

Felpham Village Conservation Society

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 APRIL 2018 AT THE FELPHAM VILLAGE MEMORIAL HALL, VICARAGE LANE AT 7.00 PM

Attendees: L Pritchard; M Lupton; M Fenton-Jones; J Pritchard; J Summerville; G Powell; P Cosgrove; J Farrington; T Davies; A Maycock; P Howell; S Tessler; D Bowen; J Bowen; V Morris; J Barber; C Holliday; A Mackenzie Morrison; M Mackenzie Morrison; P H Raven; D Wooldridge; A Wilmers; J Rowland; G Farrel; J Arsmo; M Arsmo; V Darlington; L Stonelake; J Etienne; M Powell; J Haines; M Camp; S Harris; L Aldis-Hobbs; G Blampied; M Blampied; S Cameron; I Cameron; R Searle; R M Pavard; M A Pavard; L Owen-Ellis; D Owen-Ellis; J Wright; C Hardy; C Hutchins.

1. Chair's Welcome and Introduction

The Chair, Joyce Pritchard welcomed everyone attending the AGM 2018 and introduced herself. The Chair thanked Andy Camp, the former Chair and Secretary and Maggie Camp, both of whom had stood down from the Committee during the past year; their contribution and commitment to FVCS had been invaluable.

Apologies had been received from: J Barnes; T and T Drennan; R and M Brooks; M and A Barnes; A Netley; B and J Thelwell; H Flynn; E and T Lord, A Camp; C Jepsom; and P and S Jenkins.

The Chair summarised the Society's performance over the past year: she said the past year had been very busy as would be the forthcoming year; funds were very healthy and membership numbers were increasing. The Chair outlined a number of past activities, including the Summer Fete, Picnic in the Park (in association with Jazz at the Village), History Talk and the Christmas Tree lighting. The monthly Beach Clean and gardening in the Old Rectory Gardens continued to take place; there had been a Social Evening for members to meet each other and the website was being updated.

2. Approval of Minutes of last Annual General Meeting

The Chair referred to the Minutes of the 2017 AGM which had been posted on the Society's website; copies were also available at the meeting. There were not any comments on these and the Leeza Aldis-Hobbs proposed that they were accepted; Teresa Davies seconded the motion which was carried by a show of hands.

3. Finance Report for the year ended 31 March 2018 and Approval of Accounts

The Treasurer, John Fenton-Jones presented the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018. These accounts had been posted on the Society's website and copies were also available at the meeting.

The Treasurer summarised that, since last year, membership had grown from 230 to 251, including 28 Life members, increasing income, from this source, from £1,559 to £1,874. Group Social Activities generated £5,900 in total, which included £4,700 raised by the very successful Summer Fete and £890 by the Picnic in the Park, the latter held for the first time. Total income was therefore £7,800 which was £2,800 better than the previous year.

In terms of expenditure, the Treasurer reported that the Society's four activity groups (Beach Clean, Friends of Old Rectory Gardens, History, Heritage and Archive, and Conservation and Development) had only spent a total of £174 which was similar to the previous year although that did not take account of the huge amount of time spent by the volunteers in these groups. The Society's major costs were on projects that the Society carried out during the past year, totalling circa £2,700. These projects would be discussed later in the meeting. Of the £2,700, a sum of £1,800 was spent on the Hanging Baskets for the village. The Society's Allotment costs of £600 were net of a grant of £200 from the Felpham Parish Council; the new Greenhouse costs of £326 were also net of a grant from West Sussex County Council; and expenditure on Event Equipment – mainly a PA system – was net of a grant from Felpham Parish Council of £553 towards a marquee which the Society purchased last year. The Treasurer thanked both Authorities for providing these grants. There were Administration costs of £1,650 which included the costs of the recent Social

Evening, Membership printing, Notice B, and maintaining the Society's website, database and email systems. The Balance Sheet showed that the funds of £7,800 were made up of Bank Balances and Pre-Payments of £8,900 less Subscriptions received prior to 31 March 2018 of £1,086.

The Treasurer commended the Accounts to members and said that he would be pleased to answer questions from the floor. There being no questions on the Accounts, Lionel Pritchard proposed that the Accounts were approved; Geoff Farrell seconded the motion which was carried by a show of hands.

4. FVCS Groups and Activities

Friends of Old Rectory Gardens; and Beach Clean: The Chair introduced Maggie Lupton to report on both of these Groups. Maggie Lupton thanked the volunteers who made these Groups' activities possible. Maggie said that the Beach Clean took place between 10.30 am and 12.00 noon on the second Saturday of every month. Eight bags of rubbish had been cleared, on average, each month as well as bulky items. Maggie thanked the Lobster Pot for providing volunteers with a complimentary tea or coffee.

