

The Blackheath Village Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 23rd June 2010

Apologies for absence:

Brian and Pauline Monk Patricia Allen Steve and Helen Drewitt Paul Cope Colin and Jane Hayward Jane and Neville Hunter Billie Hockley John and Mary Crittal Jane Hume Sarah Henderson
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1. Welcome:

Nick Harrison, the chairman of the Society, welcomed those attending and reminded the attendees that in view of the changed financial year of the Society this was the first AGM since January 2009.

Attendees were asked to record their name on the list of BVS members which was circulated at the meeting.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the AGM held on the 22nd January 2009 were agreed to be a true record of those proceedings and adopted as such. Consequently, the Minutes were signed by the Secretary.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked the officers and other members of the committee for their support and hard work during the past year and referred to the main items of the written Report (copy attached) which had been circulated before the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the numerous individuals who had selflessly acted in so many ways over the last year for the benefit of the village and its inhabitants. Particular thanks were expressed for the hard work of Dave Grisley and the Fair organising committee in achieving yet again two remarkably successful Fairs in May 2009 and 2010. The 2009 Fair had been particularly successful in financial terms and whilst the 2010 Fair had been affected by cold weather, it had still managed to achieve a good financial result which had enabled the Committee to agree to make the sum of £8,000 provisionally available for distribution. However, the Committee had decided

that a part of that total may be held back for the general benefit of the village rather than distributed to external claimants. Funding bids should be made to Richard Williams as Chairman of the Funding Sub-committee by Friday 10th September.

Particular thanks were also given to Patrick and Hilary Venning for their dedication over many years in organising and manning the Plant Stall and a bouquet was presented to Hilary to indicate the committee's gratitude.

The Chairman also thanked Dave Grisley and Paul Brodie for their vision and dedication in pursuing the Village Well project to fruition and explained that for insurance and upkeep reasons the well would be in the ownership of Womersley Parish Council for the next ten years, at the end of which time the Council and the Society had an option to transfer the well and land into the ownership of the Society.

The Chairman also thanked Nick Morris and Paul Brodie who will now be stepping down from these roles for their dedication in establishing and promoting the Traffic Calming Scheme which it is generally agreed has done much to alleviate traffic speed through the village. (Further details are given below). He also thanked Sarah Henderson for her co-operation and readiness to help in relation to matters affecting the Heath and Alistair Taylor and Hamish Whiteman for their hard work in organising the very successful and much enjoyed Village Christmas Parties and BBQs.

The Chairman reminded those attending that the Society had decided in principle to change its legal status from an unincorporated association into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. However, further information would be given in this regard in due course when full details of proposed new legislation relating to the establishment of charities was made available.

The Chairman asked villagers to remain vigilant and report through the village email system any suspicious activities that they noticed in and around the village.

Finally, the Chairman referred to the Village Audit report (see below) and the first steps which had been taken to implement some of the findings in the form of chestnut posts at various points in the village and the edging of the verges near the Village Hall with bargate stone.

The Chairman then invited those attending to ask questions or make comments and the following issues were raised:

- 1) Could the village email system be used for all purposes? The Chairman explained that there were no "hard and fast" rules but that he was prepared to circulate messages which were considered to have a general benefit to villagers but not purely commercial matters. Each case was considered on its merits.
- 2) Should we consider having a break from the Fair for one year and then conduct Fairs which were reduced in scope and size, since it was felt that

fatigue factor was beginning to manifest itself in certain parts of the village and amongst villagers of a certain age? It was agreed that this recurring theme needed to be discussed fully and properly at a special village meeting (possible the next AGM), at which the financial implications of the village not holding a Fair could also be fully considered.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Patrick Venning, referred to the documents and independent examiner's report (copies attached) which had been circulated before the meeting. The Treasurer reminded those attending that the Society's financial year had now been changed to the calendar year (1st January to 31st December) and that the Society's total assets now stand at just under £24,000. The Treasurer pointed out that although the 2010 Fair had been less successful in financial terms than the 2009 Fair the Society's funds were still in healthy balance and had enabled the Society to make the sum of £8,000 provisionally available for distribution whilst at the same time keeping sufficient sums in reserve to finance the running of the Society, next year's Fair and a contingency reserve.

