



OXTON SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7.00 pm 1st November 2023 St Saviour's Parish Centre, Oxton

Present: At least 50 members of the Society: Diana Duncan, Sue Spencer, Bob Knowles, Alan Brighthouse, Peter Wright, Allan Brame, Peter Humphreys, John Heathman, Sean Duncan, John Little, John Field, Don Firth-Williamson, Chris Willis, Griff Round, Kirsty Cotton, Heather Alcock, Lisa Stafford, Lorraine Kendrick, Ronnie Stone, Helen Roberts, Monica Toosey, Patrick Toosey, Ronald Jones, Jeff Willis, Stuart Kelly, Kate Thornton, Paul Gelling, Kevin Donovan, Patsy Taylor, Chris Jarrey, Gordon Capper, Annette Capper, John Booth, Kate Heathman, Justine Shakespeare, Jennifer Baldwin, Rhiannon Evans, Sue Ferguson, Steve Ferguson, Rowena Bighton-Dykes, Lisa Bettye, Alison Clarke, David Coombes, Liz Coombes, David Clarke, Ralph Ingram, Monica Doyle, Rachel Leah, Chris Brace, Dominic Wilkinson.

Apologies were received from 20 members: Steve Weber, Carla Walker, Glyn Mon Hughes, Peter de Figueredo, Lynda Roberts, George Harrison, Janine Suggest, Heather Youd, Rossana McKeane, Paul Smith, David Ainsley, Bea Parry, Diane Swaffield.

1. Welcome

The Chair of the Society, Chris Jarrey, welcomed members to the AGM.

Prior to any business being conducted, a **tribute to Dave Barden**, committee member of the society who tragically died in the Moroccan earthquake 6 weeks earlier, was read out by the Vice-Chair, Jeff Willis

2. Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM, which had previously been made available to members by email, and with paper copies circulated at the meeting, were approved. Proposed for approval by Kevin Donovan; seconded by Heather Alcock

3. Chair's Summary of the Annual Report

The Chair outlined highlights from the last year, being:

- Highly successful community events, particularly the Secret Gardens event which exceeded all expectations, benefiting local charities.
- The distribution across the entire conservation area population of a conservation explanatory leaflet, informing residents of their responsibilities with regards to

building works, tree cutting, the fitting of solar panels and the need to maintain the general character of the conservation area.

- The successful work carried out by the History Group with periodicals, running the village walks
- The retirement from the committee of John Booth, who has worked tirelessly for the society and the area in general.

The Chair thanked key members and events planning teams for their selfless efforts in making the community of Oxton thrive.

The Secretary asked for Approval of the Annual Report from members. This was proposed by Kate Heathman and seconded by David Coombes

4. Conservation Report

Alan Chape, committee member responsible for Conservation and Partnership, presented the latest developments with regards to the implementation of the recently published Local Plan published by Wirral Borough Council. He outlined how key members of CAW (Conservations Areas Wirral) had worked over the past year to ensure that the plan represented the views of all 26 Wirral conservation area committees, and that the Council were 'minded' to ensure that conservation was built into the working nature of the plan alongside the need for other priorities E.g. zero carbon obligations. Additionally, he stated that the publication, by the Oxton Society of the conservation guidance leaflet was seen as a great example of a leading activity across the entire CAW group.

Questions from the members present were taken: With regards to the enforcement capabilities from WBC in planning cases, it was felt that this was not an issue in Oxton, as there has been little or no need, recently, to use enforcement measures, as residents are generally 'bought in' to the planning process and limits to permitted works.

5. Financial Report

The Treasurer, Griff Round presented an income and costs report for the last year's financial transactions. This highlighted the success of the Secret Gardens event which provided a large revenue boost to not only the society, but to the charities that help to run the event.

Questions were invited from members present: With regards to bank charges from our main clearing bank, HSBC, it was asked why the society had not changed their banking provider. In answer, it was stated that most clearing banks all charge charities now for their business transactions and that additionally, having now reached the situation where 90% of members use standing orders to pay their membership, it was thought not wise to upset this arrangement by moving to a different bank.

Approval was sought from members present for the accounts as presented. This was received. Proposed by John Booth, and secondly by Lisa Stafford.

6. Matters Arising.

There was one matter arising to discuss. A proposal had been presented to members by the committee to make certain amendments to the Society's constitution. A paper, outlining the proposed changes had been circulated to all members previously in accordance with the timescales required in the current constitution, and is attached to these minutes for information. The Secretary outlined the changes proposed and asked members present for any questions prior to a vote on this matter being taken.

A question on the attitude of the Charity Commission to the regulated change proposal was asked; it was explained that in recent conversation with a representative of the Commission, there was no obvious declaration of objection to this change and that it was expected for the proposal to be accepted.

A question on how far and wide the society wished to exert any influence outside the conservation area; The object of the change was simply not to restrict the society to just the conservation area alone, but to work with any organisation or situation that would affect the society's aims.

A vote was taken, the result being that the proposals were approved by the required two-thirds majority on members present.

7. Election of Officers and Committee.

Nominations for members to stand for election as Executive Committee members and for specific Officer posts was presented by the Secretary.

These were as follows:

Chair – Chris Jarrey

Vice Chair – Jeff Willis

Secretary – John Heathman

Treasurer – Griff Round

Conservation and Partnership – Alan Chape

These were unopposed re-elections and were approved: Proposer Peter Wright with Seconder Helen Roberts.

The following were proposed to serve on the Committee: John Field, George Harrison, Bob Knowles, Heather Alcock, Carla Walker, Steve Weber, Dominic Wilkinson, Don Firth Williamson

These were approved: Proposer Lisa Stafford and secondly by Allan Brame.

Annette Capper and Allan Brame remain as co-opted members of the committee.

8. Design Awards. It was noted by Jeff Willis, that there were no nominations for Design awards this year

9. Awards for Outstanding Contributions to Oxton and its Community.

Jeff Willis read a tribute to John Booth who had decided to retire from the committee. In his time with the society, John has been an active contributor to just about everything going on in Oxton over the years, and in particular organised the hanging baskets in the village, winning RHS awards year after year. Despite retiring from the committee, John intends to still help various groups in the area with their activities.

10. A Presentation on Electricity distribution and Climate Change was given by Stuart Walker of SP Energy Networks. Questions from the floor were taken on this. It was requested that the content of the presentation be circulated to all members.

11. The Chair closed the meeting and thanked members for their attendance and support.