

## Report to General Meeting

The Long Rock Memorial Institute had been successfully run as a community hall for a number of years; however, by the 1990s its condition was deteriorating.

The previous Trustees and volunteers from the Long Rock community submitted a planning application in 2000, for demolition of the existing building – already being described as dilapidated - and replacement hall on the site.

The planning application was granted, but the demolition and build did not go ahead, possibly due to lack of funding. At that time, extensive community consultation was carried out: there was good support for a new hall, and a range of uses suggested.

By 2021, twenty years later, when management was transferred to the Parish Council as sole Corporate Trustee, the hall was unfit for bookings, and with just two managing Trustees, the committee was in no position to actively manage it. No volunteers came forward to boost the Trustee numbers, nor was there much apparent interest from Long Rock residents at that time.

On behalf of the residents of Long Rock, the Parish Council, as managing Trustee of the charity, has carried out a number of steps over the past two years:

- Revamped the administration of the charity, including updating the online reports to the Charity Commission, and registration with the Land Registry.
- Before handover in 2021, the charity's building society accounts were due to be closed down, and then became dormant. A new bank account has now been opened and the charity funds successfully transferred, although it proved to be a protracted and difficult process (Lloyds Bank has apologised for poor service). It is expected that, when new trustees are appointed, updating the bank mandate to accommodate new signatories will now be a much easier process as it will not be necessary to go through the process of opening a new account.
- The property has been secured, as the site is hazardous to enter and should not be accessible to the public.
- It was established that the current hall building is beyond repair, and so the process to enable the building to be demolished was started:
  - o A pre-demolition asbestos survey has been carried out
  - o A quote has been given for demolition and clearance of the site
  - o It has been established that there is no longer a water supply to the site
  - o National Grid has been contacted and has given a quote for disconnection of the electricity supply
- The vegetation had become very overgrown, so its removal was undertaken as part of the site clearance.

When accepting management of the hall, the Parish Council was clear from the outset that consultation with Long Rock residents was needed, in order to find out what the local community wanted as potential uses for the site. There had already been suggestions from

various quarters, including: continued use as a village hall; a memorial garden; a community café; or for affordable housing to meet local housing need.

A grant application was submitted to the Community Levelling Up fund, which aimed to cover the cost of demolition, and community consultation.

Unfortunately, the grant application was unsuccessful: the funders needed to know that projects would be delivered within a set timescale, and there was a question mark over the LRMI project at that time: a third party had asked English Heritage to consider Listing the building, which made the timescale for project completion uncertain. English Heritage has now decided not to List, so a new grant application may stand better chance of success if a project completion date can be given with sufficient certainty. The new Trustees may also apply to the Community Capacity Fund; and it is hoped that the grant funding work already carried out will be useful to them as they look to move forward.

A working group with members of the Long Rock Residents Association (LRRRA) was established, and at the latest meeting, members of the LRRRA reiterated their wish to take on the Trusteeship of the charity, as previously raised at the charity's AGM in January 2023.

This request was put to the Trustee, the Parish Council, and so this General Meeting has been called, on the basis that returning the charity to a committee of managing Trustees would better fit the original governance arrangements of the charity.

If run as a management committee of Trustees rather than sole corporate Trustee, the governing document of the charity had provision for an AGM to be held each year, at which all members of the charity (residents of Long Rock and surrounding area) could attend and vote, if aged 18 or over, for the coming year's Trustees to be appointed.

Five local residents having put their names forward, all those attending and eligible can vote to elect new managing Trustees at the Annual General Meeting on 1 November 2023. The Parish Council will then step down as sole corporate Trustee; and the newly-elected Trustees will control the work of the charity from that point on.

The governing document of the charity has provision for the management committee to have ten Trustees, and so if there are any other residents of Long Rock and surrounding area who wish to volunteer to become a Trustee, they can contact the clerk to the parish council to register their interest – contact [clerk@ludgvan.org.uk](mailto:clerk@ludgvan.org.uk) or tel: **07928 813 653**