

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee

Held at 7.00pm on Monday 18th November 2024 at The Chequers, Maresfield

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jo Lawrance (JL) Chair
Terence Brady (TB) Treasurer
Bruce Milton (BM)
Ian Shaw (IS)
Rob Penfold (RP)
Stephany Reed-Perkins (SRP)
Tom Merchant (TM)
Caroline Shaw (CS)
Tracie Coe (TC)

PRESENT: Jo Lawrance, Tracie Coe, Tom Merchant, Rob Penfold, Stephany Reed-Perkins, Caro Shaw, Ian Shaw, Bruce Milton, Richard Wane (Minutes Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Tracie Coe

1) **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** – None declared.

2) **MATTERS ARISING - JL**

- It was proposed that Richard Wane is co-opted on to the Committee with immediate effect and would serve on the Committee and as Secretary until the next AGM. Proposed (IS) and Seconded (TB). APPROVED.

AP1 – RW to liaise with TM to obtain access authority to Charity Commission website for the Society and amend records to reflect his co-option and Secretary role.

- The Chair noted that an amendment to the Society's Constitution had been made at the last AGM expanding the Committee membership by two – but this has yet to be reflected in the text of the Constitution.

AP2 – RW to follow up with previous holder of Constitution (Alex) and update Constitution and make any notifications as are required.

- **Legacy Funds.** To the best of the knowledge of the Committee there are none. This matter is now closed.
- **Shed door replacement.** Remains in progress (BM – move to Footpaths update).

AP3 – BM to report back at next meeting.

- **Draft Local Plan.** No progress reported (ALL – move to Planning Group update).

AP4 – TC to chase further on Local Plan response and copy in TM.

- **Maresfield Historical Society (MHS) (RO/CS/BM).** Carol Jeffree (Secretary) and Jenny Eadon (Treasurer) joined the meeting. RP reviewed notes (see below) of a meeting held with MHS, following the Committee's determination that the MHS and Society run in parallel pending the Society's AGM in June. JL had circulated a note from the Charity Commission concerning Charity mergers. It was noted that the MHS is not a charity. Nevertheless the Society needs to continue to do its due diligence

before confirming any merger/absorption. Further discussion covered Village Hall bookings and future speakers slots as well as collection and storage of MHS artefacts. Co-operation will continue.

Maresfield Historical Society – meeting notes (per RP)

- The MHS committee met on 12th November, where we discussed the proposal from MCG to run the MHS in tandem up until June 2025 (when the arrangements will then be reviewed). We went through the points as detailed in Peta's minutes. There were no objections raised. The only comments related to collecting subs. As you know MCG have gone digital, MHS are not. Whereas it is accepted that MHS subs will need to go digital, a proportion of MHS income is generated by ad-hoc attendees who pay £3.00 per talk. There will need to be some mechanism in place to account for this income (cash). As long as it is properly accounted for, it could be used as a slush fund for expenses such as refreshments etc.
- The issue of GDPR was discussed. Ceri will now write to MHS members seeking their permission for their details to be compared against those of MCG to see who is a member of both groups.
- The hall is already booked for the following dates: 25th Feb 2025, 25th Mar, 22nd April, 20th May

We discussed the possibility of reducing the number of talks to 4 per year, however this can be looked into once the membership take up has been resolved.

- I have given Carol the master file of speakers, so everyone can use this as a start. Incidentally looking at other Historical Group websites (Hailsham, Crowborough and Lewes to name a few) provides details of speakers they have used, this has proved a useful source.
- Carol and Jenny would like to meet with Caro and Bruce to discuss matters, and I am going to circulate contact details.
- I believe Caro mentioned she could store the archive, to that end the archive needs sorting out and the remaining items placed in archival quality storage boxes. (i.e. not plastic) This is something that they can discuss when they meet. There are sufficient funds in MHS coffers to make this purchase. Ceri is also happy to help with the archiving exercise

AP5 – RP to send RW notes of the MHS/Society meeting. RW to add to circulation of minutes (Done).

AP6 - CS and BM to discuss possible speaker slots and dates for 2025. Further update on MHS progress to be at the next Committee meeting

The minutes of the previous Society meeting were APPROVED.

