

## THORNTON RUST INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF AGM HELD ON MONDAY 11 MARCH 2024 at 7:30pm

1. **Present :** Committee  
Sue Duffield, Steve Duffield, Martyn Donno, Karen Raven, Paul Raven, Rob Cromey Hawke, Susan Freer, Richard Loukota, Rob Newall  
Residents  
Kate Elliott, Tim Freer, Rachel Newall, Peter Connick, Helen Nation, Tim McQueen, Ro Charlton, Olwyn Chorley
2. **Apologies :** Lynda Denny, Julia Loukota, Carole Hudson, Marjorie Spence
3. **Minutes of AGM held on 6 March 2023:** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed: Rob Cromey-Hawke; Seconded: Paul Raven
4. **Matters arising:** None
5. **Chairman's Report: Sue Duffield (Chair):** " Since the last meeting on 6 March 2023, the main events that took place were seasonal. The hall was decorated for Christmas by Rob Cromey-Hawke, Paul Raven and Richard Loukota. A Christmas tree was erected outside the hall, with a variety of lights. Fortunately, despite the heavy rain and gale force winds, the tree remained in place.

A Christmas Whist took place on Friday 8 December – thanks again to Marjorie Spence who organised the event. There was a raffle with donations mainly supplied by the village.

On Saturday 16 December we held our usual Christmas Coffee Morning. The cost was £3 per head. The event was very well attended and the new procedure of payment by card, if preferred, was successful.

As is our custom our New Year Party took place on Saturday 6 January 2024 at a cost of £5 per head. Again this function was well attended, so much so that we had to arrange extra tables and chairs. The food was supplied by the Committee, with the meat supplied by Hammonds of Bainbridge. There was a huge variety of desserts supplied by villagers.

We discussed arrangements with regard to the Skittle Alley. In the past skittles evenings had been poorly attended. It was agreed that we need to offer something extra to entice people to play, eg. cheese and wine.

We have purchased a new vacuum cleaner and I would like volunteers to help set this up please. (NB: It was agreed at the meeting that this was simple to do).

I must also thank Richard, Julia, Paul and Susan for overseeing the set up of the hall in Martyn's absence.

I have arranged for an advert to go in the Upper Wensleydale Newsletter in the April issue re the hiring of the hall and extra numbers for the Badminton Club.

Richard noted that it is the centenary of the village Institute in October 2024. Although a long time in advance perhaps we could come up with ideas of how to celebrate. Perhaps we could dress up appropriately for the era of 1924?" **Action:** Further discussion at the next Committee Meeting

6. **Lettings:** "M. Donno presented his report for the period 01/03/2023 – 29/02/2024. The Institute was in use in 109 occasions during this period, giving approximately 29.85% occupancy. We received income of £1025, covering 73 sessions, equating to an average of £14.04 per session. Whist met on 22 occasions, generating its own income for the Institute. Entertainment, Coffee Mornings and Management Meetings also generate their own income for the Institute and the hall was used on 14 occasions for those purposes.

In common with many groups and organisations, vibrant membership remains a challenge. The Wensleydale Orchestra, Badminton Club and the Circle Dance Group (all of whom are regular users) are no exception, resulting in a number of cancelled bookings. This, together with challenging weather conditions and events cancelled due to lack of support has contributed to a difficult climate. The Institute is not immune to these challenges and this is largely responsible for the reduced lettings by more than 20%.

However, our finances remain healthy although, collectively, we need to address our program of events to protect against a volatile lettings market.

On a positive note, projected occupancy for March currently stands at 45%. The income forecast from the Circle Dance Group, to be invoiced at the end of their term, would be in excess of £100, which is not reflected in the figure above.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority have booked the Institute on several occasions for their biodiversity program."

The question was raised as to whether it would be beneficial to ask for payment in advance for regular bookings. Although this is something we could consider, we do try to adopt a flexible approach as there is often a reasonable explanation for cancellations ie. adverse weather.

Badminton Group, which meets on a Tuesday evening needs more members as currently there are not enough players. **Action:** Advertise more widely, ie UWNL, posters etc.

Kate Elliott suggested film nights. This has been suggested previously and was also discussed and minuted at the 2023 AGM. If we were to go ahead with a film night we would not be able to charge people for attending otherwise we would require an Entertainments Licence (rough cost £1700 annually). However it was deemed to be worth looking in to further and perhaps billing it as a private showing. We would initially need to hire a screen. **Action:** RCH to do a forecast of cost.

Tim McQueen suggested monthly lunch clubs. He has some experience in this area and would be prepared to oversee such events. **Action:** Further discussion at the next Committee Meeting.

Karen Raven again raised the possibility of creating a dedicated email distribution group purely to communicate Institute news and events. This would require canvassing village residents to ask if they would be happy to receive such a communication and as per GDPR rules, would have to give their written permission for us to hold their data. **Action:** Further discussion at the next Committee Meeting.

In the meantime it was agreed to share a list of forthcoming events with the village via the Bulletin, TR Residents WhatsApp group and by posting on the notice board.

**7. Treasurer's Report: Rob Cromey-Hawke (Treasurer).**

**"Accounts:** The accounts for 2022-2023 were submitted to the Charity Commission on time. The draft accounts for this financial year end have been prepared and will be submitted to the accountant for review within the next couple of weeks and any findings shared with the trustees. The accumulated fund is currently £26,618.43; there is £23,748.82 in the current account, £2,689.36 in the savings account and £180.25 as petty cash. The deficit for the financial year is £773.37; this is attributed to the increased cost of utilities, and an agreed spend on replacing all the cutlery as part of the ongoing maintenance of the Institute. However, the accumulated fund remains very healthy as a result of the sound financial management by the Management Committee, and the amazing contributions from the Whist Group. No concerns are raised at this time.

**Banking:** we remain with HSBC for both current and savings banking, however the application for a Virgin Money charity (business) account has been prepared and all consents gained from the trustees so it can be submitted. I expect we will have full access to online banking within the next few weeks.

**Lettings and other income:** the regular use from the Circle Dance group, the Wensleydale Orchestra, the Thornton Rust Badminton Group, and the Whist group have generated approximately 65% (down from 72%) of this financial year's income for the Institute. A special thanks, once again, to the Whist Group who have raised £743 for the institute in this period. This highlights the importance of recurring, regular bookings and efforts should continue to be made to try and increase the number of groups using the Institute regularly. The Institute received £20 from donations.

**Events:** on review, the 'ticket' price-point for events is very good. Across the nine committee-organised events, a marginal profit has been achieved.

**Utilities and insurance:** The cost of utilities continues to be high as a result of the increased price of oil and electricity. The cost of the wifi has been reduced to account for the low usage of data on a monthly basis. The Institute remained in credit for the water account until the final quarter this financial year. The annual renewal of the insurance has once more increased but no other cheaper alternative, with the same level of cover, could be secured at the time of renewal.

I agree that this is a true account of the above meeting:

Signed..... *Sue Duffield* ..... Sue Duffield (Chair)