

BRAISHFIELD VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held at the Village Hall on Thursday 22 January,
2015

PRESENT:- David Robinson [Chairman], Graham Bennett [Vice-Chairman], Sheila Still [Treasurer], Rosie Groves [Secretary], Mike Mullane [News Editor], Sue Mullane [Distribution], Chris Balchin [Web Editor], Sue Coleman, Michael Stubbs, Viv Robinson, Ted Still, Richard Groves, Meryl Balchin, Mary Stubbs, George Elliott, Jimmy Chestnutt, Geoff Daniell, Carole Renvoize, Steve Renvoize, Mike Prince, Hazel Prince, Dorothy Ross, Lawrence Randall, Marian Randall, Richard Brazier, David Protheroe, John Bevan, Angela Bevan, Mike Horton, Betty Horton, Tim Howkins.

APOLOGIES:- Julie Kemp, Jane Bennett.

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

MINUTES OF AGM 2014

The minutes of the last AGM, having been circulated at the meeting and available on the website, were confirmed. Proposed by Sue Coleman, seconded by Mike Prince.

MATTERS ARISING

None.

CHAIRMAN

David Robinson gave the following report:

Your committee has met six times during last year, every other month, to discuss issues and plan appropriate actions or responses.

We produced six issues of the Braishfield Village News, which I hope you will agree has continued to get bigger and better, with more articles and more people wishing to communicate through its pages. We are extremely grateful to Editor Mike Mullane and to Sue Mullane who helps to produce it and organises the distribution. There is a willing band of volunteers who ensure that every household in the village gets a copy, and we are very grateful to them for their involvement. We organised two social events during the year, a wine tasting and a special event to celebrate St George's Day in conjunction with BMADS, who laid on a splendid

evening's entertainment which was enjoyed by around 60 people. We also took part in the Christmas Tree festival, with a tree on the theme of 'Remembrance' produced for us by Sheila Still. We organised another trip to the Dorset Steam Festival in August, which turned out to be yet another mud bath(!), borne with admirable stoicism by those attending. Perhaps we were inspired by the memories of the first World War which have been high on the nation's conscientiousness all year.

On which subject we were able to produce a Memorial booklet which has been on sale throughout the village, raising £262 which has been paid to Service charities. We also laid a wreath at the village war memorial as is our custom on Remembrance Sunday, and paid for the additional wreath for the extra ceremony which took place on 11th November.

We added to the profits from the St George's evening to provide the Village shop with sufficient funds to purchase a fridge freezer, which is now in use.

We responded to Hampshire County Council's consultation exercise on the use of household refuse sites, making a vigorous argument for the retention of the Bunny Lane site, which, it appears, may have been successful.

We sat in on all the year's Parish Council meetings (myself when possible, or another committee member when I was elsewhere), and have raised matters which seemed to us to be worth their attention. These have included: the provision of some bike racks near the village shop (this was first raised by us in June 2013, but has not yet been actioned); the issue of having a village based emergency planning group, which the Parish Council have decided to take on board. We sought to encourage villagers to make their views known to the Parish Council on the issue of providing affordable housing, and after some deliberation made an objection to the TVBC Southern Planning Committee on the unsuitability of the chosen site. Their decision was deferred, and meanwhile we carried out an informal poll by e mail to try to gauge the level of opposition to the proposed site among villagers, which established that 111 adults inhabitants were against. At a later meeting of the Planning Committee, however, the application was accepted. We understand that the building of the houses has been postponed until this spring. We regret the decision, but have to move on, and hope that we will all welcome those of us in the village who come to live there.

More recently, we raised with the PC the concerns of a number of villagers about speeding cars along the main road. This has resulted in some activity by the PC in establishing data on the speeds being recorded, and we hope will eventually bring about some action.

Our website has been given an initial facelift by Chris Balchin, our Webmaster, and we may expect further improvements during the coming year. We have also begun to publish the draft minutes of the committee's meetings on it, which you may like to refer to from time to time.

