

## Appendix 1 to minutes of YDCC 25/10/22 meeting

# Oktoberfest 2022 report

## Introduction

At YDCC's meeting on 30 August, John Palfrey reported on discussions with Jane Morgan from the Parent Council of Yetholm Primary School (YPS-PC) concerning the future of its Oktoberfest fundraising event. It had been a great success the previous year, making a net profit of £2557. Of this £500 was a one-off donation, so the trading profit was a little over £2000.

He explained that crucial to the event was the availability of a good size tent at a price which would not render the event unviable. Commercial rates for a suitable size tent started around £1350, a figure which, in the event of poor attendance due to bad weather, could easily eat up the entire income.

Last year Jane had borrowed a tent from a friend, but at the event that had been badly damaged by high-speed gusts, meaning that this year's event could not proceed unless a replacement were found.

The council's own tent was also in a poor state but, mindful of the upcoming Oktoberfest, it subsequently ordered a replacement.

However, at the 27 September meeting Jane also informed the council of another issue which had arisen only the night before at the Parent Council's AGM, where it had become apparent that YPS-PC no longer had sufficient active members to cope unaided with the workload associated with the event. Moreover, since virtually all the money raised at the 2021 Oktoberfest had since been spent on the children, YPS-PC did not have enough left to fund the up-front costs of a repeat event.

The feeling among YDCC members was that the event should go ahead if at all possible. Therefore it reached an agreement with YPS-PC under which the event and all its attractions would remain the school's responsibility but YDCC would help with the administration, in particular providing a tent and handling all financial matters, including up-front funding which was to be recouped in its entirety from the takings. The agreement reached on the night contained a provision for YDCC to charge YPS-PC a modest rental fee for use of the tent, but in subsequent discussions councillors unanimously decided to let the school use it free of charge, on the grounds that this was a community event.

## Erection

The tent was delivered a few days in advance of the event. It was erected by a team of helpers, some from the Parent Council, some from the council, on the Tuesday before the event, necessarily earlier than the planned date because the weather forecast for the following two days was poor, and it needed to be erect for Friday morning so that stand holders could get ready.

Initial impressions of the tent were good. The fabric is thick and strong and all the fittings robust and of good quality. There is every prospect of it proving a useful asset to YDCC for a number of years.

The stretch-fabric design allows the purchaser to erect the tent in various configurations (we chose three sides closed, one long side open), but the instructions do not detail the options very well and a certain amount of trial and error was needed before suitable support pole lengths etc could be achieved. Nevertheless, by Tuesday night it was looking good, although we took the precaution of ordering a few more pegs, to guard against freak weather; these were added the following day. Regular re-tensioning of the various guy ropes is important, especially when the fabric is new and inclined to stretch, as it is the tension on the fabric that keeps the internal supports in place.

The tent straddled one of the access roads to the green, a closure which was facilitated by a road-

closure order, and additional barriers were placed between the green and the main road.

All appropriate signage, for alcohol, health and safety, social distancing, fire, etc, was in place and the risk assessment and other legal material was stapled to the back of the nearby noticeboard. A fire point was established close to the stalls using gas canisters. These were located well away from the tent, in which no smoking was allowed. Copies of the risk assessment were available to all stallholders.

The police were notified of the event.

The musicians handled the PRS licence. No Entertainment Licence was needed because it is Scottish Borders Council policy not to require one for community events where there is no charge for entry. YPS-PC and YDCC both carry public liability insurance and the tent itself is included on the YDCC policy on an “all risks” basis.

## **The event**

Saturday was quite breezy but in other respects the weather was kind. The event was free entry. It opened at noon and attendance built up steadily as the afternoon progressed.

The tent is considerably bigger than its predecessor, which gave the organisers much more scope to create a leisure area, with bar, music and straw bales for seats. We were delighted with how fully the tent filled up as the day progressed: the atmosphere inside was such that people were still enjoying themselves right up to bar closing time, 8pm.

The main tent was complemented by several smaller tents, supplied via YPS-PC or the stallholders themselves. The attached plan shows the general layout and details the various attractions.

As YDCC Treasurer I distributed a float to the various stallholders and for security reasons periodically collected large denomination notes, using my wife’s car as a bank. At the end of the event I made a final collection, then counted and banked the money, less reimbursement to YDCC as agreed.

## **Dismantling**

This was the least pleasant task, as on the Sunday the weather was poor. It had been hoped to lay the fabric on the green and progressively clean and dry it, folding it as each area was completed, but the weather rendered this impossible. Tents stored wet deteriorate quickly, yet we had failed to make provision for drying and folding it indoors should the weather demand it.

This was a serious oversight for which John Palfrey and I, as the YDCC representatives on the project, accept full responsibility. The Youth Hall was unavailable as it was temporarily housing the shop, so the Wauchope Hall was the only option, and we had not asked permission in advance. Pippa Emerson and Peter Snell, who are responsible for the hall’s maintenance, were understandably annoyed, and worried about damage to the recently refurbished floor, but we were particularly careful not to damage it – those actually drying the tent worked in their socks, and we left the floor clean and dry. We apologised profusely at the time and repeat that apology here.

All the components apart from the fabric have been stored in the container next to the Pavilion. As this is unheated and the fabric can crack if kept under 10°C long-term, the fabric is currently in my workshop, which is very well insulated and can be heated if necessary. If YDCC wishes to continue this arrangement, I am happy to do so at no charge.

## **Financial outcome**

At the time of writing there are still small amounts of monies to collect and a few small bills to pay,

some of which may not materialise in practice as people have been very generous with their time and money.

