

Minutes of the M8 2024 Trustees' Meeting

Venue Root & Branch Westmill Farm & Online MS Teams	Date Monday 12 th August 2024 6.30 pm
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Trustees Present Richard Taylor Emma Welch Nick Daisley Colin Bell Rosie Wheeler Neil Griffiths	Also Present Tanya Parkinson Martyn Cooper Carolyn Place
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Welcome

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from David Atkins and Alistaire Knight.

Martyn Cooper attended a meeting for the third time following his expression of interest to join the board. Carolyn Place attended a meeting for the second time following her expression of interest to join the board.

1. Minutes of the previous trustee meeting

The draft minutes of the Meeting M7 (July 2024) were agreed and ratified as accurate by trustees present, they can be saved and published on the website.

Action Emma

Matters Arising.

Ian Matheson has been invited to become a patron of Root and Branch and we are delighted that he has accepted. Ian has been invited to the family event that we are planning for the 6th September.

The board agree that we should mark Ian's contribution at the AGM in October.

Adam Twine, who is also a patron of R&B, has also been invited to the family event, but unfortunately Adam and Liz are unable to make it.

David has reviewed and updated the Risk Register and there is now a Risk Register folder in the Admin section on Teams. David has emailed and asked that he update the board on this in the September meeting.

Website/Branding:

Tanya has circulated ideas for a strap line to all and has asked everyone to vote for their favourite. Tanya will check with participants before we publish any of their anonymised stories/comments on social media.

Action All

Three items remain on the Progress Sheet for review and update next month:

See Appendix A for Actions.

2. Financial Update

Finance Report

Alistaire has finalised the accounts for 2023/2024 and has sent the full spreadsheet to Tom for auditing.

Sarah is now using the new cash book for the current financial year. She has this up to date to the middle of June 2024.

The finances are currently in a healthy state, with significantly more than our required reserves in the bank. The kitchen project, which is now almost complete will be funded from charity reserves and we are very excited to see this project come to fruition. Fund raising planned for the remainder of the year will cover any short fall in kitchen costs. See fundraising below.

Alistaire has remained in contact with R&B whilst we find a replacement and the board would like to thank him for his commitment. Recruitment is minuted in the Governance Section. Currently Tanya and Sarah are on top of finances in the office, but moving forward with a new treasurer, the board expressed a desire to get back to monthly finance reporting as soon as possible.

In the interim period Emma will contact Tom Case to find out if there is any other help he can give us to support the book keeping in the office and the board discussed the potential of adopting a system that uses accountancy software like Xero. It is agreed that we will aim to adopt an accounting package when we recruit a new treasurer.

Fundraising Update

Just Giving continues to bring in very useful core funding. The trustees would like to thank Bob Buckley who is running the Chippenham Half Marathon for R&B – specifically Bob is trying to raise money for the Kitchen Project. He has a fund raising page on Just Giving.

Tanya has written a six month appraisal for Rachel the fundraiser – with some input from Nick and Martyn. It is clear that Rachel has worked very hard and the board agreed to stand by the offer made to Rachel in her original offer of employment letter, now that she has completed her probationary period.

Moving forward, the board would like Rachel to update a report each month listing all the attempts and opportunities she has made for fund raising. Tanya will discuss this with her.

Action Tanya

Emma and Rosie have helped Rachel research and get quotes for more environmentally friendly log burners and Rachel has applied for a grant to fund this.

3. Governance, Policies, Strategy

Trustee Recruitment

Richard and Emma have created an advertisement for the trustee treasurer and circulated to all. It is being advertised widely, on our local networks, at Nationwide and within Zurich in Swindon. Emma will email the advertisement to all on the mailing list. It is agreed that everyone will continue to share this along with a job description. Nick will work with Tanya to put the ad on linked in again.

Action All

So far we have been visited by one potential applicant who unfortunately can't start straight away – so we will stay in contact with him.

Action Emma

The board are delighted to have two new potential trustees in Carolyn and Martyn. A third individual with a background in law will be joining us at the trustee meeting in September. We would like to thank everyone for their interest and feel very lucky that now our board is very dynamic and diverse.

Policy Review

Rosie and Neil have made a comprehensive review of the Recruitment Policy. They have brought the Policy up to date with current terminology and current practice.

The board agreed to all their changes and updates. Richard will send a couple more comments to Rosie by email, so that Rosie can complete the review and we can sign off this Policy as updated.

Emma and Martyn will research ways to make sure that all volunteers, staff and trustees are DBS checked and that these checks are kept up to date. This will be reported back at the next meeting.

Action Emma and Martyn

It is agreed that there should now be a 12 week probationary period for all new volunteers and Emma will update the Volunteer Handbook to reflect this.

Action Emma

Insurance Review

Emma had circulated the current policy document to all ahead of the meeting, and thanked everyone for their comments. It is a very comprehensive policy with good public liability cover. Emma will update the policy taking on board all comments, to make sure that the insurance covers all our needs for another year.

Action Emma

Strategic Plan Review

Emma had circulated the current strategic plan to all. The board agreed to review this ahead of the AGM in October. Tanya had some comments that she will bring to the September meeting, as we plan for the AGM.

4. Operational Review

Tanya updated the board. There has been lots of progress on the premises this month, with the kitchen project being completed, two working parties from Zurich and the completion of new paths in the garden. The Zurich teams have painted all external woodwork, smartened up all our wooden signs and built a covered walk way between the log cabin and the toilet.

The board thanked Zurich for all their hard work. Tanya has worked incredibly hard to make all of it happen and the board expressed their gratitude for all the time she has put in. Jo and Peter have been given a gift to express thanks for the work and time they have volunteered.

Kate has started to present her vision for the garden to all participants on a daily basis. This presents wonderful opportunities for all our participants to be involved in the future of the garden. Carolyn offered a member of her team to draw up the vision and create a plan.

Action Tanya/Carolyn

All volunteers have been sent online links to complete level 1 safeguarding training.

5. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meetings will be:

3rd September 2024. 6.30pm At Root & Branch Westmill (and online on MS Teams).

Items from the rolling agenda:

Prepare for the AGM (Emma and Richard) including making updates to strategic plan.

Charity Risk Register (David)

DBS update

Review of the Trustee Handbook

The Annual General Meeting will be Tuesday **8th October 2024**, At Root and Branch.