

Sopwell Residents' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 8th June 2010 at Marlborough Pavilion, Old Oak

1. Welcome

The Chair, Sandy Norman, welcomed those present to the 7th Annual General meeting of the Association.

The Chair explained that the Association is looking for new volunteers to help deliver newsletters and to join the Association Committee.

- 2. Present:** Ananda Armstrong-King, Richard & Helen Cooper, Marie-Jeanne Crawford, Clive Dolphin, Cllr. Martin Frearson, Frank Guest, Cllr. Eileen Harris, Jack Hill, Mark James (Treasurer), Jo & Lawrence Jevon, Andrew Johnstone, Len Lewsey, Roselyne Masselin, Lillian Murray, Sandy Norman (Chair), Peter Segers (Secretary), Rob Sharman, Adelle Stapleton, Tina Swain, Jennifer Taylor, Rick Taylor, Peter Wares, Claire Woodthorpe.

Apologies for absence: Cllr. Roger Axworthy, Cllr. David Poor, Chris Pudsey, Liz Klir, Anne Wares.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the previous AGM on 12th May 2009 were approved. This was proposed by Len Lewsey and seconded by Rick Taylor.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

5. Annual Report of the Association

The Secretary, Peter Segers, presented the 2009/2010 Annual Report, with many items illustrated with photographs using PowerPoint.

The list of achievements of the Association included: the walk, the family cycle ride, bulb planting, the litter pick, participation in Larks 2009 in Sopwell, the installation of two new benches, a tree planting event at the Nunnery for children, a £500 grant obtained for research into Sopwell's history, interviewing residents and visiting archives for the Sopwell Project, doing visitor surveys at the Nunnery Green Space, application (in progress) for a grant to build a boardwalk by the river, responses to many consultations, feedback given on the Abbey station hump, the Multi-use games area, litter bins etc, etc. All this as well as running the website, producing and distributing newsletters and holding committee meetings.

The full report is available on the www.sopwell.org.uk website.

The Annual Report was adopted. This was proposed by Jennifer Taylor and seconded by Mark James.

6. Statement of Annual Accounts

Mark James presented the 2009/2010 Accounts. The Chair then invited any questions. Someone noticed that the date on the sheets printed was wrong: it said 2008 instead of 2009.

With said amendment, the Annual Accounts were adopted. This was proposed by Ananda Armstrong-King and seconded by Frank Guest.

7. Election and re-election of the management committee

Giles Hanford, Chantal Burns and Rebecca Prebble (Secretary) had stepped back as active committee members during the year but remained supporters. The Chair wished to thank them for their hard work over the years.

Three new members had joined the management committee in the course of the year: Rob Sharman, Adelle Stapleton, and Peter Segers (Secretary).

All eleven current committee members put themselves forward for re-election: Ananda Armstrong-King, Jack Hill, Mark James, Sandy Norman, Chris Pudsey, Peter Segers, Jose Sena, Rob Sharman, Adelle Stapleton, Rick Taylor, and Peter Wares.

The following members were standing to be elected or re-elected as officers: Sandy Norman as Chair, Chris Pudsey as Vice-Chair, Mark James as Treasurer and Peter Segers as Secretary.

The Association committee members and officers were accepted. This was proposed by Len Lewsey and seconded by Jennifer Taylor.

8. Presentation by Peter Bloomfield of Transition St Albans

Peter Bloomfield of Transitions St Albans (www.transitionstalbans.org) explained how Transition Towns is a grassroots, non-political movement of ordinary people, to prepare our towns and cities for the twin challenges of peak oil and climate change.

In the coming decades, climate change and peak oil will require us to radically re-think our lifestyles, and adopt a way of life that uses less energy. This will need government legislation, and it will need individual actions, but we don't need to wait for either of those. Transition Towns is about empowering communities to pull together and start grassroots initiatives in their local areas.

We then did an interactive session where we were working in groups and given a number of photographs of vegetables and fruit, and asked to guess how far some of these had to travel to be available in our supermarkets all year round, and the resulting cost to the environment. Growing and buying local produce was one solution to help resolve this.

9. Announcements

- No Larks in the Parks organised in Sopwell this year
- “Roman” cycle ride on Tues 22nd June, with another ride due in Autumn
- Priory Walk Big Lunch at green on Berners drive on Sun 18 July

10. Open Forum – Questions and issues raised from the floor

- SADC feasibility study to turn Pavilion into a community centre
Some people expressed concerns about safety in the area
- A lady from Praetorian Court/The Close asked if anyone was doing anything about nearby St Stephen's Field. County Cllr. Martin Frearson suggested that residents should start a “Friends of” group, which could then suggest to the council what needs to be done.
- Discussion about ivy on trees – does it kill them or not?

The Chair then thanked everyone for attending the meeting and invited all to join the Association and speakers for refreshments, over which they can ask further questions.

Aerial photos of Sopwell in the 1940s and onwards, obtained from the National Aerofilms Collection, were on display at the back of the room. They triggered off quite a few memories among those present.

The refreshments included some wonderful home-made cakes baked by Ananda Armstrong-King.

11. The meeting closed at approximately 9.50pm