

Re Alder Bridge Association for Steiner Waldorf Education 'legacy fund proposal'

A proposal has been made to the Association members of Alder Bridge Association for Steiner Waldorf Education that Bridge House be sold and a legacy fund created.

It has to be pointed out that many aspects of such a proposal, according to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of ABASWE, are not constitutional and therefore cannot happen without changes to the constitution by special resolution (>75% approval). It is unlikely that such approval would be achieved.

The Memorandum and Articles of Association are attached.

If ABASWE ceases running activities and Bridge House is sold:

1. Assets can only be given to a registered Charity or Trust with rules on giving away assets to members that are as strict as for ABASWE [Memorandum page 5, section 7]
2. It is the members who decide where assets should be given away to. By special resolution – ie 75% [Memorandum page 5, section 7]
3. Trustees can't give away assets, only the members can [Memorandum page 5, section 7]

The Memorandum and Articles of Association of ABASWE are designed for running activities and not as a Trust Fund.

No financial benefit can be received by members of the association, directly or indirectly. Memorandum page 4, section 4.

From this proposal:

“Anyone involved with Steiner-Waldorf related activities could be invited to apply for funds and the ABASWE trustees would decide annually whether to award funds...”

This is not true as only Charities with the same or similar aims can receive funds.

“Beneficiaries could include Steiner-Waldorf Schools needing to stock their library, design a play area, build a classroom, buy new classroom furniture, refresh their costume cupboard, for example. Or individuals could apply for funding to enable their child to continue attending a Steiner-Waldorf School during a period of personal hardship perhaps. A teacher could apply for funding a sabbatical. Steiner-inspired home education initiatives could be eligible to apply for funding, including any such organisation using the current school site.”

Steiner-Waldorf schools who are registered charities can be beneficiaries but individuals could not be. Home education initiatives could not be beneficiaries unless they were registered Charities.

Contrary to what the proposal suggests, Bridge House is perfectly viable and the debt would be perfectly manageable with good management. Bridge House has been providing free accommodation to the school, including all utilities, for the past 20+years. Rooms provided free included Early Years (Kindergarten and Parent and Child) rooms, a number of offices, workshop, special needs room and classrooms.

It would be much better, and of permanent value, to keep Bridge House for the benefit of all in perpetuity. This is expanded on elsewhere.

Stuart & Marcus

15th September 2023