

FELPHAM VILLAGE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

MINUTES FROM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON MONDAY 24th APRIL 2017, AT ST MARY'S CENTRE, FELPHAM

Attendees: RH Brooks, M Brooks, Mary Fenton – Jones, Patrick Jenkins, Murdo Mackenzie – Morrison, Anne Mackenzie-Morrison, Lionel Pritchard, Eileen Lord, Tony Lord, Hilary Flynn, Jane Barnes, Sally Cameron, Ian Cameron, Sue Tressler, Arlene Wilmers, Di Wooldridge, Judith Barber, Sue Jenkins, Sue Harris, Maggie Lupton, Joyce Pritchard, Graham Jones, Mary Pavard, Mike Pavard, Vera Darlington, Maureen Haines, Val Morris, Lolly Vincent, Andrew Vincent, Jackie Onions, Teresa Davies, Paul Warne, Sheila Turner, Glenn Powell, Maggie Camp, John Fenton – Jones, Leeza Aldis- Hobbs and Andrew Camp (Chairman and Minutes)

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Andy Camp introduced himself as the current Chairman and Secretary of The Society and gave everyone a hearty welcome to the meeting. He then listed the names of people who had apologised for not being able to attend this evening's meeting.

APOLOGIES

Bob May, Sue and Ron Long, John Farrington, Gina Riley, Stan and Chris Cann, Nick Gibb, Bee and John Thelwell, Geoff Farrell, Alison Merriman, Felicity Hurcomb, Angela and Mike Barnes, Chris Hardy, Barbara Piedot, Tina and Tom Drennan, Rachel Searle, Wendy Elsdon, Lorraine Stonelake and Conrad Jepson.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE OVER THE PAST YEAR

Andy stated that The Committee had worked really hard on behalf of its members along with much appreciated help from several of them. Much of what had been said at last year's AGM in terms of what was planned for the year had been achieved and he listed some of the things which came to mind.

Butlins' had smartened up their border on Upper Bognor Road, the Rife bridge had been painted, flower baskets had been up on the lamp posts going from one end of Felpham Road to the other and were watered regularly. The Old Rectory Gardens border had been kept tidy and a natural hedge had been built. Attempts had also been made to tidy up the area next to Oldcorns' bathroom store and privet planted behind the seat.

A Quiz Night, a Summer Party in Old Rectory Gardens, a History event, the village Christmas Tree had been organised and monthly beach cleans had continued to have been run. The Social Evening at The Fox, when 64 non – Committee Members had turned up, had been a great success!

Andy went on to say, however, that he found it rather disappointing to hear that there appear to be many people encountered in the village or on The Prom who believe that The Society is "something to do with Blake's Cottage" and do not remember what we have actually been doing for the village. He stated that it was true that donations had been made to the Big Blake Project in the past and that The Committee *is* interested in protecting the buildings in the village, *including* Blake's Cottage. More would be mentioned about what is being done in connection with the cottage later on in the meeting.

He stated that he was sure that many members present were aware or involved with the arguments surrounding the actual ownership of the property over the last two or three years but went on to say that The Committee believes that *its* job is to focus on the building itself and *not* to take sides with The Blake's Cottage Trust or anyone else.

Andy finished off by saying that he believed that The Society should be encouraging more and more people to appreciate what Felpham is all about; history, buildings, gardens, beaches.....but mostly, that it is a great place to live. Our best way of encouraging people to do this is to give them more of the things they enjoy seeing and doing and above all – to have some fun doing it!! So, if any of the Attendees had any ideas in mind they should inform The Committee – either under "Any Other Business" or by sending in an email to Felpham Village Conservation

Society. He asked them to provide their name and contact details, and a Committee Member would be getting in touch with them. He encouraged people to join the Committee as there were currently four vacancies.

2. FINANCE REPORT AND APPROVAL OF 2016/17 ACCOUNTS

John Fenton-Jones, Treasurer, presented the Society's Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017, which had been approved by The Committee.

John stated that Felpham Village Conservation Society is a non – profit making organisation and went on to discuss the Income and Expenditure Account and accompanying notes that had been handed out prior to commencement of the meeting.

Income, he stated, came from two main sources:

Membership which has grown from 178 members last year to 230 members this year, including 33 life members. Income from this source had increased from £1188 to £1609.

Social Activities, principally the Summer Party (which made over £3000), generated £3400 in total.

Total Income of £5000 was very therefore similar to 2015/16.

Expenditure totalling £250 (net) came from the Society's four activity groups. However, major costs of around £4600 came from a number of projects which would be discussed later by Glenn Powell. £2300 of this money was accounted for by the Hanging Baskets. Event equipment, costing £1300 (net), included the purchase of a shed to store it as well as the purchase of a marquee; grants from West Sussex County Council and Felpham Parish Council, respectively, helping to keep these costs down. John took the opportunity of thanking both authorities concerned.

