

**Beltane Fire Society
Board Meeting Minutes
(timings are approximate)**

Date and Time:	Monday, March 10th 2025, 1915 for 1930
Location:	Beltonia
Present:	<p>Present in person: Jenny Bloom, Andy MacLeod, Franklyn Reinhart, Neil Barton, Jenny Glover, Robert Lee, Steffie Sutherland</p> <p>Present electronically: Tom Watton, Steve Glover, Ella Humphries</p> <p>Apologies: Rob Thorburn</p>

Item		Details	Action on
1. Welcome and general	1930	<p>Jenny Bloom welcomed everyone to the meeting</p> <p>There was some introductory chat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Community member] will be leaving Greyfriars Charteris, which provides bookings for Beltane meetings and Getting Ready Space. - There are a great deal of very old emails at Beltonia which may be of interest - Jenny Bloom has started work on a big book of past Beltane Festival posters and flyers - if anyone has any archive material to donate, please contact her. (This is not a formal action, more of a request). - People checked in, as usual, with brief mentions of mood and anything special which has happened in the last month (this is not minuted). <p>There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>	
2. Minutes Agreement and review of urgent action points	1935	<p>The Minutes, which had had a few minor changes, were agreed.</p> <p>The action points were discussed and some were closed.</p> <p>Action 9.1: Jenny Bloom to confirm completed actions in the list below, so Jenny Glover can move them to the completed list document.</p>	9.1 Jenny B, Jenny G

3. Operations (Blues update)	1940	Things have been doing well and some practices have been done with groups and with the May Queen. No problems.	
Operations (Contractors' update)	1945	<p>ELLA (FOH): The Family Beltane will be the Saturday after Beltane - May 3rd. This will tie in with the Mummers' Parade. The general format will be the same as last year (craft activities in the morning, songs and storytelling in the afternoon). There have been a few suggestions from Beltaners.</p> <p>TOM (EVENT COORDINATOR): The licence and other applications have been done. There are ongoing conversations with the parks department. 1,000 tickets have been sold so far. Having a waiting list helps to reduce the load. Fire Safety training is happening Note: Some GOs haven't completed their training forms Action 9.2: Tom to remind GOs at GO meetings or directly if they are very tardy.</p> <p>TOM (UPDATE ABOUT PREMISES) There are a couple of potential options Mansfield Traquair Centre is currently available to rent. There are training and office facilities on site and one condition of the lease is that at least some part of it is to be available for community use. However, the operating costs are very high, probably partly due to the need to maintain the Phoebe Anna Traquair murals in good condition.</p> <p>Beltonia (16 East Cromwell Street, EH6 6HD). Eric, Beltonia's landlord, has confirmed that he has no interest in talking about the future until January 2026 (this is one year before the end of the lease). If the lease is renewed, then some increase in costs is likely.</p>	9.2 Tom Watton
Operations (GO notes and updates)	1950	<p>Notes for the GO meetings are being done by Jenny Glover and put in the GO Team drive. Location: GO Team/Resources for GOs/GO meetings 2025. (This is ongoing until April 2025, reference action 7.6)).</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>Bower: There is a project proposal pending and consent from the Board to proceed is requested. This was discussed and permission granted. Later note: The</p>	

		Bower proposal has been submitted by Tamsyn Ball, Sarah Barr, Lindsay Hunter and Troy Parkin.	
Operations (Samhuinn location for 2025)	2010	<p>There has been much discussion between Jenny Bloom and Tom Watton, following the “Envisioning Samhuinn” Blether in January 2025.</p> <p>The main conclusions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calton Hill is the best realistic option and this may lead to Calton Hill being the home for both Beltane and Samhuinn - There is no other realistic option in Edinburgh eg Princes Street Gardens has a moratorium on events and, in any case, a cap of 250 people maximum; Edinburgh Castle Esplanade also has restrictions on numbers - Community feedback indicates that the community wants a home for Samhuinn and not to have to keep moving. <p>Action 9.3: To start considering the move to Calton Hill for Samhuinn. It can be announced early in due course to give people time to think about how it can be done.</p> <p>There will need to be work done on the narrative, theming, setting up the hill and helping the community reframe its relationship with this special space.</p>	9.3 Jenny Bloom, Tom Watton
Operations (Allergy update, Bower and Busk)	2025	<p>ALLERGY UPDATE: A Beltane member has contacted the Board about their very severe allergy to lavender. Board decision to request members not to wear, eat or drink any lavender related products at an Beltane or Beltane adjacent event. (This also applies to nuts for similar allergy reasons - we want people to have fun at events, not go into anaphylactic shock).</p> <p>BOWER: This has been discussed above in the Operations (GO notes and updates) section.</p> <p>BUSKS: There has been some difficulty finding a suitable venue. Bristo Square has been suggested and will be further investigated (this could be beneficial because it is a student populated area, and this may attract people towards attending/participating in Beltane festivals).</p> <p>This venue could be combined with or as an alternative to having a picnic in the meadows (or a pub visit if the weather is bad) and possibly some musical performances there.</p>	

