

Minutes of a meeting of Gressingham Village Trust
7.30pm Thursday 11 July 2019 in Gressingham Old School Room

1. Present: Michael Hampson, John Hamlett, Mary McClements, Jane Paxman, Martin Brooks, Louise Stevens (the meeting is quorate)

2. Apologies: Rosie Smith

3. Minutes of 29 April 2019 were signed as a true record

4. Matters arising

a) JH reports that the old Yorkshire account is now registered to his address; he is chasing paper statements for the new Natwest account; the Yorkshire account is still serving the direct debit payments for water and electricity; a transfer has successfully been made to the Yorkshire account from the National Savings account (which had had no transactions for many years) and details for that account are being updated; JH confirmed that all trustees apart from JP are signatories to the Natwest account, JH and RS are signatories to the Yorkshire account.

b) MB reports that the insurance policy has been renewed in the name of Gressingham Village Trust. MB and JH will update the Risk Assessment and Fire Risk Assessment, and check that we have (residential) landlord's insurance in time for the tenancy beginning on 1 September.

c) Land Registry: Possessory Title has been granted on "School House, Gressingham, Lancaster LA2 8LP", Title number LAN220739, Registered Proprietor Gressingham Village Trust. Absolute Title can be claimed after twelve years (May 2031). It was agreed in principle that we would seek to coordinate registration of the septic tank site with the possible forthcoming sale of Juniper Cottage, possibly using the same solicitor, in order to make matters as straightforward as possible for the Land Registry (and therefore for GVT as well) – MB will discuss with the owners.

5. Tenancy

The occupier of the upstairs apartment has given notice that he wishes to give up caretaker responsibilities from the end of August. GVT has already agreed that he should be able to stay in the flat indefinitely on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. The occupant has agreed that the rent will be £371pcm monthly in advance from 1 September. This hugely simplifies the process of setting up an appropriate Assured Shorthold Tenancy, as it will not need to include reference to caretaker responsibilities. It was agreed that a five-year fixed-term tenancy would be offered, with the tenant (only) able to give three months' notice of termination at any time. The various options within the model tenancy provided by HM Government were selected (most notably the CPI option on rent increases), and the checklist from the HM Government "How to Let" guide was completed. MH will complete the documentation and the passport check. It was agreed that, specifically for this one occasion only, the final tenancy agreement could be signed as a deed on behalf of GVT by MH (chair), JH (treasurer), and any one other trustee, acting together. A trustee of the tenant's choosing will hold keys to the upstairs apartment on behalf of GVT as landlord.

6. Future caretaking

JP will organise for a paid cleaner to clean fortnightly.

JH has set up an online lettings diary and will act as administrator, granting others access as appropriate.

MB will source and fit a key safe for access.

It has already been agreed (29 April 2019) that emergencies can be handled in good faith between meetings; it was further agreed that any three trustees acting together could attend to repairs, renewals and replacements between meetings up to £500, and it was noted that the constitution allows any trust decision to be taken by email where there is unanimity amongst the trustees.

7. AOB

MB will check the state of the septic tank.

JH reports that the PAT (portable electrical appliance) testing is complete, and will organise the full wiring and fixed appliance check for both upstairs and downstairs, and the Energy Performance Certificate required for the upstairs apartment.

JP reports that Chris Potts (architect) has now done the building-regulations work on the plans for the possible conversion of the school room into a residential apartment, and the work required for obtaining quotations for the work, all based on a very high standard of work for the long-term benefit of GVT as long-term landlord. Quotations for the work will be obtained for information before the proposed village referendum.

8. Date of next meeting to be determined when required.