

Signed

BLESSINGTON AND DISTRICT FORUM

Minutes of Meeting
held at St. Mary's National School, Blessington
on Monday 9 February 2015
at 8.00 p.m.

Present: List of members as per attached

Apologies: List of apologies as per attached

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 January 2015 were read and reviewed.

Jason Mulhall advised of one amendment relating to the tree cutting on Main Street. The minutes were proposed by Nuala Haughian and seconded by Jason Mulhall and signed by the Chairman.

Correspondences

Members were advised of the following

- Native Woodland Trust advised of a woodland wildlife walk on Sunday 15 February at 11.00 a.m. with the meeting point being the ESB car park on the N81 south of the wildlife reserve. This walk will look for signs of wildlife (perhaps sightings) and explore the different habitats found. The event is free for Members with a suggested donation of €4 for non Members and the event is weather dependent.
- ESB are having a tree planting initiative at the Burgage Mor Lane end of the Greenway on Sunday 1 March from 11.00 a.m. to 4pm. Michael Quinlan, ESB has asked if there could be six persons available from the Forum to help steward the event. The ESB will publicise the event and provide the necessary materials and equipment and arrange the booking of time slots for the participants. Members will be contacted closer to the event to check their availability to assist.
- Margaret Ryan of Tramway Theatre reminds members that Tramway Theatre are holding a fundraising concert on Saturday 14 February from 7.00 to 8.00 p.m. in the Tramway featuring an orchestra and choir from Exmouth Community School in Devon and the Blessington Youth Theatre in an evening of pop, classical and musical theatre. Tickets are only €5 and available from the usual outlets. Members were encouraged to support this event as it contributes towards the essential maintenance work in the theatre.
- Enzo Farinella, a member of Irish Italian Twinings Committee emailed with a request from Italy for Blessington to twin with Castel Maggiore. Liam Fay agreed to have a look at this request and report back to the Forum in due course.

Greenway

The Chairman reported that himself, Killian McGreal and John Horan had met with Junior Government Minister Simon Harris at Stephen's Green on 2 February 2015. This meeting had in attendance representatives of Wicklow County Council, WCP, Wicklow Tourism, Irish Water, ESB and Failte Ireland. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Phase 2 and John Horan outlined the likely costs involved in laying another 43k of Greenway. The meeting discussed the way forward in terms of funding options and immediate actions necessary to place the project ready whenever funding becomes available. Meetings will continue with Junior Minister Harris at two to three monthly intervals to monitor progress.

Old Library

Jason Mulhall advised that himself, the Chairman and Liam Fay had met with Lorraine Gallagher of Wicklow County Council at the Old Library on Thursday 29 January. Jason and Michael Duggan and other Members had then inspected the building subsequently on 4 February. It appears that the library part is in good condition with internal walls and ceiling fine while there is some dampness in the Old Engineers Office but generally the building is in good condition and could be worked with.

All Members contributed their view to what course of action would be best to adopt with several Members favouring its use as a Tourist Office or a Family Resource Centre. All Members agreed that the Forum needs to make a decision now as the building has been vacant since 2002.

Liam Fay advised that Men Sheds would like to declare an interest and would be available to take immediate possession. Men Sheds are vacating their present location and have been in discussions with St. Kevins with a view to moving there, however, the Old Engineer's Office/Old Library would be a preferable option. Jason Mulhall also advised of having discussed a possible interest with the History Society, however, the Society would not be keen to take over the building.

Members agreed that with the skills available to Men Sheds the maintenance of the building both interior and exterior would be in safe hands and it was unanimously agreed to recommend the Men Sheds as a tenant to Wicklow County Council. Previously Wicklow County Council had indicated that they would give the building in trust to the Forum, however, Members agreed that with Men Sheds now being available as tenants, the Forum would request Wicklow County Council to deal directly if possible with Men Sheds.

West Wicklow Business Network

The Chairman reported that up to sixty people had attended the inaugural West Wicklow Business Network meeting at Tulfarris on the evening of Wednesday 28 January. Members were advised that the next meeting will again be at Tulfarris at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 25 February.

Tidy Towns

Jason Mulhall, Chairman of Tidy Towns advised in relation to the following

- The Tidy Towns AGM was held on Thursday 29 January 2015.
- Dog litter is an ongoing problem and the question of pavement stencils is still being followed up and there are visits by the Litter Warden although irregular.
- Tidy Towns Committee and the Chairman will chat over the coming months about the Christmas lights.
- Members were reminded of the upcoming quiz in Hennessys on Friday 6 March.
- Members were also reminded to return their draw cards in advance of Quiz Night.
- Tidy Towns are reviewing the option of a Repair Café.
- Tidy Towns are also looking at project options with the Care Group.

