LITTLE BADDOW PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the History Centre Committee was held in the Memorial Hall on September 28 2026. The Meeting commenced at 7:00pm. In attendance: -

Cllr Barbara Teal - Chair
Margaret Martin
Chrissi Frost
Verity Rose
Andrew Wiltshire
Caroline Ogden (taking minutes in the absence of the Clerk)

Members of the Public – none

1. Apologies for Absence
Apologies received from Andy Coppell, Ian Wardle (Clerk to LBPC)

2. Declarations of Interest
None

3. Approval of the Minutes of the 22 June 2026 Meeting
Following the Chair's reading of the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2026, Committee approved said minutes and they were signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising
The idea of East London walks guided by the Chair was discussed.
Actions from the last meeting around insurance, vestry use and parking facilities for the Autumn Craft Fair were confirmed as complete.
Use of the HC as a conference area was discussed – none since EWT but did we need a camera for virtual conferences?
Cleaning for the HC – the Chair had raised this matter at the last parish council meeting, as the HC cleaning is included in Liz the cleaner's hours, but we do not feel it has been done or done well. The Chair explained that there were problems with LIz at the Hall also, but LBPC were reluctant to confront her as her flexibility for Hall cleaning is of value. She states she goes to the HC weekly, and it was agreed she be asked to come on Wednesdays, so that we can confirm on Thursdays if it is clean and Caroline will not empty the bins as she usually does. All volunteers have cleaned the HC and would be willing to continue cleaning it - but not if it is her remit. Nevertheless, Mel Thompson plans to clean and paint the 'postie's loo' next week. **ACTION – The Chair to ask Liz to clean HC on Wednesdays.**
AOB – student volunteer fell through.
Nothing further on URC position.

5. Public Participation
No members of the public in attendance.

6. Autumn Craft Fair
All going well – still vendors to chase. Carla and Alan would do burgers again. We would do our own coffee and tea, as that makes money – Steph and Chrissi would help. Discussion of Verity's suggestion of Fantastic Feasts but agreed no other food vendors wanted, as competition for burgers. The Chair would do pumpkin soup. Alcohol licence discussed. Those beer and liquor companies approached no longer do sale or return, mainly because of regulation. Mulled wine discussed – could be heated without involving vestry kitchen. Caroline would like a 'food hall' area if enough stalls. Organic veg not coming but Two Browns Eggs are. Caroline would also ask Andy if we might use the vestry for stalls. She had asked Richard if we could have an extra marquee, if necessary – he would provide an easy-up gazebo in the yard. She had asked Michael Auker to help with wi-fi and power again. She circulated latest list of vendors and discussed. Posters had gone up and 200 flyers had been ordered (cost = 2 stalls!); some were distributed to committee attendees. Sadly, Bond

unable to do signboards this year. Tables from Hall would come down on Friday afternoon and had to be returned to Hall by 6pm on Saturday – LBPC men would help. Marquees would go up on Friday morning and be taken down Sunday afternoon, once dry. SEPP bollards and Council bins arranged by Steph Scott. Parking times were discussed - 8-6. Margaret raised the issue of disabled parking – the only options were verge parking or drop off; Andrew warned against people leaving cars at drop-off point and cited Open Gardens experience, which resulted in a shunt! He would get balloons to mark car park and footpath therefrom. He refused offer of relief shifts! He had provided an aerial map sent by New Hall which Caroline would include in her vendor pack of aerial site plan, arrival slots, marquee and building layouts, table and chair requirements.

7. AOB

Social media and advertising

Verity would try to design a banner in time for the Fair; the idea is to have permanent metal posts (cost £100) at the URC side gate, so we can put it up on Thursdays and for any events - with a space on the banner to add these individually. It could also advertise URC on one half. The Chair was in discussion with Andy re permission. If not decided in time, the banner could go at the Memorial Hall before the Fair. Verity also suggested a Corex sign affixed to noticeboard opposite HC, where Neighbourhood Watch sign is at present, advertising that HC is opposite! There was also discussion of a wheeled weighted-base banner for HC side gate. Caroline mentioned the HC sign inside the gate could be repainted and made more visible. Andrew suggested designs for Andy for clarification. **ACTION – Verity to design banners and Corex sign. ACTION – designs to Andy.**

Verity had also produced wonderful social media adverts for the Craft Fair and had recently done one with visitors' comments at Caroline's request. The problem with facebook is that it does not show for everyone – but is random or according to algorhythms. One has to do a search or join. However, we have 53 members. Verity suggested more animation and eye-catching colour. Canva was discussed (£100 p.a.) As committee was quorate, it was agreed we pay this sum – Verity and Caroline would look at it together. **ACTION – Caroline and Verity to set up and work on Canva. ACTION – The Chair to notify the Clerk of decision.**

The Chair had contacted some Australian family history groups to explore synergy and promotion.

