

## The Society of Friends of Silton

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of The Society of Friends of Silton, held virtually on the Zoom application on Tuesday 7th July 2020 at 6:00 pm

#### **PRESENT**

Mrs R Showering	Col C Woodhouse
Mrs L Woodhouse	Mrs J Dyer
Mr R Dyer	Mr M Hall
Mrs S Williams	Mr P Williams
Mrs M Anderson	Mr D Quayle
Mrs D Masters	Mr D Masters
Mr K Harris	Mrs A Bridge
Col A Cattaway	Mrs C Cattaway
Mrs J Marsden	Mrs A Browell
Mrs S Menzies	Mr D Desborough
Mrs S Matthews	Mrs M Honnywill

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Mrs J Peel	Mr C Peel
Mrs M Burroughs	Mr M Burroughs
Mrs I Ryall	Miss W Malet
Ms D Brockley	Mr K Downie

#### **2. Minutes of the last AGM**

The minutes of the AGM held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019, were read, approved and signed as a true record of the proceedings. Proposed by Mr D Masters seconded by Mrs M Honnywill and carried unanimously.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes that were not covered by this meeting.

#### **4. Election of Chairman**

Mrs Rita Showering kindly agreed to continue as Chairman if elected. She was unopposed. Proposed by Mrs A Browell, seconded by Mrs A Bridge. Unanimous agreement.

#### **5. Election of Secretary**

Mrs Jackie Dyer kindly agreed to continue as Secretary if elected. She was unopposed. Proposed by Mrs M Anderson, seconded by Mrs S Williams. Unanimous agreement.

#### **6. Election of Treasurer**

Col Chris Woodhouse agreed to continue as Treasurer if elected. This was unopposed. Proposed by Mrs J Marsden, seconded by Mrs S Matthews. Unanimous agreement.

#### **7. Election of Members of Committee**

Mrs April Browell, Mr Keith Harris and Mr John Houchin agreed to continue as Committee members and were unopposed. Proposed by Mrs M Anderson and seconded by Mrs A Bridge. Unanimous agreement.

#### **8. General Report and Accounts to 31st May 2019**

The Treasurer, Col C Woodhouse, submitted the report, and highlighted various items under income and expenditure. The following points were explained:

- a. The accounts have been audited by John Houchin and have been found to be correct as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. Copies were emailed to you together with your agenda and the minutes of the last AGM.
- b. In addition to the cash held in the bank some £10000 is invested in a Virgin Charity Account and a further £32282 with the Charities Aid Foundation. These investments have served us well in the last year particularly the Charities Aid Foundation although recent fluctuations in the stock market and the negligible interest rates have reduced some yields.
- c. **Virgin Account.** Brief details. Interest rates for this account were a paltry 0.15% in the last Financial Year and are reducing still further now and as I mentioned at our last meeting your committee has decided to run down this account and use the money here to pay for any major bills. As it happens we have not had to touch the account since 2017 so it still has a healthy credit balance. Because of the poor interest rates, interest paid in the last 12 months was just short of a measly £40.
- d. **Charities Aid Foundation.** The object of the Charities Aid Foundation is to provide an average annual real return of 5% over a business cycle. Investments are held in UK equities, overseas equities, property, bonds and cash. To date we have not had to withdraw any funds from this account and our original £15000 investment is now worth £32,282.84. This was the figure quoted to me on 31 May, the end of our FY, and quite how they are managing to do so well in the current climate is a mystery, I wish I could invest in this account myself. Currently the account is returning a yield of about 3%.
- e. As you can see from the accounts, last year we had an excess of income of £555 but this year our account is £3558 in credit. The difference is largely due to the bill for repairs to the church wall paid last year, some £5574. However, the need to cancel several of our planned social events this year has clearly left a dent in our income, at a guess we have lost in excess of £2000 from having the cancel a quiz night, a wine and cheese night, the plant sale and the canal trip.

We have made no grants to the church in this Financial Year and a grant of only £100 to the Village Hall. However, we are aware of plans to improve the entrance to the Village Hall and now await finalisation of the details. As many of you will know a Quinquennial Review of the church was carried out last year and we await details of what needs to be carried out. However, we know there is a need for re-stencilling to be carried out on the West Wall once the wall has completely dried out and your Committee has agreed to pay to have the new church carpark surfaced with material similar to that used on the Village Hall carpark. This work should be completed shortly.

On page 2 of the accounts is a profit and loss comparison which shows what each event actually made after expenses were deducted.

In general the fund is in good shape but we are aware of pending bills from both the Church and the Village Hall and doubtless there will be others also.

## 9. Annual Report by the Chairman

The Chairman, Mrs R Showering, submitted her report to the meeting, and talked through the following points:

**Finances.** You have heard from the Treasurer that income exceeded expenditure by some £3558 last year and we did not have to draw on any of our reserves. Overall therefore I believe your Society is in a healthy financial situation and I do not propose to carry out any specific fund-raising measures, over and above what we normally do at present, although as the Secretary will explain there may have to be some changes to cope with the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.