The Treasurer confirmed that he was ready to answer any questions and, none being asked, proposed that the accounts be adopted. This proposal was carried unanimously and the independent examiner, Louise Healy, was thanked for her help in preparing the Treasurer's report. The Treasurer also thanked his Fair cash team (Terry Powles, Andrew Webster and Philip Davies) for their help in handling and counting the fair proceeds so quickly and efficiently during and after the Fair.

5. Village Audit

Alistair Taylor reminded villagers of the background to the village audit. Following enquiries by a number of people it had become clear that there were a number of issues which concerned and affected villagers including matters such as drainage, verges, traffic calming, fire-breaks etc. One of the most problematic issues is that of flooding through the village since it involves both public and private responsibilities and concerns. Consequently, Alistair was in the process of producing a revised draft plan which will address these issues for consideration with Sarah Henderson. This will then be circulated to villagers for comment.

6. Traffic Calming

Nick Morris firstly reminded villagers of the background to this project. It is clear that the task has not been an easy one and that bureaucratic obstacles nearly brought the project to a standstill. However, the Joint Traffic Calming Committee has persevered and has now finally completed the tasks that had been approved by the village over the last 8 years. Consequently, he and Paul Brodie now wished to stand down from the committee but were prepared to listen to any comments or suggestions that villagers wished to make for future consideration. One continuing concern relates to the speed of traffic at the

crossroads. However, it was unanimously agreed that the scheme had been a great success and was now being adopted and emulated by other villages in the area.

7. Committee Business.

The Chairman explained that under the current Constitution he and Steve Brockwell were required to stand for re-election whilst Jeannie Davies, Sheila Webster, Patrick Venning and Richard Williams were standing down from the committee. He and Steve Brockwell were prepared to stand for re-election and Julie Firth, Penny Kirkwood, Alan Barlow and Hamish Whiteman had confirmed that they were also prepared to put their names forward for election. It was proposed, seconded and approved that these 6 people would be re-elected or elected. The new committee would therefore comprise the following elected members:

Alan Barlow
Steve Brockwell
Paul Brodie
Julie Firth
Dave Grisley
Nick Harrison
Penny Kirkwood
Alistair Taylor
Hamish Whiteman
and
Peter Herbert (Lord of the Manor)
Nick Morris (Parish Councillor)
as co-opted members

The Chairman also explained that due to other commitments, he now wished to stand down as Chairman and that since the other two officers, (Patrick Venning as Treasurer and Richard Williams as Secretary), were also resigning from the Committee, it was necessary to replace all three officers. In the circumstances, the committee had proposed and agreed that Alistair Taylor would be elected as Chairman, Alan Barlow would be elected as Treasurer and Nick Harrison would be elected as Secretary. These appointments were approved unanimously by the meeting.

Bouquets were presented to Jeannie Davies and Sheila Webster in recognition of their contribution to the committee and presentations were also made to Patrick Venning who had taken over the role of Treasurer at short notice over two years ago and had thereafter run and presented the Society's accounts with great efficiency and to Richard Williams who had served as Secretary for nearly ten years, nearly three of which had been spent as acting Chairman.

Finally, the new Chairman Alistair Taylor thanked Nick Harrison for his sterling work and commitment as Chairman, a sentiment which was heartily echoed by the meeting generally.

8. AOB

The following issues were raised:

- 1) The plans for the proposed new cricket pavilion. Nick Harrison explained that following discussions with the club's immediate neighbours revised plans had been drawn up. These will be discussed in due course with residents who live nearest to the cricket ground and then made available to the village as a whole.
- 2) The Friary. It is hoped that the building will be adopted by Benedictine monks. However, the Franciscans have stated that they will be leaving the Friary on the 31st December 2010 in any event.
- 3) The Murals Restoration at St Martin's Church. David Allen, the Church Treasurer, advised that the project has been awarded to two experts who hoped to start the project in July 2011. The Church also hoped that if they managed to save some of the money that had been raised for this project, this could be used to improve the lighting in the church.
- 4) Our new vicar. The new vicar has now been appointed and is expected to be installed in September. She is Debbie Sellin who is currently curate at St Saviour's in Guildford.

9. Future Dates

The Blackheath History and Photographic Exhibition has been planned for the end of September. Therefore, if anyone still has items that they wish to be used, they are invited to produce them to Jane Barlow or Graham Hayward as soon as possible

Richard Williams
Secretary