It is clear, however, that the net profit from the event is very close to last year's net trading profit of £2057, and that all funding provided by YDCC has been repaid in full. It is interesting to note that this single event has enabled the village to recoup over 20% of the purchase cost of the tent.

The profit figure discussed above is a worst case from the Parent Council's viewpoint, because there are two ways in which YDCC could increase that total.

Firstly, the cost of the extra pegs. The advisability of these did not become apparent until erection was well advanced, when there was no time for me to get YDCC authorisation for the purchase. So I agreed with all three YPS-PC representatives that I would buy them personally (£201.70) on the understanding that, if YDCC were unwilling to sanction the purchase retrospectively (it has a perfect right to refuse), YPS-PC would reimburse me from the takings (this has now happened) and donate the pegs to YDCC as a thank-you gesture for the use of the marquee.

Secondly, cable trunking. John Palfrey paid £119.97 for cable trunking and has already been reimbursed from the takings, so this trunking is a YPS-PC asset. However, as the trunking is likely to be needed on most occasions when the tent is used, it is actually far more use to YDCC than the school. So it would make sense for YDCC to buy it from the school at cost.

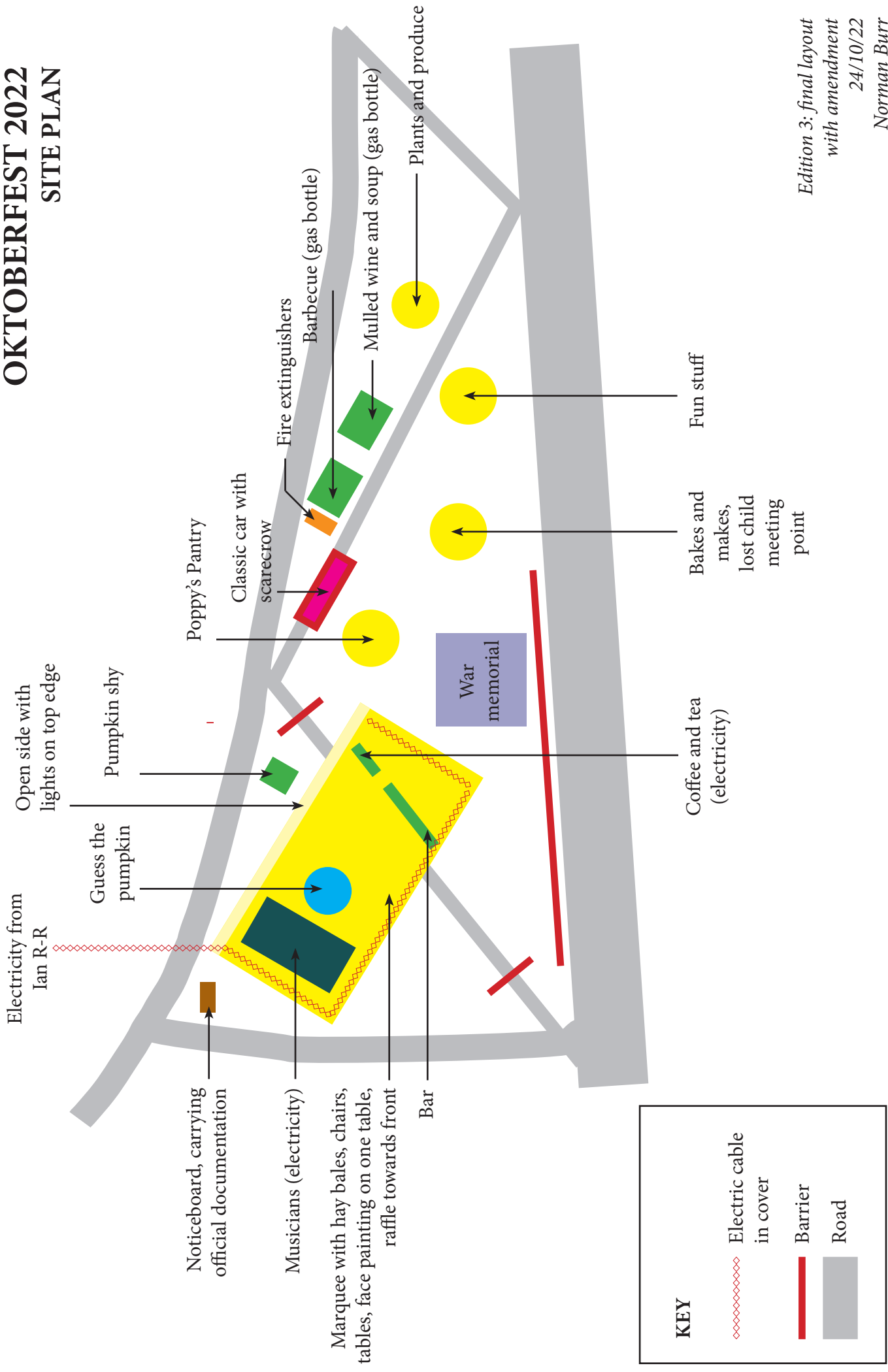
Were YDCC to agree to pay these exceptional items, YPS-PC's net profit would rise by £321.67.




Whatever YDCC's decision, I would like to thank everyone who helped make the event a success, no matter how modest their contribution, and I commend the event to the council as one well worth repeating. Everyone enjoyed themselves, it cost YDCC nothing (unless it chooses to agree an entirely voluntary contribution), and the children will benefit from over £2000 of fun and opportunities that they would otherwise have been denied.

There is also the broader point that YDCC exists to support all aspects of village life, of which a vigorous and well resourced school is a vital part.

*Norman Burr, Treasurer*

# OKTOBERFEST 2022 SITE PLAN



KEY	
	Electric cable in cover
	Barrier
	Road