

Meeting held on Wednesday 10 October between the PCC, EBVHC and TeamEB at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Those Present:

Tim Coleman (TC) (Chair)	Chrissie Atwell (CA)	Mary Kimber (MK)
Linda Carter (LC)	Ailsa Main (AM)	Clive Harper (CH)
Mick Netting (MDN)	Meryl Cain (MC)	Eileen Simms (ES)
Lin Gardner (LG)	Tanya Hudson (TH)	Valerie Coleman (VC)
Moe Netting (MN)	Alex Morgan (AM)	

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

It had been agreed at a recent EBVHC meeting that there had been a breakdown in communication between TeamEB and EBVHC and a meeting was arranged to discuss the way forward.

TC welcomed everybody to the meeting. He opened the meeting by confirming his understanding of the purpose of the meeting - to discuss the changes for the Village Hall (VH) and the Church, that were being planned in order to improve and develop the buildings. Both buildings were valuable assets to the village in providing facilities for social and other activities within the village.

There were three groups represented at the meeting – Eaton Bishop Village Hall Management Committee (EBVHMC), TeamEB and the Parochial Church Council (PCC). EBVHMC had made tremendous strides in improving the Hall both structurally and functionally; putting on fund raising events; non-profit making events and other events to raise money for non-village charities. The Church was embarking on a re-ordering programme through the endeavours of the PCC. This would enable the church to put on certain events, as well as being available for worship. This re-ordering would be in line with the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent message to parishes to turn their churches into "temples of fun" eg hosting unusual events and exhibitions. The third group was TeamEB; an independent group who organised events generating funds for both the VH and the Church through an annual programme of activities. It was noted that between 2012 and 2017 a total of £36,671 had been raised. This money had been distributed between the Village Hall and the Church based on the financial needs of both buildings. All 3 groups fully deserved the congratulations and thanks from the local community for their efforts.

However, there had been a lack of communication between the groups that had led to a lack of awareness and confusion with regard to future events.

TC also suggested that questions being raised by people living in the village indicated a number of uncertainties. For example:

- *"Who was actually involved in organising local events?"*

- *Whether or not the village can continue to afford to maintain both the church and VH, both of which required on going funding.*
- *Would money raised from, say, the sale of the VH be transferable to help maintain the church?*
- *How much will the re-ordering of the church and work to the VH cost and how much would be borne by the local community?*
- *What is the extent and objectives of the proposed reordering of the church?*
- *What would happen if the church failed to generate funds to cover the cost each year?"*

He felt that failure to raise awareness and encourage the active involvement of the village community meant that there was a risk of potentially valuable ideas not being voiced. In addition there was the risk that disinterest would result amongst those who felt uninvolved in implementing future changes.

The underlying *raison d'être* for the meeting was to stimulate discussion to improve communication between, not only the PCC, EBVHMC and TeamEB, but also between the three groups and the local community. TC invited those present:

- to comment on the perceived need to improve communications between the three groups involved with fund raising and between these groups and the local community
- to offer constructive suggestions as to how to move forward in the future to ensure the lines of communicate were maintained.

LC opened by pointing out that a questionnaire had been given to people in the village who had attended the Parish Council Open Day/APM (Annual Parish Meeting) but there had only been two responses.

LG said that she would like to see members of the VHMC joining TeamEB. She pointed out that the Church was in need of urgent repairs and she had spent the last 4 years investigating grants and had established that in order to obtain the larger sums of money required the PCC would have to demonstrate the involvement of the whole village, including all the organisations involved with the village ie Gardening Club; Historical Society etc. This could be demonstrated by an independent survey being carried out. She had identified a company which would be able to perform this. She also confirmed that a grant was available to fund this.

CA added that the VHMC had attempted to carry out a survey at the last Christmas Market, Easter Market and APM but there had also been little response. CA informed those present that she and MN had met with Community First (an organisation that supports rural communities) who indicated that they would be willing to assist in carrying out a door-to-door survey in the village. She suggested that questions concerning the church might be able to be incorporated into this questionnaire. LG had visited the Community First website and was concerned that there was no mention of assistance for churches. CA explained that they worked with a range of buildings, which were used to offer community service, eg old pubs etc.. and

that she could make enquiries accordingly. Everyone was in agreement that it was imperative that the views of the people in the village were gathered. There were two areas of need for the church – the urgent repairs and the re-ordering of the church.

LC emphasised that it was not the intention of the PCC and TeamEB to see the VH shut down. The reordering of the church simply involved removal of pews at the back of the church and moving the font to create a useable space. The intention was also to install a toilet and a small kitchen so that the church could host certain events in the future.

Members of the PCC had visited Yarpole village where a similar exercise, albeit on a larger scale, had been successful. There, the church and the VH ran side by side.

LC explained to the meeting that in the past the 'Parish Quota' was determined by the diocese for each parish to pay annually and that this was used mainly to pay for the incumbent's salary. This had now changed and a new scheme was in place that meant that the church only donated what it could afford. Under this new scheme the PCC had been able to reduce the church's contribution to the diocese by half.

MDN asked what was the cost of insurance and would this increase if the church was used more. LC confirmed the current cost was £3,000. She pointed out that due to the costs involved the church was only insured for 25% of its value. TH confirmed that should the church host more events the cost of insurance would rise incrementally but would not be prohibitive.

TC questioned whether there was a financial plan in place for the improvements to the church. LC confirmed that no repairs had been carried out on the Church and they were "barely keeping their head above water".

TC summarised the points made and everyone agreed that a survey was essential. A discussion followed on the success of the National Development Plan survey but it was agreed that the circumstances surrounding that survey had been very different and it was uncertain whether there would be the same interest for the new survey.

CA felt that the VH was in a different situation. Community First had indicated that the VH should not have a problem attracting a grant for their needs. MN pointed out that the VHMC had been approached by Community First who were offering their assistance to all villages in Herefordshire and Worcestershire to a) recruit young volunteers and b) conduct door-to-door surveys. TH suggested that CA approach Community First with a view to widening the scope of the survey. **This was agreed.**

MDN queried whether architectural plans had been drawn up for the reordering. LC pointed out that the church did not have funds to put architectural plans in place and agreed that there was no point in carrying out

TC observed that TeamEB was made up primarily of PCC members and suggested having more VHMC members and individuals from the community who were not affiliated to either the PCC or VHMC. Looking to the future, he also queried whether TeamEB might then want to consider becoming more formalised for example, with appointed officers and published minutes of meetings. TH felt that this would put additional pressure on an already stretched team.

MK reiterated that TeamEB would like people from EBVHMC to help them with fundraising. CA and MN pointed out that the EBVHMC had always made themselves available to help and wondered how else they could be of support to TeamEB. MK suggested that future arrangements for working together along the lines of 'Curry and Quiz' should be the goal. CA enquired if this took place would EBVHC still have to do their own fundraising. This was confirmed. There followed some discussion on hosting of the New Year's Eve party. This responsibility for this event rested with EBVHC although TeamEB confirmed they were willing to assist. No final decision was made at the meeting.

CA agreed to approach Community First regarding the survey and report back to the other two groups.

The meeting was brought to a close at 9.00 pm.

Signed _____ (Chair)

Dated _____