It was also agreed that the Chairman and Jason Mulhall would visit in the coming weeks the Receiver of the Downshire Estate with a view to discussing again the park area off the relief road.

Members are anxious to discuss plans for Main Street and the Square and in this connection it was agreed to set up a Committee to look at options and report back to the Forum. The Committee comprises Peter Eustace, Catriona Cullen, Ariadne Laurenns and Mrs. Haughian from the Forum to which will be added 2/3 Tidy Towns Committee persons.

Events

With notification from the Hillbilly Committee of their stepping down and worries about the continuance of the Hillbilly Run it was decided to set up an Events Committee to have a look at possible options for 2015. This Committee comprises Peter Eustace, Nuala Haughian, Frank Hanlon, Charlie Brophy and Nuala Cashin and the Chairman will ask some businesses to perhaps add one or two persons.

Glending

It was agreed that the Chairman would ask Wicklow County Council for an updated report to the report previously issued in November. Glending representatives Carmel Cashin and Noel Murphy will distribute copies of the updated report as soon as to hand. The Chairman also agreed to follow up with Gerry O'Neill a meeting with Michael Nicholson.

Skate Park


Members were happy to note that the Skate Park is now open although there are concerns in regard to the use of items other than skate boards or BMX bikes. Members were also concerned about the growing litter problem in the area and it was agreed that the Chairman would liaise with the local Councillors.



Any Other Business.

- Nuala Haughian raised the question as to whether the small parking area towards the Senior School end of Dunnes Stores is for sale.
- Fr. Tim advised that the Day Care Centre continues to be on schedule for opening.
- Nuala Cashin advised that the Text Alert Committee has been set up and that liaison with Muintir na Tire is planned.
- Michael Duggan advised that the St. Patrick's Well area is a mess following the recent tree cutting and it was agreed to liaise with the local Councillors.
- The question of upgrading of the N81 was raised and it was noted that this will be a subject being dealt with by the West Wicklow Business Network.
- The question of a bus shelter at the Lamb was raised.
- Frank Hanlon advised Members in relation to the library that staffing consists of only one full time and two part time persons and that if the full time person is sick or otherwise unavailable then the library must close as it cannot operate with part time persons. This matter is to be raised with the library service.
- Members acknowledged the recent retirement of Chief Superintendent Tom Conway and expressed their thanks and appreciation for the efforts of the Chief Superintendent to upgrade policing in Blessington District.

This concluded the business of the meeting

The Forum will reconvene on Monday 9 February 2015


Chairman
9/3/15
Date


Proposer

Seconder

Blessington & District Forum

Attendance List 9 February 2015

	Name	Signature
1	Brady Tommy	Tom Brady
2	Brennan John	Apologies
3	Brophy Charlie	Charlie Brophy
4	Cashin Carmel	Carmel Cashin
5	Cashin Nuala	Nuala Cashin
6	Conlon Laurens Ariadne	Laurens Conlon
7	Conlon Pat	Pat Conlon
8	Cullen Catriona	Catriona Cullen
9	Curran Michael	Apologies
10	Doyle Michael	Michael Doyle
11	Duggan Michael	Michael Duggan
12	Egar David	David Egar
13	Eustace Peter	Peter Eustace
14	Fay Liam	Liam Fay
15	Gilheany Fintan	Fintan Gilheany
16	Hanlon Frank	Frank Hanlon
17	Hanly Joe	Apologies
18	Haughian Nuala	Nuala Haughian
19	Kane Brian	Apologies
20	Keegan Kavanagh Noreen	Noreen Keegan Kavanagh
21	Kelly Eamonn	Eamonn Kelly
22	Keogh Aine	-
23	McGreal Killian	Apologies
24	Moroney Anita	Apologies
25	Mulhall Jason	Jason Mulhall
26	Murphy Fr. Tim 045 865442	Fr Tim
27	Murphy Joe	APOLOGIES
28	Murphy Noel	Noel Murphy
29	Murphy Mary Lorna	Mary Lorna Murphy
30	Nolan Noel	Noel Nolan
31	O'Brien Paul	Paul O'Brien
32	Phibbs Patsy	Patsy Phibbs
33	Sargent Michael	Michael Sargent
34	Schweppe Brian	Apologies