

**Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society**  
**Registered charity No. 246145**

**Summary Minutes of the online Meeting of the Committee – 8.00pm 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Present:**

**Committee members:** Judie Collins (Chair), Trevor Stone (Treasurer), Richard Hagon (Sec), Paulina Lewis (Planning), David Eastwood B.A., Leslie Cupitt (Green Spaces Lead), Vivian Labaton MSc., Martin Garrett.

**Co-opted Members:** Angela Stone (Town Centre & Business Lead)

**Guest:** Ian Bowden, Chairman of Altrincham Little Theatre

**3. Report from Guest** Ian Bowden, Chairman of Altrincham Little Theatre

The Chair welcomed Ian Bowden to the meeting who gave a potted history of the theatre, as follows:

Altrincham Little Theatre dates from 1896 when we were called The St Margaret's Church Institute Amateur Dramatics Society. The Society was born out of the Bible Reading Groups associated with the Church and they performed plays/playlets at Tea Functions. The first recorded play was at a Senior Bible Class Tea Party where there is a mention of a play but no title. At the Junior Bible Class Tea Party two days later on 15th January 1896 there is mention of a play "My Turn Next"

The Society blossomed and continued to perform up to the 1st World War when performances were stopped until the cessation of hostilities. The stoppage was repeated during the 2nd World War and again performances continued. There were two more plays under the name of St Margaret's at which time there was a name change to The Club Theatre. It is known that many of the early plays were in fact sketches and one act plays and they were also only performed once or twice.

Since the restart of the performances in 1947 we have grown to performing for 7 nights and producing 5 plays a season. In the early 1960's we were having to leave the St Margaret Institute. At that time the theatre was run by Chairman David Lane and his wife Vikki who was Production Director. Fortuitously the Chapel and Sunday School of the Methodist Church on Oxford Road came on the market and David personally bought the building for about £10,000, which the Club repaid over the years. It was converted into a theatre and we have been performing there since November 1962.

The only interruption being during the 1982/83 season when we closed for extensive re-building. We are now fortunate to have full facilities, including full size rehearsal area, bar/lounge, wardrobe facilities, all dressing facilities and all technical functions. The cost of rebuilding has now been paid off, and the society has full ownership of the site.

The Theatre has been purposely kept in the traditional style with a stepped auditorium, the stage is 22 ft proscenium arch by 16 ft depth. Recently we have started installing the very latest in LED computer controlled lighting. Activities at the Theatre are various and our aim is to use the Theatre for its main purpose, performance. This is obviously limited to the time available to the stage crew and all the helpers.

All help is purely voluntary but there is a very strong core of caring helpers. Included in our aims to select plays is our belief in new works, we firmly believe that we need to encourage new authors and new plays.

We completed our Centenary year in 1996. Constantly striving to improve our standards we have been fortunate to receive awards for our achievements from both the Greater Manchester Drama Federation and the Cheshire Theatre Guild.

We changed our name to Altrincham Little Theatre in August 2012 as it was felt that the club connotation no longer gave the correct indication of our purpose as all our productions are now open to the public.

Website: <http://www.clubtheatre.org.uk/history.htm>

#### **4. Report from the Chair**

Unfortunately the planned date for our new President inauguration was not convenient for Patricia due to a hospital appointment. So we will have to reschedule later.

The meeting with Nikal has been postponed to July but we need to put together our list of questions asap as we have requested the same from them.

No progress with Lidl meeting despite umpteen emails. Police have asked us to discuss crime rate on retail Park when we do meet with Orchard House who own it.

No progress on The Devisdale

Many thanks to David for our speaker from Altrincham Little Theatre. We need someone for July and then have a break in August.

Update from Angela at how The Not So Secret Garden is going. We still have disabled access concerns.

#### **5. Treasurers Report**

Finance: Bank Curr A/c £ 836.88 Dep A/c £ 1427.35 HLF A/c £ 1.00

The Mill subscription was £70

#### **6. Planning - Questions for the Altair meeting next month**

There was some dismay among the committee about the lack of interest from Trafford who own the land and how the current situation had been allowed to continue for so long. After some further discussion Chair said she would put together a list of questions on the basis that now Nikal had been restructured how do they plan to move forward with the various phases of the project and on what sort of time scale.

Regarding Orchard House (Lidl Landlords) and Rapleys (Town Planners) and the Lidl Application at Broadheath, Chair will give them some dates for a meeting to discuss our concerns.

Paulina said that the application to turn the Old Post office into a restaurant involves closing off the courtyard at the rear, but they seem to think that the wheely bins can be left on the causeway. Damian of the Design Forum has asked for comments, so she will submit comments about it. Angela said there are a lot of residents in that area now so the planning committee need to be careful about what they approve. Paulina said she will also be commenting on the retrospective application at Oakleigh, Higher Downs regarding their white gates and fencing, as they are not in keeping with the other properties. Paulina said she would also follow up on the breach of height restrictions on the Hill Carr development.

