



The Otford Society AGM Minutes

30th April 2024 at 7.30pm Club Room OVMH

Present: R Shelton (Chair), S Featherstone (Vice Chairman), C Sutton (Treasurer), C Bent (Secretary), P Clucas (Promotion), P Chatterjee, J Kelly, G Bignell, R Rogers and approximately 90 members of the public

Guest speaker: K Fremlings

- 1. Apologies for absence – C Croft**
- 2. The Minutes of 2023 were considered (as copies were available for members of the public to peruse as well as being available on the website in advance). The Minutes were approved (Proposed by David Evans; Seconded by Charles Dymoke)**
- 3. Chairman's Address (Rod Shelton)**

The Chairman outlined that the purpose of the Society is 'to bring people together' in a world that is becoming more self- centred. However, he felt that all of us in the Society can still play an active role in our village community and again he referred to the role of our volunteers who give up their time to help at our community events and the successes of the past year's projects reflect this. In his closing statement he told the audience that he had notified the Trustees of his resignation as Chair with immediate effect. He asked Simon Featherstone, as Deputy Chair, to take over. He presented the gavel he inherited to Simon. Finally he thanked everyone for the support that has been given to him and reiterated that with our digital strengths, we can harness and engage for the benefit of our community in ' Excelsoir! Ot Soc'

Simon Featherstone in response thanked Rod Shelton for assembling a great team under his leadership and gave thanks for his tireless contribution to reform the Society in 2020 after his creation of 'Road Friends during Covid'. Simon then outlined Rod's contribution and involvement to the following: Road Friends, Staying Warm, the Millenium Mosaic, Books on Otford, the Flag Pole, the Christmas Lights, Otford Palace and his subsequent model construction, Otford Parish Council's Planning Committee and his work on the Village Design Statement and the Local Plan.

As a token of our gratitude, a historic rose and camembert were presented. Following on, it was announced that Rod would become Honorary President after the next trustees meeting. The audience showed their appreciation in a generous round of applause. Photos were taken for the website.

4. Treasurer's Report (Chris Sutton)

The Treasurer reported that the Society has had a healthy trajectory over this past year. Using accompanying slides he gave a very comprehensive breakdown of the Society's finances. It was noted that membership donations were down at this stage. (Paid up membership will allow free pedestrian entry into the fete)

The audited accounts for the calendar year (Jan 1-Dec 31st) were given as follows:

Income £43,475; Expenditure £14,930; Profit £16, 442. It was noted that extra income came with the merger of the Village Fete Fund. CS outlined some of the project that the Society has funded: the installation of the difib at OVMH, the Library Art project, A gazebo for the Allotment Society and a donation to the Sevenoaks Loaves and Fishes.

(Our net worth as it stands is £ 36,471; £30,000 in the Current account; £372 in cash and £1,209 in Assets) It was agreed that a sum of £30,000 would be kept in reserves as an emergency and target fund to be used when necessary.

The audience were given the opportunity to ask questions before the Accounts were unanimously approved. Proposed by: Christopher Croft; Seconded: Nick Rushby

The subscriptions of £7.50 or £5, by standing order, were approved. Proposed by: Sarah Brydon; Seconded by; Sue Stephenson.

Thanks were given to Chris Sutton for his diligence in presenting the accounts in a thorough, detailed and clear accountable way.

5. Vice Chairman's Report(Simon Featherstone)

Before, giving the audience a breakdown of the year's events, S Featherstone gave thanks to C Sutton for continuing his role as Treasurer.

The Vice Chairman, with accompanying slides, then gave an outline as to why the Society wants to put on events:

- a. To foster community spirit
- b. Enhance the quality of life for all village residents
- c. To help village businesses thrive
- d. To raise money for village projects

During the past year the Society has organised the following: Otford Village Fete, Christmas Fayre with Christmas Grotto, Coronation BBQ, Garden Party, Stay Warm, Clean Up Otford, Otford Superstar, The Otford Craft Guild and the Easter Bunny Trail

Furthermore thanks were given to the Friends of Otford Station with their ongoing planting, window boxes, hanging baskets and the historical posters.

Again, thanks were given to the group of volunteers for their role in these events and hopefully more will be recruited to answer the call 'Your Village Needs You' in a poster designed by Phil Clucas

A programme of events coming up for 2024 was announced:

- The Village Fete - 27th May Thanks were given to Patty Chatterjee and her team for their preparation
- The Garden Party- 6th July kindly hosted by Mark and Irene Roy

- The Christmas Fayre - 23rd November. Thanks were given to Jenny Kelly for organising the Otford Craft Guild

6.Election of Trustees (Rod Shelton)

Rod Shelton asked the audience to approve six proposed trustees for the society. He noted that only one new application was received from Claire Croft and she was to be included in the vote. He felt that for the Society's security and ease of operation, the trustees have recommended to spread the term of engagement into three different time periods, effective from their next meeting on 4th June. For this vote, only paid up members with a red voting card were allowed to participate. A quick introduction to the proposed Trustees was given.

- Standing for 3 years: Carol Bent and Simon Featherstone
- Standing for two years: Claire Croft and Chris Sutton
- Standing for one year (2024-25): Phil Clucas and Graham Bignall

Simon Featherstone (proposed by Jeff Lee, seconded by Nick Rushby)

Carol Bent (proposed by Chris Croft, seconded by Marion Corver)

Chris Sutton (proposed by Marianne Bradnock, seconded by Betty Bishop)

Claire Croft (proposed by Patty Chatterjee, seconded by Peter Bradnock)

Graham Bignall (proposed by Chris Bishop, seconded by Sue Stephenson)

Phil Clucas (proposed by Ed Thompson, seconded by Jenny Kelly)

A unanimous vote for all candidates, with no objections, was given.

7 .The Otford Community Superstar Award

Awarded to Paul Robertson, our Community Warden. A certificate and a voucher for a golf driving range were presented to him in recognition for his service to the community as a good friend and support to the village and he will be missed as he begins his retirement. The audience gave their thanks in generous round of applause.

8. Date of next AGM: Wednesday 30th April 2025 Venue tbc

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Kevin Fremlings on a 'Villa Full of Secrets' in Church Field.