Administration Costs of £1900 included the cost of the recent Social Evening, the cost of the notice board outside The Village Post Office and the cost of updating The Society's website, database and email systems.

In total, Expenditure came to £6700 providing a deficit of £1700 which had reduced our funds from £6300 to £4558.

John went on to say that the Balance Sheet shows that the fund is made up of bank balances of £5700 less subscriptions received prior to 31st March 2017 of £1,086.

John commended the accounts to the Attendees and asked for questions.

As there were no further questions, Andy proposed that the Accounts be accepted. This was seconded by Leeza and carried unanimously by a showing of hands.

3. USE OF SOCIETY FUNDS

Glenn Powell (Vice Chairman) provided some further information on the projects that had been carried out over the past year.

Glenn started by stating that planting up of the hanging baskets for this year had now started and The Society would continue to pay for someone to water them regularly once they were put up, which he expected to be at the end of May.

The bridge over The Rife had been painted in “Felpham blue” and now looked very smart compared. Glenn stated that gaining permission to paint the bridge involved some tortuous communication and form filling but the job had been completed very well and no paint had fallen into The Rife.

The Christmas Tree Event would be taking place again this coming December and as last year, Butlin's had kindly agreed to provide the tree itself. The lights and refreshments will be provided by The Society.

Glenn went on to discuss the re -development of The Society's web site. The original system, developed by Tony Lord, had served us well over the years: however, the re-developed version enabled us to be more flexible in communicating with members and storing and displaying information. For example, it had been possible to develop the “Living History” archive, recording the information that was displayed at last October's excellent History Evening, enabling us to re – live historical memories.

Finally, Glenn invited the Attendees to let The Committee have their ideas for new projects – either by emailing us through the website or by writing them down and handing them to Mark at The Village Post Office, where they could be collected, during one of the regular visits by Committee Members.

Glenn then asked the Attendees for questions.

Teresa Davies raised a concern over the whereabouts of a cine - film that had been made of “old Felpham” several years ago and transferred on to video. Joyce Pritchard (History, Heritage and Archive Leader) responded that she still had it in her possession and the intention was to put into on to a CD. Glenn added that it will eventually be stored on the website, from whence anyone who wanted to could view it.

Di Wooldridge thanked The Committee for the hanging baskets, stating how much she had appreciated them.

4. PRESENTATION OF SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

1. Friends of Old Rectory Gardens

Maggie Lupton, Leader of the Friends of Old Rectory Gardens stated that the “Friends” met on the fourth Friday of every month; the main activity being to tidy up the border but they had recently built a natural hedge on the boundary of the wooded area.

During the year, The Friend's main contact from the Parks team at Arun DC, who own and maintain the gardens, had left The Council. This had had a major impact on plans to install bird and bat boxes and to plant bulbs in the wooded area. A meeting had been arranged with the new Parks Officer Friday 28th April, when it was hoped that plans for the future could be agreed.

She went on to state that investigations were taking place by Arun into recent damage caused by someone using a metal detector in the park. She had counted nineteen places where squares of turf had been removed then replaced – but because of the current drought, the grass had died off. Maggie asked members to let The Committee know of any other suspicious activity that they may notice in the gardens in future.

Finally, Maggie closed her talk by inviting the Attendees to come along and join the gardening sessions.

Maggie was asked whether Arun DC were responsible for cutting the grass in Old Rectory Gardens, as it really needed a cut. Maggie agreed to mention it at the forthcoming meeting with the Arun Parks Department Officer.

Joyce Pritchard raised a concern that Arun DC were planting more wild flower areas and that these could eventually encroach on the areas of the grass which should be maintained. Maggie agreed to raise this at the forthcoming meeting.

2. History, Heritage and Archive

Joyce Pritchard, Leader of the History, Heritage and Archive Group recalled what she had mentioned at the 2016 AGM about last year's project concerning the involvement of the businesses and premises in the village. The research work had led to the identification of eighty - one businesses. Photographs of each business were taken and, with the help of their owners, a time line was formed. The information, including blown up versions of the photographs were used at the Living History Event which took place in the middle of October.

The evening was an overwhelming success with over one hundred people attending, many with their own memories to share. Joyce reported that since the event took place, all the photographs, information and shared memories had now been uploaded onto the FVCS / Living History website and that details of each individual business could be found by clicking into one of the premises. She added that this would be an ongoing project and information could be added to the site when new contributions were received. New photographs would also be added should there be a change to any of the businesses.

