

## **HYTHE CIVIC SOCIETY**

### **Minutes of the 73rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018 at 7pm**

The Society's Chairman, Crispin Davies, welcomed those present (about 36) to the meeting. He thanked everyone very much for attending and that their support was very much welcomed.

The Chairman announced that the Civic Society's President, Doug Amans, had given his apologies as sending his best wishes to the Society members. The Chairman commented that as well as dealing with the usual formalities of an AGM, the Committee would try to tell the members what we have been doing on their behalf during the last year and give those present the chance to tell the Society what they would like us to do in the coming year. He asked those present to fill in a questionnaire with ideas for an event to celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2020.

The meeting opened with a talk from the Society's Hythe Local History Group leader, Anne Petrie, on the work in connection with the celebration of the centenary of the World War One armistice on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The Group has researched the histories of some 200 names on the Hythe and Saltwood war memorials as well as a number of other people who died as a result of enemy action. An individual summary of their lives and, where possible, a photograph of themselves or their grave will be produced and eventually displayed in shop windows in the town and on the History Group's website.

#### **Presentations**

Hythe Town Council's Mayor, Cllr. Paul Peacock, presented Sally Chesters, with a Citizen of the Year Award.

The HCS Awards for outstanding service to the Community were presented to Rev. Desmond Sampson, who was sadly unable to attend the meeting, and to Alan Joyce.

This year the Society decided to award the Capon Shield to Folkestone and Hythe District Council for their excellent restoration of the historic Tram Shelter on Princes Parade.

#### **THE AGM**

Apologies for absence were received from 11 members.

#### **Approval of the Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous AGM were approved by a show of hands and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

#### **Amendment to the Constitution**

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman proposed an addition to the constitution as set out on the agenda paper. The Committee has realised that responding to policy documents and planning applications has become an activity of significant proportions that it ought to be specifically recognised in the Society's constitution. This was agreed unanimously by those present and the proposal was carried forward.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Alan Joyce stated the balance sheet for the year shows an excess of expenditure over income of £915.87. He then went on to explain any significant differences between this and last year's accounts. Alan reported on two subsidiary accounts (Hythe in Bloom and Town Centre Accounts). Both Accounts have been set up for specific purposes. The funds for these projects are raised from HTC, SDC and KCC and from donations given by local businesses.

Alan thanked David Carter for his examination of the annual accounts and for his valuable advice and he also thanked the Newsletter distributors for their efforts to collect the subscriptions early,

#### **Membership**

Alan Joyce reported that 754 individuals were members – a reduced figure from last year due to deaths etc.

## **Trees**

Alan Joyce reported that the Society has continued to assist in providing advice to a number of members on tree issues and liaison with the SDC Arboriculture Officer.

## **Cycling**

Alan Joyce reported that the Cycle Shepway Committee (CSC) lobbying for a coastal cycle path from Folkestone to Dungeness has resulted by KCC developing this in Phases. Phase 1 along the seawall from Folkestone to the Hythe Bay Fish Restaurant is funded and work has commenced to improve the safety. Phase 2 from the Fish Restaurant to The Redoubt, has been put on hold until the proposed application to have the Green designated as a village green has been determined.

## **St Leonards Churchyard**

Alan Joyce reported that the joint Society / PCC team, as well as other volunteers, have regularly continued throughout year to carry out the ongoing maintenance work. More volunteers would be welcomed to join the work force. Workdays are usually on a Wednesday morning.

## **Eaton Lands**

Alan Joyce stated that approval was given last September for a Community Orchard. The initial clearing of the thick undergrowth brambles and nettles was followed by the removal of a number of scrub sycamore was undertaken over the winter months. A grant of £1750 from the Affinity Water Community Engagement programme was granted which has helped to cover tree removal costs by a contractor. Ongoing clearance work will continue through the summer. The planting of Kentish variety apple trees will take place in October /November. Schools and members of the community will be invited to participate in this and subsequent ongoing maintenance together with other projects.

## **Archives**

Finally Alan Joyce reported that the overhauling of the Society's archives and cataloguing the library of books and research material is ongoing with the intention to list the catalogued items on the History Group website.

## **Planning**

Crispin Davies reported that the Society now reports fully on planning matters on the new website. The Society will be submitting comments on the Core Strategy review by mid-May. The Society has submitted 12 comments to the Places and Policies Local Plan Submission Draft and will accept an invitation from the independent Government Inspector to take part in the Examination in Public if an invitation is forthcoming. The Society has objected to the hybrid planning application for development on Princes Parade.