Governance (AGM planning)	2045	<p>LEITH THEATRE: Tom mentioned that this is now formally open and may be available for the Samhuinn open meeting.</p> <p>AGM PLANNING: Tom advised that a priority should be the availability of venue and not clashing with important events for lots of members eg festivals.</p> <p>Suitable dates were suggested as June 14th or June 15th This will not be advertised yet (so no formal action from this meeting).</p> <p>THINGS TO DO AS PART OF THE PLANNING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send out notification of the AGM in advance (article 36 of the Articles of Association states that the membership needs 21 clear days' notice of the AGM) - Send out Trustee applications - Have information (which may exist) on the shared drive about how to run a AGM - The Chair will give a statement on the work done by the Board in 2024-25. <p>POTENTIAL TRUSTEE CHANGES: Some current Trustees expressed interest in staying in place, but there may be some changes (if a Trustee resigns from the Board, they may continue as a Community Organiser).</p> <p>Traditionally, Trustees are re-elected every year, however, article 69 of the amended Articles of Association suggests that most Trustees can stay in post for up to 3 years.</p> <p>There has been interest so far from a couple of people: [redacted].</p> <p>(Currently the Board consists of 7 Trustees. Article 66 of the Articles of Association states that there can be between 3 and 18 Trustees).</p>	
Governance (Meaningful election of Safeguarding Officers)	2050	<p>The Safeguarding Team selection is in progress. Action 9.4: Jenny Bloom and Steffie Sutherland to plan progress on this.</p>	9.4 Jenny Bloom, Steffie Sutherland

Finance and Income Generation	2055	<p>Neil Barton has presented the monthly figures and some points mentioned were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room bookings for GO meetings has been £1040 - Safeguarding costs were £480 for Simone's travel for the GO training weekend (this was considered well worth it by the Board) - Licence including market training are about £6,000-ish. - The Consent workshop is £280 including room hire - Costs for court are £150 for the Mary Queen's costume, £100 for the Green Man's costume - The drum subsidy needs to be worked out and explained to all relevant groups. <p>HARDSHIP FUND This is confidential and only known by the person applying and the Treasurer. 5 people have applied for this so far for Beltane.</p> <p>FUEL BUYING BFS pays for fuel on the night, but not for practices. Action 9.5 Tom Watton to investigate bulk buying of fuel (this will also involve thought on how to store and decant the fuel safely).</p> <p>BELTONIA TENANCY Be United, which rents space at Beltonia, is winding down and is likely to cease renting at the end of the month (March).</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>£5 SUBSIDY TO ALL GROUPS This will be given to all performers. It is not certain if it will be provided to all helpers, as some helpers are more involved with the performance (eg with face paint and costume) than others. There was no firm decision made about this - it will probably be decided (by the Treasurer, liaising with the Board if there is any doubt) on a case by case basis.</p> <p>UPDATES ON COUNCIL LICENSING It was pointed out the Council may change the terms of the parks levy. There is exemption for religious reasons and if the event has less than 5,000 audience members. Tom is in negotiation with the licensing clerks to explain the legality and validity of getting a religious licence for Beltane, on the grounds that it is quasi-religious. (No</p>	<p>9.5 Tom Watton</p> <p>9.6 Tom Watton</p>
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		<p>formal action for this, as it is part of Tom's contractor remit).</p> <p>Tom will continue to negotiate with the Council parks department and the Calton Hill conservation trust about the levy, and will also work to ensure that the levy is used to ensure improvements to Calton Hill actually happen.</p> <p>The BFS is committing to paying the levy if tickets are over £10, with the levy directly passing to ticket holders. Additional donations are requested for charities which have already been agreed.</p> <p>Tom's mood can be accurately described as "pissed off".</p> <p>For Samhuinn, if the audience numbers are kept to below 5,000 and the ticket price is less than £10, then it might be possible to dodge the levy and discussions are ongoing about this.</p>	
Outreach (Edinburgh Zoo)	2130	<p>The Board is not giving a flat decline to the Edinburgh Zoo's offer to reach out to community groups, delivered via Robert Bell, who works there. However, any official reaction or PR comment to the Zoo must go via Gabbi Sloss (Communications).</p> <p>It was suggested that groups with a specific conservation or animal priority might wish to make their own arrangements to visit with the Zoo directly. Action 9.7 Jenny Glover to communicate this to Robert Bell.</p>	9.7 Jenny Glover
Outreach (Whale Arts)	2135	<p>Whale Arts, based in Wester Hailes, seem to be asking Beltaners to perform for free at a date/event to be arranged. It was noted that performers will not be free on April 30th, for very obvious reasons. Action 9.8 Tom to facilitate the conversation with Whale Arts.</p>	9.8 Tom Watton
Community (Blues and Board social)	2140	<p>Jenny Bloom to arrange a communal meal at her place, hopefully to be cooked by Cinder (who is a superlative cook). Action 9.9: Jenny Bloom to arrange date, time and inform Board and Blues.</p>	9.9 Jenny Bloom
AOB (Emergency contacts and safeguarding)	2145	<p>EMERGENCY CONTACTS There has been some confusion about arranging emergency contacts. Tom's suggestion is for people to read the description carefully.</p>	

<p>presence at Beltane)</p>		<p>Action 9.10 Tom to discuss this at the weekly GO meeting. Later note: Tom suggested, at the GO meeting, that, in the absence of any other person to be contacted in the unlikely event of an emergency, the Nightwatch team may act as an emergency contact.</p> <p>SAFEGUARDING PRESENCE AT BELTANE It was suggested that Simone Last, the Safeguarding Officer, should attend Beltane as an audience witness, as it will help her understand the Beltane culture and have an idea of what the Festival is like.</p> <p>It was pointed out that Lisa (the previous Safeguarding officer) found it very useful to attend.</p> <p>The suggestion is to allocate a maximum of £500 for Simone to attend. After that, should she wish to attend future festivals, then she should be given a complimentary ticket, but pay for her own travel and accommodation.</p>	<p>9.10 Tom Watton</p>
<p>Date of next meeting</p>	<p>2150</p>	<p>The next meeting will be held on Monday 7th April.</p> <p>Trustees are asked to keep Monday 21st April free if there needs to be an additional Board meeting.</p> <p>There will be an option to attend electronically for both meetings</p>	