Maggie called for more volunteers for the Friends of Old Rectory Gardens ("ORG"). This activity, which was fun, took place on the last Friday each month, between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. She said that Arun District Council ("ADC"), which owned ORG, had recently appointed a tree surgeon who would be visiting the gardens. In answer to a query from the floor about grass cutting, and another about having an additional litter bin, Maggie said that she would raise both matters with ADC. A discussion took place about dog fouling. There was a suggestion from the floor of having dog "poo bag" dispensers. Geoff Farrell referred to a contract in place between ADC and Hampshire Council to increase patrolling in relation to dog fouling.

ACTION: Maggie Lupton to ask ADC about grass cutting and a second litter bin in ORG.

History, Heritage and Archive: The Chair introduced Sue Tressler, Archivist at Chichester University, based at the Bognor Regis campus, to report on this group's activities. Sue Tressler spoke of the WWI Commemoration Event being organised for Sunday 11 November 2018. There would be an accessible, circular walk encompassing former homes of 17 of the official total of 39 local fallen men. The day before, there would be a "Lyons Corner House style" tea with an exhibition. In case of bad weather, the walk would be relocated to the Village Memorial Hall. There would be a route of large poppies, placed on lamp posts in remembrance of the local fallen. Father John had also asked that poppies be placed on the Lychgate to St Mary's Church. The Chair added that Felpham Parish Council had awarded a grant to the Society for the poppies; she also put out a call for tea sets and cake plates for the tea. A comment from the floor commended the excellent History Talks in the past year.

Conservation and Development; and Hanging Baskets and Allotments: The Chair introduced Glenn Powell to report on these two Groups. Glenn said that the Society had had some successes with tidying up shabby areas in the village: two of these had been the former Eddie's corner shop and the corner of Admiralty Road. He said that the Society was working with Felpham Parish Council on reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan; the Society had posted Felpham's listed buildings and those of Special Interest, on its website. The Society had also worked with ADC on the Conservation Area review. The Society "kept an eye" on Blake's Cottage where the Society's initial interest was in seeing the cottage restored. The Blake's Trust would be phasing its plans for the cottage, firstly restoring the thatched roof once it had obtained the necessary permissions and funds.

The Society would also be facilitating a survey of Felpham's Flint Walls a list of which had been captured. ADC would like the survey to be included in its Neighbourhood Plan. Glenn also referred to the new Beach Huts put up by ADC on the West Greensward and said that a small number of the old huts had been retained for posterity. He said that the Society was non-political and not a planning watchdog but it would contact members for views from time to time as it had with the Beachcroft planning application where a mixed response had been received. Glenn made a call for more volunteers for this Group, especially those with relevant knowledge.

Glenn said that Ron Hands, on behalf of the Society grew the flowers for, and maintained, the hanging baskets which were on display in the village from May until the first frosts. He said that the planters at Snooks Corner represented a good collaboration between the Snooks Corner residents and the Society. The Society had bought a new greenhouse to replace the one blown down in Storm Doris. It was sited at St Michael's Allotments, a lovely area by the Rife, where the Society had assumed an unofficial role as the

Friends of St Michael's Allotments. Regular working parties were now taking place. The building contractors for the new Chichester University campus in Bognor had also helped to improve the allotments. The Society had one of the allotments where it grew produce for the Summer Fete. It was a members' plot; and members could share produce in return for their help on the site. Glenn thanked Ron Hands for his contribution. A comment from the floor acknowledged the improvement to the St Michael's Allotments.

Events: the Chair introduced Leeza Aldis-Hobbs to report on the Society's events. Leeza referred to the following forthcoming events:

The Quiz Night on 9 June - tickets would be on sale at the Post Office approximately one month before and the Society would help members where they did not have a full table themselves.

The Summer Fete on 14 July – there would be entertainment all afternoon as well as a tea tent, bar-b-q (run by the Rotary Club), games and more. This was a community event; and helpers were always needed.

Picnic in the Park on 2 September - in association with Jazz at the Village.

History Talk on 20 October.

Commemoration events to mark the end of WWI (as previously reported by Sue Tressler)

Christmas Tree Lighting on 7 December.

The Chair thanked all volunteers on these groups and activities as well as the groups' leads.

