



MERTON PRIORY TRUST

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 1 December 2010 at 1 Compton Road SW19 7QA

1. PRESENT:

Chair: Marcus Beale (MB), Cllr Maurice Groves (MG), Cllr Nick Draper (ND), David Saxby (DS), Nicholas Hart (NH), Cyril Maidment (CM), Dave Roberts (DR), John Hawks (JH); also in attendance Max Breese (architectural student)

2. APOLOGIES: Cllr Geraldine Stanford, Vicki Carroll, Jane Sidell

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

Agreed these are a true and correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

4.1. Land Transfer (see 5. below)

4.2. Events (see 6. below)

4.3. Improvements (see 7. below)

4.4. World Heritage Site. Nothing further to report as yet.

4.5. Papal Visit. This had not happened, but the Trust are still interested in making contact with the Papal Nuncio next year.

4.6. Friends of Merton Priory. The "Friends" had made contact with MB and MG regarding Nones in 2011. It was agreed their use would be conditional on observing the user's agreement and on not disturbing or otherwise interrupting the planned programme of improvements.

4.7. Access and Use (see 8. below)

4.8. Financial Report. DR reported that the bank account had now been transferred from Natwest to a no-charge account. He presented the annual accounts which were approved.

4.9. Action carried forward. MB and JH will meet to address website improvements, and MB would contact John Merivale re criteria for funding from Bridge house Trust. **[Action: JH/MB.]**

5. LAND TRANSFER

NH/JH reported on recent meetings and correspondence with the Council. JH strongly felt, and had proposed, that the only way this by now absurdly protracted issue might be resolved would be if senior decision takers met and agreed the principle, and only then instructed their respective legal departments - furthermore, NH's advice was that in practice the lawyers alone would *never* be able to resolve the issue without such a step, as the Section 106 agreement had been rendered inoperable by events - the Gordian Knot had to be cut. However, Council officers had so far refused to countenance this suggestion. Meeting agreed that the situation was deeply unsatisfactory, and two parallel courses of action would be taken: (i) NH (with support from MG and ND) would in the New Year seek the help of Cllr Andrew Judge who was already apprised of the situation, and (ii) MB would attempt direct contact with Axa at a senior level. **[Action: NH/MB.]**

6. NEXT STEPS. A programme of improvements will be undertaken in the New Year (see 7 below). JH/NH suggested a public meeting (with an influential speaker) in April to raise awareness and interest. The Nones service will take place as usual in May, and other planned open days so

far include the Wandle Weekend (June 4/5), the Festival of British Archaeology in July, Kidsfest in August and London Open House in September. "Abbeyfest" was also interested in using the Chapter House once more for drama during July and August. **[Action: JH/NH.]**

7. IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Subcommittee of JH/NH/DS tabled an Action Plan for the use of MBA's £1,000 gift over the next six months, which was approved in outline. This also included additional work, especially sand removal/replacement, for which a grant can hopefully be obtained. Work would start in the New Year, and meeting agreed that the subcommittee was delegated to spend this money without reference to the Board, but would do so by reclaiming as expenses. MG suggested use of community service groups and would contact the organiser. Useful contacts had also been made with potential volunteers, including David Tatham (an enthusiastic local resident) and Hassan Al'Ouari (an IT postgraduate whose particular subject was the Priory), and the Visitor's Book kept by NH was also an excellent potential resource. DS had begun a Facebook page by which events and opportunities to help would be publicised, and was updating this weekly. **[Action: JH/NH/DS/MG.]**

8. USER'S AGREEMENT FORM

JH/NH had revised this, which was approved. MB will send a copy to "The Friends", who would be given a key nearer the time for Nones. NH will send a copy of the form for interest to the Wandle Industrial Museum. **[Action: MB, NH.]**

9. AOB

9.1 Stained Glass Panels from Sheridan Road. NH is arranging for the transport of these to the Chapter House in due course. **[Action: NH.]**

9.2 Outline Maps. DS and NH will continue with marrying up the various maps of the site. **[Action: DS, NH.]**

9.3 Heritage Strategy. CM raised the Merton Heritage Strategy, and will be pursuing issues it raised which are less than ideal in a number of respects. **[Action: CM.]**

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING. 5 pm on Wednesday 19th January at the Trust's offices: Old Post Office, 1 Compton Road, SW19 7QA. **[Action: all.]**

These notes by JH/MB. Any corrections or clarifications please to info@mertonpriory.org