

Minutes of  
The Haslemere Society Annual General Meeting

24 November 2023 at 7:30pm

At Haslemere Hall

**Attendees:**

Mr Chris Harrison (Chairman & Trustee)  
Mr Howard Brown (Trustee)  
Mrs Dawn Brown (Trustee)  
Mr David Dullaway (Treasurer & Trustee)  
Mrs Sonja Dullaway (Trustee & Minutes)  
Mr Gareth David

**Apologies:**

Mrs Jane Stopford Russell (Trustee)  
Mr Richard Mason (Prospective Trustee)  
Apologies were also received from members: Richard Evans, Geoff & Sheila Martin, Fay Foster, Wendy & Andrew Neate, Bernard Coe, Dianne & Stephen Bennett, Sylvia Kahn Freund, Lesley Banfield Sheila Cheikley, Margaret Ovington, Beryl Bishop and Anne Fitchett.

1. The AGM was quorate, there being more than 20 members of the Society in attendance.

**The Chairman's Report**

2. The Chairman welcomed members to the 139<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Society. He apologised for twice changing the date of the event, the first time because another group had had a more urgent need for the venue on the original date and the second because the proposed date clashed with Richard Royd's wine tasting event. Unfortunately, the finally-selected date clashed with the Twinning Association dinner. Given the number of society meetings and other events at this time of year it was perhaps inevitable that there should be a clash with something.
3. Drawing on his statement in the Report and Accounts, the Chairman reflected on the last year. He noted that membership stands at 455, reinforcing the Society's position as one of the largest societies in the town as well as one of the oldest. We have had some new members during the year but are always happy to welcome more.
4. The Chairman introduced the Trustees, briefly outlined their roles and thanked them and the various other people who help out in various ways to help make the Society's events a success.
5. The Chairman noted that for the second year running since the pandemic we have been able to hold our AGM, the regular spring meeting and the summer party in person. The speaker for the AGM last year was Mick Bradford, a well-known local personality, who gave a talk about the experimental British bomber that crashed into the Rex cinema on 22 September 1942. The talk at the spring meeting was given by Charles O'Brien, the joint editor of the Pevsner series of architectural guides. In recent years, Charles has overseen the rewriting of the Surrey guide and the latest edition pays far more attention

to Haslemere's architecture than earlier editions. The summer party was held at the museum and the music was provided by the Town Band. In addition to these regular meetings, the Society also organised an outing to Winchester Cathedral in September, which was attended by 25 members, and two local visits to Farnham Castle to tour the Palace of the Bishops of Winchester. He noted that the Trustees hope to offer another outing next year.

6. The Chairman briefly reviewed the actions of the Planning Group over the past year. He thanked Chris Boobyer for his service on the group and noted that Mr Boobyer is now standing down. He invited any members interested in planning matters to consider volunteering with the group. The Chairman then gave an update on the Heritage Group's 'Buildings of Local Merit' project, which is being undertaken at the request of Waverley Borough Council.
7. Finally, the Chairman thanked Gareth David for his work as the Editor of the Society newsletters and Clare David for her work as the External Examiner.

### **Minutes of the last AGM**

8. The Chairman apologised for sending these out at late notice and asked if any member had any objection to being asked to approve the minutes for that reason. No objection being raised, the Chairman asked if members approved the minutes and this was agreed by a show of hands with no objection or amendment raised.

### **Treasurer's Report & Accounts**

9. The Treasurer rose and briefly outlined the key items in the accounts, which were displayed on the main screen for members to see. He noted that the previous year had been rather boring on the financial front, which is just what a Treasurer wants to see. The 'professional services' shown in the accounts were for a soil assessment round the West Street tree. The other change to note is that the Society is now receiving some interest on the assets in the bank, reflecting rising interest rates. The Society has around £10,000 in the bank as 'rainy day' reserves plus £3,744 for normal operations. There was a small surplus for the year. There was one question, about the West Street tree.
10. The Treasurer noted that the Society does not have a fixed subscription year, so members' subscription years run from whenever they joined. Inevitably over time everyone forgets when that was and that makes it rather hard to know who has remembered to pay and who has not. So to help manage that, the Trustees propose to set up a subscription year, to align with the financial year. At the year-end the Treasurer will check who has paid in the last year and will send a reminder to anyone who hasn't. Finally, the Treasurer thanked those members who had swapped their standing order to the new higher rate and invited other members to consider doing so, while emphasising that this is entirely voluntary.
11. There being no further questions, the Chairman proposed that the Accounts be accepted. This was seconded by Christopher Assheton-Jones and approved by a show of hands, no objections being received.

### **Election of incoming Chairman and Trustees**

12. The Chairman stated that he and all the Trustees were standing for re-election. As many members would be aware, Jane Stopford-Russell had been ill and was unable to attend

the AGM, but, to the great pleasure of the other Trustees, she wished to retain her role. In addition, a new Trustee, Richard Mason, was being proposed. Unfortunately he was also unable to attend the AGM as he is ill with shingles. The Chairman gave a brief outline of Mr Mason's background. The Chairman asked if members were content to vote on the election of the Trustees as a group. That being confirmed, Lorraine Wilson proposed the motion and John Greer seconded it. The vote was carried by a show of hands with no objections.

#### **Election of the Independent Examiner**

13. The Chairman stated that Clare David had acted as the Independent Examiner for many years and was willing to continue in that role. He proposed that she be re-elected and Anne Downey seconded the motion. It was approved on a show of hands with no objections.

#### **Slide show**

14. The formal business of the AGM being completed, Jo-Anne Buckrell, the Haslemere Museum's researcher, then provided a talk on the history of the Museum in Haslemere. This was followed by drinks and canapes and the evening ended at around 10pm.