Paulina said she was concerned about the Bruntwood Plans for the Stamford Quarter changing the access slope from the interchange into steps as the slope is too steep for current regulations. Their idea that disabled people with buggies etc can use the roadway at the back of Rackams Service Area is ridiculous as

it's too far to go and it's very rough anyway. Chair said she had been talking to disabled groups and the RNIB were very cross about it.

For current planning applications **see appendix 1**.

## **7. Local Listing Update**

The National Funded Scheme are keen to encourage local authorities to increase their local listings of buildings which don't currently merit national listing as buildings of national and cultural interest. But hopefully will translate to national listing in the future. Chair has spoken to Hazel Pryor and will mention about the possibly of including the Altrincham Little Theatre building.

**8. Town Centre Report from Angela Stone:** Night time economy, Town Hall and Altrincham businesses.

### **Update June 2021**

#### **Hospitality**

Intensely frustrating announcement yesterday,

Funding is needed if this is to stay in place for another 4 weeks. Business rates have to start being paid (albeit at a reduced rate) from the end of June, June rents are due in 2 weeks, loans are being paid back

Most venues are operating at half capacity inside, closing early because it's too cold for outdoor seating, still struggling to find staff to man table service.

I have emailed Sir Graham today as we know he's wholly against the continuation of lockdowns.

Planning for the Euro 2020 has taken much of the month. 18 venues are showing the matches.

There's restrictions in place to try to prevent people standing around outdoor screens outside venues, no cheering or shouting etc. The first match passed peacefully, England v Scotland this Friday at 8pm and our final match against Czech Republic on the 22nd

The plans are to launch Best Bar None in July for assessment over the summer.

There's a planning application in for the old Post Rooms unit to turn it into a restaurant.

#### **Stamford Quarter**

The Not So Secret Garden launched on the 4<sup>th</sup> June. There's live music every weekend, which seems to be at a level so as not to annoy residents and other day-time events showcasing businesses.

The plans are to change the space to a winter theme later in the year.

The temporary pop up shop seems to be popular. So far there's been two art businesses and vegan beauty business. Each business seems to be there 2-3 weeks and some are planned to return.

#### **Altrincham 10k**

I'm meeting the organisers on Thursday to find out more about the event in September

#### **Travellers**

Travellers are causing a problem in the town once again. They are being moved around too much, it's not fair to local residents and not fair to them.

## Amazon Smile

We have set up A&BCS on Amazon Smile. It's free to customers all you have to do is sign into Amazon using [www.smile.amazon.co.uk](http://www.smile.amazon.co.uk).

Shop as normal and Amazon donate 1p for every £1 spent, which increases to 10p on Amazon Prime Days

No news on Paint Altrincham Pink, Blue our ACV for the Town Hall, Public Realm, Buskers or Oxford Road

## AOB

We have received a request for some mentoring from St.Albans Civic Society. Chair has passed the email to Mike Shields and Tony Collier as they have experience with the neighbourhood plan.

Richard asked was there any news about our Student Intern Jessica? Leslie said he had still not heard back from her, so will contact Salford University and ask them to write to her on our behalf.

The Minor Injuries unit is returning to Altrincham Hospital on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.  
Opening will be 8am to 8pm Monday – Friday only, not at weekends.

The meeting closed at approximately 9.35pm

**Next Meeting:** The next Zoom Committee Meeting will be Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 8.00pm.

## Appendix 1

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

24 May 2021 – 14 June 2021

24 May 2021

104211/HHA/21 The Downs, Altrincham WA14 2QQ

Erection of rear infill glazed single storey extension, new rear dormer for existing loft room and partial basement conversion, new external spiral staircase to rear sun terrace and other associated internal and external alterations.

100818/HHA/20 2 Lloyd Street, Altrincham WA14 2DE

Erection of rear extension at first and second floor.

1 June 2021

104429/HHA/21 Oakleigh, 12 Higher Downs, Altrincham WA14 2QL

Retrospective application for the erection of gates to front of property.

7 June 2021

104583/FUL/21 1A Bridgewater Road, Altrincham WA14 11LB

Proposed new 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to create a self-contained 3 bed flat, removal of existing spiral staircase and erection of side extension to create new entrance.

NOTE: This application falls within 'permitted rights'

104522/CPL/21 36 Oxford Road, Altrincham WA14 2EB

Certificate of proposed lawful development use of third floor to single occupancy office space.

14 June 2021

104383/FUL/21 70 Stamford New Road, Altrincham WA14 1EE

Change of use of the property from A1/ A3 to Class E(b). Creation of a new mezzanine level following the increase of the roof height of the existing flat roof section. External alterations to include a new openable glazed roof over the courtyard for outside dining. New plant to roof and extraction flue, new fire escape door and infilling of the rear gates with creation of a new fire escape.

NOTE: Damian Utton, Design Forum, has asked for comments. It is also intended to submit comments on behalf of A&BCS to include use of area on The Causeway at rear of building to store commercial refuse bins.