I am standing down as from the end of this AGM after five extremely interesting and rewarding years. I am very grateful for the opportunity and especially grateful to my fellow committee members for their support and enthusiasm over that time. Sue Coleman is also resigning after only one year, but we have been very grateful to her for initiating a 'social' role in making contact with people who may have been ill, or in other difficulty, to offer support and solace. Our secretary Rosie Groves is standing down after ten years in the role, and my own gratitude and respect for her contribution is pretty well boundless. She has single-handedly

ensured that I have not made a complete ass of myself on numerous occasions, and has shown steadfast dedication to the best interests of the Association. She has also been responsible for examining numerous consultative documents from TVBC and HCC, as well as local planning applications, and advising us whether to comment, and if so, on what grounds. We are all extremely grateful for her contribution. Chris Balchin will take over as secretary, and Michael Stubbs the responsibility for planning matters.

I hope the meeting will approve the election of two new members of the committee shortly, one of whom, Jimmy Chestnutt, is willing to take on the role of chairman. And on that note I ask you to accept my report on the year 2014.

Report adopted. Proposed by Richard Groves, seconded by Mary Stubbs, carried by all.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The treasurer, Sheila Still, had circulated the finalized accounts for year ending 31st December 2014 to all present. Her report was as follows:

I hope you all have a sight of the balance sheet of your Association for 2014. As you will see, our main source of income is the advertisements in the Braishfield Village News. This is very slightly up on 2013. It is also pleasing to note that donations are up. Postal subscriptions remain the same and bank interest has increased by 40p! This is not due to any help from the bank but purely down to transferring assets into a deposit account until needed. Other income was received from the St Georges evening, the Dorset Steam Fair outing and the Wine tasting. The donations for the memorial booklet "The Bugle Sounded" were paid to the BVA and these have yet to be distributed.

Now to the expenditure! The printing cost of the Braishfield Village News has increased by 31%. This is down to a change of printer and we feel that this is reflected in the quality of the News. Also some of the editions have been a bumper 48 pages which are therefore more expensive. Other normal annual expenditure remains acceptable and although the BVA news expenses show as zero there will be a higher cost next year as some expenses have not yet been paid. A profit was made on all three functions. Additional expenditure was incurred on printing the leaflet regarding the affordable housing application and a trial print of the Memorial booklet before the final printing and we were able to make a donation to Braishfield Pantry to cover the cost of the Ice Cream freezer.

Consequently I consider that the financial position of your Association is healthy enough to meet future budgeted costs and remains a viable Association.

Lastly I should like to express my appreciation to Gill John for auditing the accounts

Mr Chairman I should like to put the accounts forward for adoption.

A question was asked: what is the difference between subscriptions and donations. SS explained that subscriptions are paid by people (mainly ex-residents) who live outside the village but still wish to receive a copy of the

News. Donations are given by anyone who wishes to help support the BVA – normally residents in the village. A second question: is it the same outstanding debtor each year? SS replied that it was but they normally pay eventually.

The Chairman wished to register his thanks to the brilliant treasurer who was rock solid, bringing common sense and attention to detail to the work.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mike Prince, seconded by Meryl Balchin and unanimously agreed.

NEWS AND RESIDENTS GUIDE-

News Editor Mike Mullane gave the following report:

Magazine:

We managed to get 6 out pretty much on time. The marvellous thing is that, as heralded last year we are now averaging a very healthy 44 pages and, surprisingly, because the immediate post Christmas edition is normally an exhausted little creature, this next one is topping out at our occasional 48 page mark. This is a direct result of the interest and contributions that you and many others now provide. We could not be more grateful or relieved, so thank you and please do keep it up – the heart and soul of the magazine is what you all put towards it.

Residents Guide 2015/2016

We intend to refresh and reprint the Guide this year, and have started work on correcting errors and updating it. It would be of enormous help if you could take a moment to glance through it and let me know of any suggestions you may have for improvement, any errors, omissions or additions. Send anything, no matter how obvious it may seem – for instance our Village shop – we're all fallible, forgetful, I more than most!

The Bugle Sounded

On the initiative of John Rhodes and George Elliott, this was the other production in 2014, a booklet to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Great War, and to elevate the memory of those from the Village and surrounding Hamlets who gave their lives during that War, and of course WWII.