Five years ago I reported that we had spent some £6400 on the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Village Hall. It was estimated that this investment would be repaid over a 10 year period and as you

can see in the accounts we have already received nearly £3200 back in feed-in tariff since the panels were installed so we seem to be well on track to recover this investment on time.

This year we have not spent anything on the Church, largely I suspect because various projects have been put on hold because of the Covid19 pandemic. However, we have a reasonably clear idea of what needs to be done to the fabric of the church and over what time frame and I know the PCC will keep us abreast of their plans.

Your committee has been briefed on the improvements being planned for the Village Hall. These proposals have already been approved in principle by the Diocesan Board of Finance but we have not yet been provided with an estimate of how much this will cost and the plans need to be approved by the PCC. However, the Village Hall still has £2000 on account to help defray these costs and we will look favourably on any other requests also.

Our social programme started off well last year with a Quiz Night being held on 26 October and another fascinating talk by John Blashford Snell on 1 February this year. However, we came to a sudden stop when the Covid19 pandemic took hold in early March and we had to cancel all other social events that had been planned, another quiz night, a wine and cheese evening, the plant sale and a boat trip.

Revenue raised this year therefore is markedly down on last year. The Quiz Night in October made a profit of some £520 and the presentation by John Blashford Snell some £680. However, as the Treasurer mentioned our revenue this year is some £2000 less than we would have expected to raise.

To help mitigate the impact of having to cancel several social events Jackie and Chris organised some very successful wine tasting and quiz nights using Zoom. I understand these were very enjoyable and very informative, I might even join in one myself if the current lockdown persists much longer.

Our sincere thanks go to those members outside the Committee, who have helped organise the very successful events we were able to hold. In particular to the many members who kindly cooked for our Pub Quiz night and provided refreshments for John Blashford Snell's presentation. I should also add that although this does not appear on the balance sheet as the payment was not received until after the account was closed, the PCC has donated £250 from the proceeds of Diana Master's plant and produce table at Bagmore Farm to help compensate for the cancellation of the plant sale which would normally have been our major revenue earner of the year.

I also need to express your Committee's thanks for the very generous donations that have been given to your Society by those who have enjoyed the wine tasting and quiz nights. To date these amount to more than £500 for which we are most grateful.

Thanks to the Treasurer, we were able to reclaim Gift Aid of some **£656** from the Chancellor and as I mentioned earlier we are well on track to recover the cost of installing solar panels on the roof of the Village Hall.

Your committee, the organisers of each event and I would like to thank everyone who gave their support, attended or helped in any way to make these events such a success. We hope we can continue to benefit from the unwavering help we receive from every member of the Friends so SOFOS can continue to be such a successful organisation. A sincere thank you.

## **10. Annual Report by the Secretary**

The Secretary gave the following report to the meeting on the present membership position and proposed plans for raising funds over the next year:

**Membership.** There were 82 paid members at the end of last year and subscriptions are coming in daily following our membership renewal letter which was sent out in May. There are now some 40 members

paying their subscription by standing order and this figure is increasing all the time. The Secretary asked members to use their best endeavours to recruit more members.

**100 Club.** Last year we had 88 members in the three draws we ran but we have suffered a drop in numbers of 11 since last year. We really need more members, ideally at least 100.

## **11. Future Events 2020 / 2021**

We had already paid the deposit for the canal trip we had to cancel this year but the organisers have agreed that we can carry that payment forward to next year for another trip on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

We are not yet in a position to give firm details of events we would like to plan in the future as these will depend on whatever restrictions are in place at the time. However, we will be holding another wine tasting and quiz on Zoom on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July and we would like to hold an event on the Village Field, possibly at the end of August.

As soon as we can we will publish details of events we would like to hold: quiz nights, a plant sale, perhaps another themed lunch and of course the canal trip..

The Secretary asked that if any members have suggestions for future events that they let her know.

## **12. Any Other Business**

On behalf of Peter Williams and the PCC, Anne Bridge thanked the committee for the financial support that is available. Whilst they have not had to call on The Society this year, there are things waiting in the wings. The Quinquennial Review was quite light. Tiles on the roof of the Church have just been repaired and there is lead to be taken off. The stencilling by the side of the altar must wait until some repointing of the outside wall is done first. This work has been put back due to the lockdown. There is also work to be done now to connect the new car park to the church path. Mrs Bridge thanked the committee for all the work they do.

Sue Matthews asked to formally propose the accounts and she thanked the Secretary for the work she had done recently to organise the online wine tastings.

April Browell thanked the Treasurer for all his extra work recently and for organising the online quizzes.

Keith Harris explained that work on the Village Hall was ongoing and he thanked the committee for their help and contributions.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.40pm.

R. Showering  
Chairman

J. Dyer  
Secretary