

**Mortimer Community Benefit Society Annual Members' Meeting**  
**Wednesday 8 December 2021, 7pm in Yarpole Parish Hall**

1 Welcome and Housekeeping	Alex Jenkins (AJ) opened the meeting by declaring that it was quorate.
2 Apologies	Apologies for Absence were received from the following: Gillian Brace, Wendy Clare, Janita Goodwin, Frances Kay, Peter Kay, Eileen Minton, Helen Frances Norris, Michael Norris, Mary Rogers, Christopher Stanners, Rebecca Stanners, Jennifer Vaux, John Vaux, Felicity Norman, Peter Blench, Linda Finney.
3 Approval of Minutes from AMM 28th October 2020	AJ pointed out that these had been available on the website and asked for comments. Since none was forthcoming he raised an issue concerning point 7 'Elections to the Management Committee' correcting a small error, with the corrected wording 'that committee members should serve for a term of three years, and also that after the first year a third of committee members should step down.' A motion to approve was proposed by Andrew Prail, seconded by Val Ainsworth, with none against, so the motion was carried.
4 Chair's Report	Marianne Taylor (MT) reminded the Meeting that her report had been on the website but summarised the main points for the benefit of anyone who had not had chance to read it, running through the main landmarks of the eventful year to June 2021, including Covid restrictions and trading difficulties, the lessons learned that would inform a new tenant search. Also outlined was the maintaining and implementing of a Membership Strategy to ensure that an adequate level of membership was maintained.
5 Receipt of Annual Accounts for 2020/2021	A paper summarising Revenue Account, Balance Sheet, and Income and Expenditure for the year were distributed around the room prior to the Meeting, and Treasurer David Cheshire (DC) summarised and explained the main points, including variations in rental income due to reductions, voids and an uplift at the end of the tenancy; that some repairs had been carried out by the tenants; that advertising expenditure had been high to attract applicants; that loan interest and a Plunkett subscription were necessary ongoing costs; and that a five-yearly revaluation of tangible assets was advisable, otherwise the accounting depreciation applied would eventually unduly undervalue them in the accounts. Concerning the Impetus loan, Sebastian Bowen (from the floor) explained that Impetus was a charitable organisation that loaned at low interest rates to other charities and worthy causes; loans are a commercial proposition, but rates are not greedy. Andrew Thompson (from the floor) asked about Public Works Loans, which had the advantage of being extendable at a low rate (2%) for up to 50 years. MT explained that MCBS cannot apply for these, only the Parish Council. MCBS would be happy to consider this, but it would demand a buy-in from the Parish Council. David Rackham (from the floor) asked if we had been able to benefit from any Covid grants. DC explained that we had received two separate sums of £2K and £10K, and that Hereford Hospitality had also received grants. A motion to approve the Accounts was proposed by Sue Russell, seconded by Jane Prail, with none against, so the motion was carried.  DC introduced the requirement for a resolution to agree that the 2021/2022 accounts be prepared without an audit and be presented with an accountant's report. This saves a considerable expense which is regarded as unjustified given the simplicity of the accounts involved. DC assured Members that the Accounts are still subject to independent scrutiny by the professional accountancy firm retained to prepare and

	<p>report them. A motion was proposed by Paul Humphrey, seconded by Jane Prail, with none against, so the motion was carried.</p>
6 Appointment of Accountants for 2021/2022	<p>DC explained that Third Sector had previously acted for the Society, but that difficulties in communication, not helped by them being based in Manchester, had led to a reassessment and the appointment of Malvern-based Kendall Wadley as a preferred option. The change was cost-neutral and made face-to-face meetings possible.</p> <p>A motion to approve was proposed by Andrew Prail, seconded by Kate Darby, with none against, so the motion was carried.</p> <p>AJ asked for a vote of thanks to DC for so ably stepping in to take charge of the accounts when the previous MCBS Treasurer had been unable to continue with her duties, and this was duly carried.</p>
7 Elections to the Management Committee	<p>To ensure continuity of corporate knowledge as well as rollover on the Committee, new Members were required to replace those departing (AJ, Wendy Clare, Jim Ainsworth) and fortunately six had come forward:</p> <p>Tony Kinsey, proposed by Andrew Thompson, seconded by Gillian Cradduck  Joanna Munro, proposed by Mike Bending, seconded by Kate Darby  Tom Rogers, proposed by Nigel Duxbury, seconded by Jane Prail  Julian Stokes, proposed by Marianne Taylor, seconded by Alex Jenkins  Graham Whitlock, proposed by Marianne Taylor, seconded by David Cheshire  Marianne Taylor, proposed by Jane Prail, seconded by Peter Lloyd</p> <p>Each introduced themselves and said a few words about their reasons for wanting to join the Committee, or in MT's case to assist with handover of experience since inception.</p> <p>Because the Committee can consist of up to 12 Members, and the total is below that, there was no need for individual elections, so a vote was taken en bloc, proposed by Clive Sheridan, seconded by Kate Darby, with none against, so the motion was carried and all were elected as Members of the Committee.</p>
Addendum	<p>That concluded the formal business of the Meeting, but much has happened since the end of the year (June 2021) and time was allowed for MT to explain where things had gone wrong during the previous tenancy, examples included: lack of business experience which covered a wide range of factors (accounting, marketing, style of offering, communications, advertising and the biggest factor, Covid trading restrictions), where they had gone right (good housekeeping, improvements, cooking skill) and what could be learned and implemented to ensure the next stage avoided previous mistakes and pitfalls.</p> <p>MT also noted that there were alternatives to a tenancy, including employing a manager, or Members running it themselves, and outlined some of the pros and cons of those models. The new committee will be able to look at the options.</p> <p>Questions from the floor included:</p> <p>'When will the pub be open?' to which the answer is that nobody knows, given that a search for a tenant is neither quick nor straightforward.</p> <p>'Could another community pub run The Bell as well as their own?' to which the answer is that it has been considered but nothing has materialised so far; such an option is open to the next Committee to address.</p> <p>'While the pub is closed, could events be organised by volunteers to help with finances?' to which the answer is yes, if volunteers are happy to come forward and arrange them.</p> <p>Finally Andrew Prail proposed a vote of thanks to Marianne (and her Committee) for all the challenging work of the past year, which received a round of applause.</p>