From some of the feedback, I suspect that I may not have produced what was expected. But my approach was to provide a small memorial booklet which, whilst listing all those who died, was reasonably cheerful in appearance and tone rather than mournful - particularly since, thanks to the Parish Council's funding, I could afford the use of colour to brighten it up and arguably make it more lively to the eye; George and I also discussed the aim of making it undaunting for children, so that they might pick it up, perhaps on a whim, but then maybe learn something, or be prompted to ask questions. So I decided not to incorporate long individual histories, partly because the booklet would have become a very thick A5 wedge and, of course, the deep detail on all our individuals is contained on the Parish Website.

There was a suggestion from the floor that the News could include a Small Ads

section. MM will look into the idea.

WEBSITE

Webeditor, Chris Balchin gave the following report:

Braishfield Village Website Annual Report 2015

The web-site has been running almost eight years.

The three 'dynamic' pages of Village Diary, Village Hall Booking and Church Room Bookings as well as the Residents Guide, and the downloads for BVA News and Five Alive are also well used.

The BVA mtg minutes have been added to the website. The website has had a change of appearance but more may happen in 2015.

I would like to thank Geoff Daniell, my deputy editor, for running the links to the Horticultural Society pages and information on Crouay as well as the for supplying the weather data and reports. Did you know we had 10 inches of rain in January 2013 on all days bar one whilst in November 2013 11 inches of rain in 26 days! Temperature ranged from -3 degC to +30 degC.

We now have 15 people registered with @braishfield.org email addresses – if you wish one please contact me.

The title of this report leads to my frustration. With the retirement of John Rhodes, who ran his own website for Parish Council matters, I had hoped that the two Braishfield websites could be combined as one village website This had been agreed by the Parish Council over 5 years ago. But the Parish Council went ahead and created another website for PC matters. So we still have two websites for village.

There was some discussion about how to combine or link the two websites and the conversation would continue.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE:-

Three members of the committee would be standing down: David Robinson, Rosie Groves and Sue Coleman.

The Chairman listed those members of the committee who were prepared to be reelected: Graham Bennett, Sheila Still, Mike Mullane, Sue Mullane, Chris Balchin, Michael Stubbs. They were proposed by Viv Robinson, seconded by John Bevan and unanimously reelected.

Jimmy Chestnutt had been nominated in writing by David Robinson, seconded

by Mike Mullane. He was unanimously elected.

Julie Kemp had been nominated in writing by Sue Mullane, seconded by Sheila Still. She was unanimously elected.

No nominations were received for the final vacancy on the committee, so it would be advertised in the News.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:-

1. Chairman of the Parish Council, Mike Prince thanked David Robinson for his service as Chairman of the BVA and wished his successor every success. He was pleased that the minutes of BVA committee meetings were now published on the website and also that the vacancy for a new committee member was being advertised in the News. He also made suggestions for the BVA to consider, including rewording points 1 and 5 of its constitution, to place more emphasis on working with the Parish Council and less on influencing other village organisations. He had been pleased that the last BVA committee minutes had stated a wish to work with the Parish Council on planning matters and agreed that it was best to put the Affordable Housing controversy behind us. But in passing he noted that holding an election for the Parish Council vacancy, for which some had called, would have been expensive given that there was only one candidate standing. David Robinson noted these suggestions and said that it would be appropriate for a new BVA committee to revisit its constitution – as a new committee normally did - and it would no doubt also look into planning considerations. He said it was time to move on from the Affordable Housing debate.
2. Graham Bennett warmly thanked David Robinson on behalf of the BVA for his years in the chair – particularly for his role in driving the production of a full and varied programme of social events. He had been a pleasure to work with. He also thanked Rosie Groves for her many years as Secretary.
3. Richard Brazier also registered his thanks to David Robinson and to the BVA and all who have supported the Village Hall and the Braishfield Pantry. He asked whether the BVA and Parish Council could link up to see if the section 106 monies from the Affordable Housing project could be used more constructively.
4. David Robinson introduced Jimmy Chestnutt as the new Chairman. He was delighted that Jimmy – with his extensive background in the Navy and in commerce - had agreed to take on the role and he wished him every success.
5. The date of the next AGM was set for Thursday 21 January 2016.