

The Village Windmill Meeting

Date: 24th January 2012

Venue: Great Chishill Village Hall

Start Time: 6:30

Attendance: Great and Little Chishill Parish Council, County Councillor van de Ven, Simon Hudson and members of the Parish (See attached list)

The Chairman explained that the meeting had been called to inform the Parish of the latest news on the windmill as the PC had promised to do this. He welcomed Simon Hudson to the meeting as well as Jim Brearley who is setting up the Windmill Trust.

He went on to give an overview as to why the windmill is being disposed of by the county and explained that financially the PC could not take it on as they were bound by Section 137. He reiterated that the village consultation had shown that the majority wished the PC to investigate ways of retaining / looking after the mill. The best way forward was for a trust to be set up to buy the mill. A report had been commissioned to assess the true state of the mill and had been undertaken by experts David Pearce and Luke Bonwick. In this report there are breakdowns of three phases of restoration:

- Get the mill water tight and structurally sound
- Get the mill to turn into the wind
- Get the mill in working order

To do all phases would cost circ £170k, this price is based on using commercial contractors.

In September 28 members of SPAB visited the mill and they were very excited by the project and have a network of volunteers who would assist with the project.

There have been some very positive meetings with English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund with regard to substantive grants. He said that it is positive to have local support in attitude and will bring a community feel. He then handed over to Simon Hudson.

Simon Hudson opened by thanking the Chairman and said how incredible it was to be in a room filled with people who had a shared interest. The success of a project is shown by support at local level. At national level, the mill is very important as it is the only trestle mill in the country that could be successfully restored and it is an exciting project. It is the highest mill in Cambridgeshire and he said that this project should be in memory of the Dukes and Pegrams.

Jim Brearley then spoke. He said that he got involved because no money was being spent on the mill that the County Council were going to auction it. He is 100% sure he can

make it water tight and confident that he can be turned again and it would be wonderful to get it working again.

The Floor was then opened for questions.

Mr Prior asked if Conservation might take action on try Trust if works were not done. Jim Brearley said that works carried out would be carried out to a good standard.

Mr Brand asked about ownership. It was confirmed that the Trust not the Parish Council would own the mill. In fact there were benefits of the Trust owning it over the Parish councils in terms of gaining potential grants

Simon Hudson stated that communicates taking ownership of monuments is becoming the norm.

Mr Sloman - asked if the Crown will be making money. It pointed out that the mill is currently owned by Cambridgeshire County Council and will be sold for £1.

Mr Martin asked if someone offered Say, £5k would the County Council take that offer. It was reported that the Parish Council has first refusal.

Mr Prior asked about ongoing maintenance cost and notwithstanding the reburshment these would be around £2k per annum. This figure is based on Wicken Mill, a working mill in the region.

Mr Crowther ask about insurance premiums. Simon Hudson said he uses NFU for other mills and asked if any people in the audience uses them, Peter Wiseman confirmed he uses them and finds them efficient. It was thought that insurance could be purchased for around £300 per annum.

Mrs Spencer said that the Trust was the best option and the alternative (ownership not connected to the village) was not a good alternative. Jim Brearley said the Trust would like to make an educational DVD to promote mills to schools and put an educational pack together. The Heritage Lottery Fund actually like community cultural links on applications for funding. want it to survive. Alternative not want to see (ownership not part of the village).

Mr Sloman expressed concerns on visitor traffic and coaches in the car park. It was stated that that question could not be answered at the present time. However Jim Brearley said that when the SPAB volunteers visited, there was a shuttle service run from the village bus shelter.

Ruth Dibblee - asked what happened if the Trust become unviable and there was no younger people interested and no new members could be co-opted. The answer is the Trust would revert back to the Charities Commission and they would marry it up with another appropriate charity. The Trust would be carefully set up with clear guidance from the Charities Commission with good guidelines in place to dissolve the Charity should this become an issue.

County Council Susan van den Ven reenforced the fact that the District and County want to make projects work and enforcement for non-works are a last resort. They will work to find a solution. The ultimate penalty is a compulsive purchase from the District Council.

Mr Prior asked if there other examples of this type of project, Simon Hudson said that Pakenham Watermill is a similar example.

Mr Wiseman stated that he had seen the mill in Chishill work. Simon Hudson said he would like talk to him about it.

Mr Crowther asked if Ashdon mill was similar to Chishill Mill. Simon Hudson said that Ashdon was in worse condition as the trestle was broken.

Mrs Wiseman asked that the Trust engage some younger members of the village to join.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming along and closed the meeting.