3) GOVERNANCE / CHAIR – JL

Committee Membership/Chair.

- JL noted that she will be standing down as Chair from the next AGM. A successor is needed but has not yet been identified. JL indicated she may be happy to carry on being a Committee member if this is supported by the Committee.
- There was discussion about documenting the various tasks – responsibility statements - undertaken by Officers and Committee members. Also around how to seek a new Chair (communication to members. via Parish Magazine etc.).

AGM.

- JL proposed to move the date of the AGM to **24th June 2025**. This was APPROVED.

AP7 – JL, TB, RW to document their key Officer responsibilities. RP to send his responsibility statement to RW. All to consider approach to defining Committee roles and recruitment of new Chair. Review at next Committee meeting.

AP8 – JL to amend Village Hall booking for AGM.

4) TREASURER'S REPORT – TB

- Balances of the Society's accounts are: £2306.92 (Current) and £11,262.24 (Deposit).
- There has been a discussion with the Society's auditor about ensuring improved keeping of receipts to cover cash transactions, although it was recognized this is difficult to manage. Similarly, Committee members are reminded to put references on any deposits made to the Society's bank account. TB to consider further. A receipt for a donation (£1,000) to the local food bank has not been received.

AP9 – SRP will follow-up on the Food Bank receipt.

5) MEMBERSHIP – JL (TC absent)

- TC had sent a note to JL to cover various items, noting that an email to remind members on payment had received just one response.
- Welcome Pack was previously produced by Stan,

AP10 – TC to send one further reminder by email and bring back to next Committee meeting any proposals on how to move forward together with a list of members and their payment status for consideration on how to handle.

AP11 – TC to liaise with Stan to get previous Welcome Pack and review for future issue.

6) EVENTS:

- **Winter Newsletter – SRP**
This is ready bar the selection of a front photo, which, after discussion, SBP will confirm.

AP12 – SRP authorized to print 100 for use and strategic placement (e.g. notice board, pub?)

- **Christmas Tree/Fair**
RP has documented event management tasks, which were further discussed and updated. Bonners are definitely not participating.

AP13 - RP to send updated list to RW, which will be circulated and kept for future use

- **2024 Calendar and 2025 Photo Competition**
Per a spreadsheet kept by CS, we have 53 out for sale/sold and 47 remaining in stock. Exact sales to date not clear. TM tracking sales in the shop. The photo competition for 2025 is off and running.

AP14 – TM to send TC photo of calendar to enable TC to circulate via email to membership.

AP15 – TB to ask Tennis Club Treasurer whether they might offer the calendars

- **Quiz (8 March 2025)**
Village Hall booked. Donation from M&S promised (JL). Discussion of possible charity took place given the intended recipient has not responded. It was AGREED that the chosen charity would be East Sussex Young Carers (ESYC) (Proposed: IS Seconded: TB).

AP15 – SRP will obtain the contact as ESYC from CS and JL to write to ESYC.

7) MERCHANDISING

- Nothing further to report.

8) FOOTPATHS GROUP UPDATE

- Work continues – with some discussion about possible removal of a tarpaulin in the hedge near the vets and possible grants available for trees etc.

AP16 - JL to send BM details of ‘Branching Out Fund’ (possible grants available).

9) PLANNING UPDATE – RB/AII

Nothing to report.

10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Park Farm Lane. No further update. (Move to Planning Update).

Engagement with Maresfield (including social media presence). TM mentioned that he had some thoughts about raising our profile in Maresfield, with improved use of the website and consideration of other social media channels (e.g. it was noted we do not have a Facebook page). There was some discussion about having a more focused meeting item on this topic.

AP17 – RW to add to next Agenda.

The Chair closed the meeting with a vote of thanks to RP who will be stepping down after nine years of service. All wished Rob well for the future!

Post meeting note: RP has since handed over a box of archive material and sent the soft copy asset register to IS. RP also noted his role as read/write Trustee with the Charity Commission and also covers GDPR.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 16th December November 2024 at 7pm in The Chequers.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.42pm.