records Project
Mike Wittle (Hon. Sec.)	St Mary's Church, Bletchley
Charlotte Hall (Treasurer)	Woughton Heritage Group
Alan Cooper (IT Officer)	New Bradwell Heritage
Jennifer Cooper (Social Media Officer)	New Bradwell Heritage
Neil Loudon (Exec)	Milton Keynes Museum Society
Anna McEvoy (Exec)	Stowe House Preservation Trust
Catherine McIntyre (Exec)	MK City Discovery Centre
Brian Giggins	Towcester & District Local History Society & Historic Survey
Michael Held	TVAT (Milton Keynes Village)
Lynne Cairns	Heritage MK
J David Morgan	Independant
Ellie Pridgeon	Archivist for ARCH MK Project

APOLOGIES

None

1. Welcome

The Chair, Robert, welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Minutes of Virtual Members Meeting dated 24th March 2021

Agreed - no amendments required.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. ARCH MK Report

4.1. Ellie gave members an overview of the project with timetable of events (*both completed and to come*):-

- Individual visits made to group archives (Oct 20);
- Remote training sessions (Oct 20 to Jan 21);
- Additional training sessions (Sept 21);
- Re-visiting group archives (Sept 21);

- Delivery of recommendations report summarising work undertaken and any future options (Dec 21);
- Final Report completed (Dec 21).

4.2. Ellie also took members through the slides presented (Slides 7 to 10):-

- Slide 7 - Training Session 1 / Care, handling & storage of documents;
- Slide 8 - Training Session 2 / Digitisation & copyright (*mainly technical issues*);
- Slide 9 - Training Session 3/ Cataloguing (*best ways to do this*). NB: An EXCEL template was supplied for this; and
- Slide 10 - Training Session 4 / Handling documents & Exhibitions (*outstanding training session awaiting in-person opportunities after relaxation of COVID restrictions*). NB: Hopefully from September 2021.

4.3. Questions arising

Lynne Cairns raised a question around digitisation limitations over time?

It was accepted that 'tech platforms' can change and that digitisation should only be part of any preservation solution. Parchment is known to be the most long lasting / tested method to-date and relying on digitisation only is not an alternative way forward in itself. Ellie gave the example of the late 90's FAX documents that can no longer be read as the ink and paper used is fading with time. Digitisation can only be part of a solution.

NB: Robert indicated that members can come along to the last session even if they have not taken part in the previous sessions when it is run.

5. HoD's 2021

It was noted that HoD's will be held between the 10th & 19th September 2021. The theme is 'Edible England / Food & Farming'. Some 150 events are currently planned. The advertising deadline has gone past **but members can still apply to MKHA for a small grant towards costs for an event over this period (i.e cost of hall bookings etc).**

6. Festival of History 2022

It was noted that this event has been rescheduled for 10th / 11th June 2023 and that various organisations like Bletchley Parks Trust, Parks Trust, CDC are all on board under this Heritage MK event.

7. Treasurer's Report

Overall amount in Bank Account is £29769.05 (*see slide 14 for breakdown*).
NB: It was noted that figure was a little top heavy as it still included money for MKHA Archive project.

It was also noted that the grant money for this year from MK Council had not been received as yet. (*NB: KEY to funding this year is to be able to encourage groups to start up again after such a long closure due to COVID19 and provide finance to assist where appropriate*).

8. Grants (*see slide 15*)

8.1. Bucks Archiological Society

It was noted that £550 has been granted for this project.

8.2. New Grant Applications

8.2.1. Bucks Gardens Trust

This is a project to survey and record important local gardens across Buckinghamshire. MKHA see this as a worthwhile project but are awaiting further information to be provided before making a decision.

It was noted that the intention was to make this material freely available to the public. The intention is to also digitise the work undertaken.

MKHA encourage members to make applications for grants. MKHA are happy to talk members through the process where required.

9.A. Members Reports (see slides / verbal reports)

9.1. New Bradwell Heritage

Alan Cooper expressed his thanks for the ARCH MK Project that had enabled their group to update their cataloging process and put in place an enhanced storage process.

9.2. Stowe House

Slides 17/18 were shown of the two rooms that have or are under going restoration over lockdown, in particular the new replica fireplace (*the original is in Madrid Santander Bank Building*). Anna pointed out the colour scheme which was unusual dating from the 1960's - gold, silver & pink.

It was noted that the House will be open again to the public (to see all of this work) from 1st July 2021.

9.3. Calverton Group (*slide 19*)

David indicated that the group celebrated its 25th Anniversary on the 18th June 2021. Like many groups the past 18 months have been difficult. The village green was in the process of having a make over. Moving forward new members had joined and were enthusiastically taking things on board.

9.4. CDC

Catherine updated on the cultural grant received from the Government which has been used to acquire and install new modern shelving (*metal roll & tracking - see slide*). This has been a great improvement and made life much better for CDC.

9.5. St Marys Church, Bletchley

Mike indicate that the church was taking part over the HoD's and will be open each afternoon of the 18/19th September 2021. The church will also be opening to the public again from Thursday 1st July 2021 from 2 to 4pm each week through to the last Thursday in September 2021. Work continued on the translation of old documentation into modern day English.

9.6. Towcester & District Local History Group

Brian indicated that meetings continued on-line but that hoped to combine both on-line (*particularly in the Winter months*) and in-person meetings as soon as possible. They had issued a questionnaire to members and are awaiting feedback. The 'Riverside' venue will be available to them hopefully in the Autumn but in reality the group may not start up there again until 2022.

A short discussion was had around the benefits of blending on-line with in-person meetings as a way forward for groups in general.

9.7. TVAT

Michael indicated that the group was rather 'moth balled' currently. MKHA indicate that if the group required any financial support to get going again this was what this years grant had been awarded for.

9.8. Milton Keynes Museum Society

Neil indicated that the group like many had been inactive due to COVID19 however the museum itself had taken the opportunity across lockdown to put in place new exhibition areas, new train track and children's gallery ready for reopening. The museum has now reopened using pre-booked tickets.

9.9. Woughton Heritage Centre

Charlotte indicated that the group had struggled over the last 18 months. Some archive work has taken place.

9.B. Spectrum-on-Air

David Morgan from Spectrum-on-Air across MK and wider (*including International Broadcasting*) provided a run down on the benefits of publicising heritage work across the radio and internet.

David indicated that he was introducing a new program called 'Heritage Matters' in July 2021 once a week (with repeats). He wanted to celebrate MK as a whole from a heritage point of view, the diverse cultures and languages and history across the area. Demonstrating that this can be done for a 'New Town' like MK will illustrate the importance and effectiveness this sort of promotion of MK can bring. David encouraged groups to get involved, to contact him and get their group promoted etc.

David is looking for 'pieces' on what is going on locally to incorporate in the program which will be interspersed with music across the hour. **To get in touch with David you can reach him on:-**

Mobile: 07789-485621;

Email: heritagematters@btinternet.com

If members have anything to publicise or an article about HoD's, ARCH MK Project, Open Days in general or a groups history then please get in touch with David...

10. A.o.B

None

11. Date of next Members Meeting

The next Members Meeting will be the MKHA AGM hopefully to be held in-person at the Granary, MK Museum on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 7PM - THIS IS SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

NB: IF VENUE / IN-PERSON MEETING IS NOT APPROPRIATE THE AGM WILL BE HELD VIA ZOOM

Meeting closed

Signed

Dated

Robert Excell

Chair of MKHA