

# Holme Valley Land Charity

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22 JULY 2014

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr J G Cropper

Members of the Trustee: Cllr L Bailey, Cllr Mrs K Bellamy, Cllr T Bellamy, Cllr T W Dixon, Cllr C M Kaye, Cllr Mrs B Osborn, Cllr Mrs J Roberts, Cllr PD Searby, Cllr K Sharland, Cllr Mrs M Walker

Co-opted Member: Dr R Bratt

Secretary: Mrs S S Barber

Eighteen members of the public were present and the Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

### **14 27 To accept Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Mrs B Bodenham and C R Greaves.

### **14 28 To receive Members' declarations of interest in items on the agenda**

None received.

### **14 29 Action Plan**

Two members of the public entered the meeting during this item.

The Chairman introduced the Members of the Management Committee and the Secretary, who all work for the Land Charity on a voluntary basis. He also explained the origins of the Land Charity and how the various sites had become vested in the Parish Council and the subsequent setting up of the Land Charity:

For a number of years, Holme Valley Parish Council worked to regularise the legal position of a number of plots of land which used to be stone quarries, but whose supply of stone had been exhausted during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Having successfully completed voluntary land registration, efforts were turned to the creation, in discussion with the Charity Commission, of a new charitable scheme to manage and administer these sites.

The new charity was established on 6 January 2009 and the Parish Council is the sole corporate Trustee. A small committee was then set up to manage the Land Charity on a day-to-day basis, and the Management Committee makes recommendations to the Trustee, to authorise and approve actions.

In 2011 the name of the charity was changed from Holme Valley Parish Council (Graveship of Holme) Land Charity to the shorter name, Holme Valley Land Charity. The Land Charity's registration number had not changed. The Land Charity's aim and purpose is to promote such charitable

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purposes as the Trustee sees fit, for the general benefit of the residents of the Holme Valley.

The Management Committee's task is to determine the future of these plots and what actions the Trustee needs to take to maximise benefits to the residents of the Valley. When sites are disposed of, the Management Committee has an obligation to dispose of them for the best market value possible, in accordance with the object of the Charity. Part of the funds raised so far would now be made available and an amount of £10,000 had been agreed, for the first tranche of grant funding; applications for land or environmental projects, with a strong educational element, would be favoured.

The Chairman explained that some sites had already been disposed of or ownership had been transferred, where better title had been claimed by others. He then summarised what was being proposed for each site still retained, as detailed on the Action Plan:

**a) White Wells/Dean Bridge (Chippings Dump) (Title Deed No. WYK530809):**

Development potential was being pursued and an outline planning application was now being considered.

**b) White Wells/Chapelgate (Title Deed No. WYK816254):**

Long term lease to Pavilion Playgroup.

**c) Cliff (Title Deed No. WYK816361):**

(i) A 99 year lease was being pursued with the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) regarding the majority of the site (which had already been dedicated as open access); the BMC would then manage that part of the site.

(ii) Other smaller plots on the site would be offered for sale to neighbouring property owners.

(iii) Development potential was being pursued and an outline planning application would be submitted regarding an infill plot on the site.

**d) Sude Hill (Title Deed No. WYK816615):**

Development potential was being pursued and outline planning applications were now being considered on two of the three areas of this site. A lapsed planning application, previously granted to the Church of England, would be resurrected for one of those areas; that application had not been progressed by the Church once it had been revealed that it did not own the site. Part of the upper level of the site would be retained for car parking.

Various claims had been made regarding ownership of this site and that it was common land, but no evidence had been provided on those claims and the site was not on the Common Land Register.

**e) Well Houses, Cartworth (Title Deed No. WYK825221):**

Areas of this site were being sold to neighbouring property owners, but a small area around the boundary had been retained by the Land Charity.

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**f) Hepworth Road, Jackson Bridge (Title Deed No. WYK570306):**  
Commercial tenancy.

**g) Meal Hill Road, Holme (Title Deed No. WYK821485):**  
Garden plot tenancy.

**h) Swindon Knoll, Knoll Lane, Honley (Title Deed No. WYK821573):**  
Common land; retained for benefit of community.

**i) Wolfstones, Upperthong (Title Deed No. WYK821600):**  
Retained for benefit of community (for informal recreation). Various projects had been implemented in recent years including the installation of a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Seat and a writing competition involving students from Holmfirth High School.

**j) Thurstonland Bank (Title Deed No. WYK821616):**  
Still complex site, with exact location of site vested in Land Charity to be established in due course.

## **14 30 Financial Matters**

The financial position of the Land Charity for the year to 31 March 2013 was on display, including the Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts and the Receipts and Payments Accounts.

The Annual Return had been completed and submitted to the Charity Commission by the due date (31 January 2014), but Charities are only expected to send their Trustees' Annual Report and accounts to the Charity Commission for financial periods when their income is greater than £25,000. Income for the year to 31 March 2013 was below the required threshold so it was not possible to submit accounts to the Charity Commission for that period.

## **14 31 Public Open Session**

The Chairman explained that this item on the Agenda was to give members of the public the opportunity to ask questions about the Land Charity and its activities.

Various members of the public asked questions relating to the outline planning application process and it was confirmed that although the Land Charity was the applicant, the Parish Council would have to extract itself from the planning process because of its interest (as Trustee of the Land Charity); Kirklees Council would then make the decision on any application.

Following a request for further details on the grant funding, the Chairman reiterated that an amount of £10,000 would be available for the first tranche of grant applications, with a cut-off date for applications to be received (details of which would be published on the Land Charity's website in due course).

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Applications for funding (up to that initial limit) would be considered by the Management Committee, but further funds could be made available in the future, subject to approval by the Trustee.

A member of the public then asked for clarification regarding a tenancy matter relating to the potential infill site at Cliff, on which the Secretary would investigate outside the meeting and contact the former tenant.

A Member of the Trustee of the Land Charity then asked a question regarding the maintenance of boundaries of the site at Wolfstones and it was confirmed that the owner of any boundary wall or fence was responsible for its maintenance; any signage that could be provided to prevent unlawful access would be installed, where considered to be appropriate and necessary.

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**Chairman**