5. Use of Society Funds

The Deputy Chair, Glenn Powell said that, as a result of strong membership and successful events, the Society was in its best financial position for many years. Therefore, the Society had reached a stage where more could be put back into the Community, working within the Society's remit as a Conservation Society, whilst retaining a reserve of £2,000 in the bank. The Committee was proposing five strategic projects to concentrate on, over the next three years. There were:

Old Rectory Gardens: to enhance the Gardens and woodland and to enable better use by young and old alike. There had been some suggestions to: open up the copse with a woodland walk; provide better facilities for families and picnics; restore the fallen flint walls; enhance the planting; and manage the tree maintenance.

Heart of the Village: whilst Grassmere Parade was already well kept with shrubs, its flagpole and a wonderful Jubilee plaque, it could be more of a focal point for the village. Its unique 1960s architecture reflected one of the many styles that made up Felpham and gave it character. However, the square could be better planned and more accessible.

Flint Walls: Felpham was the “flint wall village” of the region. Some flint walls were within the Conservation Area whilst others were widely spread around Felpham. Some were listed, others were not. Some were owned by local authorities, most were in private hands. Many people needed help and advice in making repairs and in ensuring safe structures.

King George V Fields: This was Felpham's largest open space, but maybe the least focused upon. Playing fields, dog walking, children's play and, overall, an open space for the area: all worth supporting and enhancing where possible. Access and car parking were problems.

Public Rights of Way: these were little thought of but so important to everyone. Twittens, footpaths and walkways: many fell into disrepair or were poorly maintained. Some did not seem to have designated ownership so no-one took responsibility for them.

The Deputy Chair said that the Society aimed to devise plans for each of these strategic projects. In doing so, it would need to work with land owners and Authorities. The Society would also increase its own funds by applying for external grants and funding where appropriate. In addition to these projects, the Society would continue to carry out ad hoc, smaller projects such as repainting the Rife Bridge which had happened in the past year and providing a picnic bench for Old Rectory Gardens, due to happen next year.

The Deputy Chair asked members to email their thoughts or speak to Committee members about how the Society's money might be spent in the longer term. It was important that the Society did not “sit” on its funds. From the floor, a member said that she had a bench which could be donated to the Old Rectory Gardens. The Deputy Chair said that they would follow this up outside of the meeting.

Secretary's note: In a follow-up discussion, it was agreed that the bench could be used at the St Michael's Allotments but but in the Old Rectory Gardens.

6. Election or Re-election of Committee Members

The Chair said that four members had been co-opted to the Committee in the past year. All four now wished to stand for election to the Committee. They were: Pamela Cosgrove, proposed by John Fenton-Jones and seconded by Glenn Powell; Colin Holliday, proposed by Glenn Powell and seconded by John Fenton-Jones; Jane Summerville, proposed by Glenn Powell and seconded by John Fenton-Jones; and Jo Wright, proposed by Glenn Powell and seconded by Joyce Pritchard. As no other Nominations to stand for election to the Committee had been received, the Chair proposed that all four were elected; John Farrington seconded the motion which was carried by a show of hands.

Glenn Powell said that although the elections took the Committee to its constitutional maximum of 15 members, he believed that vacancies would arise during the year. It was not onerous to be a Committee member but members did need to be active on behalf of the Society. This was a sustainability issue.

7. Appointment of Advisors

Glenn Powell said that the Society was very grateful to its two Advisors over the past year: Martyn White as Conservation Advisor; and Lisa Kebell as Design Advisor. He proposed that both were appointed for the forthcoming year, in the same respective roles. Leeza Aldis-Hobbs seconded the motion which was carried by a show of hands.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

The Treasurer proposed that Ivan Towse, who had been the Society's Independent Examiner for the previous year, be appointed for the forthcoming year; Ivan Towse was a qualified accountant. Maggie Lupton seconded the motion which was carried by a show of hands.

9. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked: Glenn Powell and Leeza Aldis-Hobbs for representing the Society and History Group at a meeting with Reverend John about Commemoration Events; Glenn Powell for laying a wreath at St Mary's Church on behalf of the Society, on Sunday 10 November 2017; Patrick Jenkins, Anne and Murdo Mackenzie Morrison and others for their organisation of the Picnic in the Park 2017; Mark at the Felpham Post Office for his support of the Society through receiving members' communications and selling tickets for certain events; and the Society's members and the Committee.

10. Close

The Chair said that the Minutes from the meeting would be posted on the FVCS website in due course. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and duly called the meeting to a close.

Jane Summerville
Secretary

May 2018