Joyce then discussed the projects for 2017. There would be another Event on October 24th when Sylvia Endacott had kindly agreed to speak about the history of Butlins and, with her vast knowledge of this subject, this should prove to be a very interesting evening. There would be a second speaker, but details had yet to be confirmed.

The Evening would also involve a small exhibition to give an overview of the Group's 2018 Event to commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War.

The Group would be concentrating on the servicemen from Felpham who died in action during the war. Research

had started and a walk through the village was being planned, starting at the British Legion War Memorial in the Church Yard and passing the former homes of the seventeen servicemen. It was hoped, with the permission of the house owner, that a wooden cross could be placed in a convenient point in the gardens to commemorate the serviceman concerned..

The Group was planning to work with The British Legion's local representative, St Mary's Church, the local Councils and schools, The W.I. groups, Local U3A organisations, and all other organisations within Felpham.

Another part of the commemoration, Joyce continued, would involve putting large poppies on each lamp-post from Flansham, through the Village to Butlins. Members of the HHA Group had already walked the route and had counted some one hundred and forty eight lamp-posts.

Joyce thanked all the members of the HHA group who had worked tirelessly in developing such an interesting group. She then stated that help was always needed and that if anyone wished to be involved, they should contact her via the FVCS website under History, Heritage & Archive.

3. Conservation and Development

Glenn Powell, Vice Chairman, stated that he was filling in for Rachel Searle, Leader of the Conservation and Development Group, on this occasion.

He apologised for the fact that not much had been tackled in the past year and said that efforts would be made as soon as possible to arrange a meeting with those members who had expressed an interest in joining the Group.

He stated that, despite the sending of several letters to Arun DC concerning the Society's "Wish List" of shabby buildings that it wanted them to deal with under the Section 215 notice, nothing had happened as the department concerned were too busy. On a positive front, however, he reported that he was pleased that finally Eddie's Corner Store near to the traffic lights (number one on our original hit list) now looked much improved thanks to the efforts of Arun, who had already started to negotiate with the owner, prior to receiving our list. Arun DC had asked us to provide our new "Top Priority" which was Admiralty House at the corner of Old Coastguards and Felpham Road, which was now owned by Oyster Estates. We were now waiting for some action from Arun!

Glenn then discussed the topic of Blake's Cottage, where The Committee had decided not to get involved because of the various "spats". Eventually, they had decided that they should investigate what was actually going on and the Blake's Cottage Trust had now been contacted and the Society would now be monitoring the restoration.

Glenn reported that, despite its appearance, the cottage was not falling down. The Society had been into the cottage to look at the supports that had been installed to secure the roof and the floors. The Trust had also commissioned a survey, which the Society had been able to read. However, any restoration required, needed the permission of Arun DC and Historical England before they could go ahead. The next stage would be the commissioning of architectural plans, and (thanks to a donation of £40,000) the Trust had engaged architects to carry out the work. Blake's Cottage Trust were planning on holding a public meeting in Felpham Memorial Hall on June 3rd when the plans would be shown to the local community.

FVCS, Glenn stated, would be keeping a "watching brief" to monitor progress against these plans.

Glenn stated that the Group would continue to keep an eye on future planning applications and road mitigation exercises. However, The Society did not have the power to directly influence planning applications: their role was to "push out" relevant information to its members and they had the power to object to such changes if they desired to.

Glenn then mentioned the recent incident reported in the local press where contractors operating on behalf of West Sussex County Council had commenced cutting down the White Beam trees in Blakes Road. The Society had intervened over the weekend and determined that this work was being done without the knowledge of our local County Councillor, Graham Jones, our local Tree Wardens, the Planning Officer from Arun DC, nor the Parish Council. A small reception committee awaited the contractors on the following Monday morning consisting of the above people as well as some Committee Members. Unfortunately the Parish Council, were unable to send

a representative. Thankfully, one of the trees had been saved. The Society were now trying to determine the criteria for chopping down trees.

Glenn completed his talk by stating that the Group was keen to take an interest in flint walls and was seeking an adviser on the subject. This could be useful for homeowners with flint walls needing repair. There could also be a long term project to restore the flint walls within the wooded area of Old Rectory Gardens.

Graham Jones raised the subject of the flint wall outside The George pub, stating that the cost of repairing it was £2000 and that a grant of £500 was available from SSE. Given the expressed interest in flint walls, Graham invited FVCS to get involved in some way; may be to arrange for an audit to take place. Glenn agreed to take the matter on board.

Leeza Aldis – Hobbs asked Glenn whether the White Beam trees in Admiralty Road would be replaced. Glenn replied that they would be, although he was not sure what type of trees these would be nor when they would be replaced.

