

MERTON PRIORY TRUST

MEETING 7 September 2011

Chapter House

The minutes of the meeting on Wednesday June 8th had suggested a next meeting date of July 20th, but this was postponed to September 7th owing to lack of progress and to the absence of Trustees on holiday. At this meeting the topics discussed included:

- Status of land transfer: still no progress to report at that stage - NH was trying to secure a copy of the transfer deed.
- Sand removal: this had been recognised by all parties to be urgent, and was now being undertaken at weekends by DS/JH with the reparation service. Equipment had been purchased with the help of funding by MBA. GS was enquiring whether the Council could help with the disposal of the bulk bags.
- The Mayor's proposed medieval banquet: this had been cancelled for health and safety reasons, given the situation now created by the sand excavation.
- MB had suggested the facsimile manuscripts might be sold via the internet, but on enquiring RC had met with serious opposition.
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MEETING 29 October 2011

Chapter House

At this meeting the topics included:

- Status of land transfer: still no progress
- Sand removal: it was acknowledged that this had become an important archaeological project rather than a mere clearance exercise. DS/JH were grateful not only to the volunteers of the reparation service but also to Jane Sidell from English Heritage for her enthusiastic participation. It was recognised that the disposal of the bags was becoming urgent, but would now be a cost which the Trust was unable to afford without Council funding.

MEETING 16 November 2011

Compton Road

This meeting was convened to discuss the sudden and welcome news that the Land Transfer had been completed. Topics discussed included:

- The new situation, with the Council as freeholder and controller of S.106 finances, and how this funding could be used by the Trust. MB stressed that the Council's policy for the Priory and the Trust as its appointed guardian had long been adopted and was a matter of record, but RC stressed it was essential that the Trust had a clear strategy. Agreed that a meeting should be set asap between MB/NH/ND/RC/JH and the Council officers responsible for the project, to clarify protocols, procedures and immediate needs.
- Ideas for the future of the Chapter House; JH presented a paper, and ND outlined his vision as a community asset.
- NH had obtained a copy of the transfer deed, and drew attention to errors, discrepancies and restrictions in it which needed clarification. Agreed we should press for a meeting with Council officers on this specific topic.
- JH mentioned that Terry Buckland of MAM was still enthusiastic to rent the external land for car parking, but this would now be a matter for the Council.
- MH had suggested a medieval lunch event as a thankyou to volunteers and associates. Meeting agreed this should be expanded to celebrate the land transfer with as many of the relevant "great and good" as possible - MB/JH would send invitations, and MH would work her magic with the catering.