

Minutes of the 55th Annual General Meeting of the Civic Society of St Ives held on 18th October, 2024 at 7.30pm in the Free Church Centrum.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Pat Akers, Celia Briggs, Judith Dartnell, Ian Dobson, Fiona Ford, Linda Haslett Norma Head, Simon Ward.

In Attendance : 48 members and guests attended. Christine welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting held on 20.1.0.24.

These were held to be an accurate record. Proposed by Philip Noble, seconded by many.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

4. Chair's Report

Christine reported that it had been a very busy year pursuing a variety of paths and activities to raise the Society's profile:

- Website upgrade – this has a bright & fresh colour palette, easy on the eye. It is linked the toe town's Hub now so should attract new members. It promotes many of the Civic Society's past triumphs & has lots of new photographs. It will provide us with the technology we need in future to set up podcasts about the historic features of the town and allow web visitors to read the annual reports and talks summaries online. A big thank you to Celia Briggs for leading us through this.
- The Regeneration Forum for the town, FoRSIT, has a remit is to convert Neighbourhood Plan consultation comments into viable proposals for reinvigorating the town. Whilst issues such as illegal parking and empty shops require political will from HDC or CCC to change, some small things can make a big difference, attract footfall. A face-to-face survey of shopkeepers on Bridge St about increasing footfall and improving the streetscape brought forth a raft of actions:
 - The shopkeepers will create their own WhatsApp group set up to discuss streetscaping issues & respond to questions posed by the Forum on customer parking, signage, flower & tree planting, pavement seating, lighting and more.
 - A new design group will create signs, posters, possibly shop fronts & fascias with a unique St Ives style. Their first project is a 'Shop Local for Christmas' poster campaign.
 - The Octagon: new focus on reusing the building for the benefit of the community, a business proposal will be drawn up to lease it from HDC

to convert it , probably into an indoor market-cum-gallery space with an integral tourist information desk. John Souter is leading on this.

- The NP consultation group divided some 250 responses into 7 categories, the aim being to shape regeneration proposals which embrace the town's heritage, protects its best features whilst anticipating the needs of future generations, as an alternative to the proposal contained in the MasterPlan.

We will try and trace landlords of empty properties to suggest displaying historic photographs of St Ives in their windows.

We will explore how best to protect The Thicket and the town's public rights of way.

We will allocate more Black Plaques to commemorate the stories of our historic buildings.

Additionally, we will be developing a series of history talks about the development & heritage of the town, to be delivered to the housing estates and outskirts of town next year, run jointly with the Norris Museum.

Planning: many of the larger developments seeking planning permission outside St Ives will affect it significantly. Our Society's planning advisory group therefore should be expanded to include professionals from construction backgrounds: engineers, builders, surveyors, etc. in order to better anticipate and respond to encroaching developments. Personal recommendations will be welcome.

5. Matters Arising from the Chairman's Report

- Q1. Flooding both from the river and from surface water after the heavy rains have affected the town twice this year. What action is being taken?
- A. Mathew Setchell said FLAG has been discussion about options with the Environment Agency and Anglia Water. The presentation by the Emergency Resilience Forum recognises this as a pressing issue.
- Q2. The closure of Dobbies garden centre will means some concessions relocating elsewhere. Could we approach them to come to St Ives.
- A. Christine agreed to pursue this idea.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Chair apologised that the new Treasurer, Linda Haslett, was absent this evening, but her holiday had been booked some while before she had accepted the position.

Christine regretted having to increase subscriptions this year and thanked members for paying the increase. The rise is minimal at £3 a year and is needed to keep pace with the incremental increase in the cost of everything and still offers good value consider the number of events and activities that members can engage in. This year we had broken even and, as a charity we must demonstrate probity.

The end of year accounts had been circulated in the Annual Report and have been signed off by Dianne McGoff, the external examiner. Basil Belcher asked if there were any questions arising. There being none, the accounts were accepted. Nomination proposed by Philip Noble, seconded by Marjorie Woods.

This being Basil's final appearance as a committee member after an impressive 14 years' service, he was given a hearty round of applause from members. He thanked members for all the good wishes expressed and the card from the Civic committee.

7. Resolution

Following the resignation of Dianne McGoff as Accounts Examiner, to appoint Judith Hartnell of Hartnell Lynn accountancy for the year 2024-25. Nomination proposed by Paul Faupel, seconded by David Stewart.

The Chair advised that she, Linda Haslett and Helen Eveleigh had had an initial meeting by Zoom with Judith Hartnell, after which she had written the following comment, which gives testament to Basil and Helen's proficiency: "Thank you for answering my questions and walking me through your accounting processes. The processes and documentation were efficient and well administered. Thank you too for sending me the bank statements and the Annual Report. I feel I have a very good grasp of the inner workings of the Society and I am very happy to be involved, and to be completing your examination next year". She apologised for not being available to attend this AGM.

8. Election of Officers and Ordinary Executive Committee Members

At this point, all members of the current Executive Committee stood down. However, the majority have agreed to be nominated for a further year. No other nominations had been received.

The nominations for positions for the forthcoming year were read out by Jane Amaral.

Designation	Name	Proposer	Second
Chair	Christine Phillpotts	Ian Jackson	Colin Phillpotts
Treasurer	Linda Haslett	Jane Amaral	Colin Phillpotts
	Celia Briggs	Peter Newbould	Jane Amaral
	Tim Reed	Ian Jackson	Gilly Jackson
	Barbara Richmond	Graham Noyce	Ena Rose
	Peter Jackson	Basil Belcher	Jane Amaral
	Helen Eveleigh	Julia Landemoo	Philip Noble
	John Holmes	Virginia Atree	A Catterick
	Mathew Setchell	Jane Amaral	Victoria Faupel

On a vote of hands the nine nominees were unanimously elected en-bloc.

9. Any Other Business

We are sad to note the death of Colin Saunderson, who has worked tirelessly for the town in a variety of modest ways over many years. Colin has also been a long-term and valued member of the Civic Society, attending and contributing regularly to its discussions. He will be very much missed.

There being no other business, the Chair brought the 55th Annual General Meeting to a close, thanking members and guests for contributing.

At this point, she welcomed and introduced the speakers for the evening: Malcolm Harrington and Rose Charlton-Peel to enlighten us about the work of the St Ives Emergency Resilience Forum.