Teresa Davies informed the meeting that when trees had been taken down in Halliwick Gardens by the Council she had been told that they did not want to replace them as it was easier to maintain the paths without them being there.

4. Beach Cleaning

Maggie Camp, who, with Louise Cooke, leads the Beach Cleaning Group, stated that when it was first decided to run a beach clean on a monthly basis, it was thought by some that it would not be possible to keep it up.

She went on to say that since January this year, 33 sacks of rubbish and 4 sacks of recycled waste had been collected by the volunteers, who really seemed to enjoy picking it up! Several new people had joined in over the last year and, in turn, had decided to become FVCS members as well. Not only was the litter being removed from the beach but it also being removed from the two greenswards and The Prom itself.

Maggie invited the Attendees to join in as it was a good way of meeting other people and stated that not only would they be helping to keep the beach and the surrounding area tidy, they would also be preventing more litter being washed back into the sea – and injuring or killing the sea life. She then thanked The Lobster Pot for providing participants with free tea or coffee.

She finished her talk by mentioning that normally the group meets outside The Sailing Club – however, for the May meeting (as The Sailing Club is holding a special event that day), they would be meeting at a point further away down the Prom.

Maggie was asked when the next event would be taking place. She replied Saturday 13th May at 10.30 am.

She was then asked when the events normally take place and replied that they were held on the second Saturday every month – usually meeting outside The Sailing Club.

Some discussion then took place about providing a means of identification for the volunteers such as shirts, “day – glo” vests or tabards. Some attendees stated that they would be happy to pay for them themselves.

Maggie agreed to investigate the costs and would be raising the matter with The Committee.

5. Events

Leeza Aldis – Hobbs (Events Secretary) discussed the events planned for the forthcoming year.

The Annual Quiz Night would be taking place on Saturday June 10th at The Memorial Hall - tickets were now available from The Village Post Office costing £10 for non – members and £8 for members. This would include the price of a fish and chip supper.

The Summer Fete would be taking place this year on Saturday 8th July between 12.00 pm and 5.00 pm in The Old Rectory Gardens. This would be The Society's “major earner” and would be the third event of this nature that had been organised. Society Funds were much depleted before The Society had started to run them. There would be a variety of musical entertainment, a barbecue, a tea tent and a Pimms Tent as well as many games. Leeza asked the Attendees to let The Committee know whether they would be interested running their own stall or helping out in anyway – such as moving hay bales or equipment and putting it up on or around the day in

question. She also stated that she would be interested in hearing from anyone who had ideas on other activities that could be included.

Leeza went on to mention the History event on October 14th, previously discussed by Joyce.

The year would finish as usual with the Christmas Tree Event on Friday 8th December at 3.30 pm in the village centre. Both primary schools would be performing and mulled wine and mince pies would be served.

Leeza ended by saying that the success of these events was all down to teamwork.

5. ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Andy stated that at the AGM last year, there were four vacancies but only one was filled by Gina Riley, who stepped in to take on the role of Membership Secretary. He said that it was possible, under the constitution, to co-opt members of The Society onto The Committee during the course of the year and that Patrick Jenkins, John Farrington and Steve Alderton were thus co-opted. However, co-optees must offer themselves up for re – election at the AGM should they would wish to continue on The Committee. Andy was able to confirm that all three had done so and, as no other nominations had been received, he proposed that all three were elected as Committee Members. The motion was seconded by John Fenton – Jones and carried by a showing of hands.

Andy went on to state that he was very keen to fill the fourth vacancy and invited the Attendees to let him know whether or not they would be interested; in which case they would be invited as a guest to a forthcoming meeting to see what was involved. No volunteers were forthcoming, however.

6. APPOINTMENT OF ADVISERS

Andy explained the role of the Adviser of which three positions were available. Rohan Amick had announced his intention not to continue but Lisa Kebell had stated that she would be happy to continue. The intentions of Martyn White were not know at the meeting and Glenn agreed to contact him.

Andy proposed that Lisa should continue as an Adviser. Joyce Pritchard seconded the motion, which was carried through on a showing of hands.

7. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

John Fenton-Jones stated that Ivon Towse, who had examined the Society's accounts for the last three years, was happy to continue to act as Independent Examiner and proposed that Ivon should be appointed to conduct the role for 2017/18. Tony Lord seconded the motion, which was carried through on a showing of hands.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS MATTERS

None were raised.

Andy stated that the Minutes from the meeting would be emailed to the attendees and displayed on the FVCS Website. He thanked everyone contributed to the meeting and for showing their interest. He gave personal thanks to his fellow committee members for putting up with him for the last year and thanked everyone for coming. He duly called the meeting to a close.

Andrew Camp
Chairman and Secretary
24/04/17