Verity mentioned footpath map holders for noticeboards and paths, which LBPC had agreed, and an insert for the HC to go in the current map. She showed her rough design. Verity also had Millennium Walk maps, which pleased Margaret who had been asking for some for years. Chrissi took some for HC.

Visits

Caroline had hosted a visit from American Porters, descendants of Cuckoos family who left for New World in 16th century. They visited Cuckoos and also attended St Mary's concert and are continually in touch with Caroline. They had made donation and bought books. Caroline had got card reader working again!
Also Jared Elliot, descendant of John Eliot, and his wife, came and also visited Cuckoos. Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings had come for the day and visited church and other houses in village, paying us £50. Caroline had posted all this on facebook. Caroline hosting Brownies in October and Mel hosting U3A in November.

Exhibitions

Both the Chair and Margaret felt 'redundant' at HC. No projects/exhibitions as there were in the past, done by Jane Rigler monthly. Exhibitions should ideally remain all year. The Chair did not have time and Chrissi and Margaret did not feel it was their forte. Chrissi offered to ask Christine Coleman if she would reconsider doing exhibitions. **ACTION – Chrissi to ask Christine**
As Danbury has a case of history items but no centre, Verity had suggested to the Chair that the two villages combine for an exhibition. The Chair had discussed this and closer ties generally with Danbury PC Chair Mandy Hessing. This would also help raise awareness of HC.

Funding/Family Research

Chrissi asked if she could ask Steph if there was further funding for Carers Club members to have their family history done for £25. The Chair pointed out this funding had been a one-off amount. Caroline pointed out we cannot advertise this with any mention of Ancestry, as we cannot use our subscription commercially. Verity asked for wording from Chrissi to promote. **ACTION – Chrissi to compose wording for Verity**

Various

- Caroline reported she had been in touch with Essex University library about our having more J A Baker items and they had sent a catalogue and offered us our pick of copies of images, letters etc. Margaret would buy his three books to have at HC and was happy to choose items. **ACTION – Caroline to pass email to Margaret to select. ACTION - Margaret to select items.**
- Caroline reported Men's Shed are fulfilling her dream of a display of the organ parts she saved from St Mary's and are also refurbing our notice board outside the HC door. Caroline would send them a picture of the original organ and her idea of the design. We need to give them a donation. **ACTION – Caroline to send to Men's Shed**. **ACTION – All to decide donation.**
- Nothing further from Witchcraft Museum**. ACTION – Caroline to chase**
- Caroline had put EWT and New Hall in touch re facilities for brush-cutting workshops, possibly using HC and outbuildings at New Hall Equestrian Centre.
- Caroline had reconciled cash and found an unexplained shortage of c. £77 (amount revised since this meeting) - probably from something not being recorded. Cash for Ian is £50. Petty cash remaining: £22.62. But there is more cash now from further donations. Lesson – do accounts monthly!
- Chrissi said Mel was concerned about occasionally needing the archive room key for the projector for events/visits. Caroline explained he had taken the projector in advance for the SPAB visit, as he knew he wasn't coming on the Thursday of that week, and that both he and she had been there early on the day to set up, as planned. If Caroline cannot be there to give a key where needed, she can pass it to some else in advance. The question of limited keys (Liz Cullen and Caroline) was raised and the Chair explained it was a requirement of LBPC's insurer. However, if Liz or Caroline are away, keys have to be passed to others. And if one is away and one late, others cannot get into archive. The Chair explained that apparently other people had keys also, unknown to us. She had asked for a key code like that outside the HC, but the LBPC in her absence had agreed a replacement lock. **MOTION - It was proposed, seconded and agreed by this HC committee that the current procedure was not satisfactory and a key safe was requested**. LBPC had agreed to review after three months. **ACTION – Chair to request LBPC to review key position in 3 months.** All other keys were now locked in the archive room at Caroline's and Chrissi's suggestion. The fact of other valuables being in the main room was raised and it was agreed the medals should also be locked away.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee would be on January 18 at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall. The craft fair working group would also meet in the meantime.

The meeting closed at 9pm.