The Committee is very aware that its constitution allows it to comment on matters of public benefit only in the civil parish of Hythe. The proposal for Otterpool Park Garden Town is outside this area. However because of the scale of the proposal, there will be knock on effects upon Hythe. The Committee is also aware that the District Council needs to plan for additional housing development. The Society will keep an active watching brief. The Committee continues to scrutinise planning applications – welcoming some, opposing some and suggesting changes to others.

## **Guided Walks**

Sally Chesters reported on very good year for guided walks. There were a total of 215 people on the Thursday walks plus parties from the Hastings and St Leonard's Society; West Kingsdown Active Retirement Association; Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society; and, Bearsted U3A History on the Move Group – an additional 87 altogether making a grand total of 302.

This year saw the departure of Sean McNally one of our excellent guides, but, fortunately, two new guides – Chris Bray and Stewart Davidson – have come forward, so our numbers are in good shape.

## **Hythe in Bloom**

Sally Chesters reported that last summer the planters in Prospect Road brought glorious colour to the town, as did the planters in the High Street through both the winter and summer seasons. Our daffodil bulb planting programme continues, with more bulbs in Prospect Road, and a further donation of purple crocuses from the Rotary Club was planted in Ladies Walk.

Sally thanked the wonderful team of volunteer planters and waterers with special thanks to Tim and Judy Green who have retired this year. More volunteers always welcome. Sally thanked all the sponsors - HTC, Gopak, Charlier Construction and Lawrence and Co Estate Agents and to Waitrose for, allowing us to participate in their green disc scheme. Also thanks to The Hythe Brasserie, Hendricks Chocolate Shop and the Old Town Barber Shop for their contribution in kind.

### **‘The Friends of Sandling Station’**

Sally Chesters stated that the partnership between Hythe in Bloom and Saltwood Village Society has continued its work. There is still a lot to do. Extra help would be very welcome.

### **Town Centre Projects**

Sally Chesters reported that the work has almost been completed on Mackeson Square but there is a new tree to plant in the autumn. The promised interpretation board covering the history of the Mackeson Brewery is still to be installed.

The damaged map in Aldi’s carpark is back in situ and two old maps of the town have been refurbished and are in place in Portland Road car park and in Red Lion Square. The total number of maps in and around Hythe is now 11.

### **Civic Day 2017**

Sally Chesters said that Civic Day is a national celebration of civic pride to say ‘I care about where I live’. The Society’s theme was ‘It’s all about Hythe’...and it was. There was a display of old photographs of Hythe and information about local activities and organisations. Around 300 people visited the display.

### **Talks**

Betty Black reported that the 'Talks' Team' (Ian Hill, Evelyn Joyce, Betty Black and newcomer Jim Twiss) had worked hard to arrange a varied programme of talks for members comprising of two speakers a month from October through to May. The Team bear in mind that membership is a real cross section of society and try to choose a variety of speakers and topics.

### **Website**

Ian Hill said that, in the first six months, the new website has averaged 6,700 hits and 2,000 new visitors. This new website covers all the Society's activities. "Visit our website and see!"

### **Chairman’s Report**

Crispin Davies thanked the Committee members for sharing the workload. There remains much to be done and there are challenges ahead such as Princes Parade, Otterpool Park Garden Town, a possible lorry park at junction 11 on the M20, the revision to the Core Strategy and the Examination in Public of the Local Plan. But there have been some very positive outcomes from bulb planting, the renovation of the historic Tram Shelter on Princes Parade and a new Society website.

The Hythe Local History Group goes from strength to strength. Crispin outlined details of its work and referred members to the HLHG website.

Crispin thanked Christopher Melchers for stepping in to edit the newsletter on an emergency basis. The Society continues to work in partnership with a number of other organisations such as the Hythe Town Council and the Hythe Environmental Group on Eaton Lands; the Saltwood Village Society on “Remembering 1918”; and with KCC Highways re bulb planting. Crispin thanked those who help the Society financially and by sponsorship including the Hythe Venetian Fete Society; District Councillor ward grants; sponsors of Hythe in Bloom; and, the Sainsbury’s s106 Town Centre fund.

The Committee has very recently set up a membership working group to identify ways in which the Society can attract additional members.

On 1 February 2020 the Society will be 75. Crispin invited ideas on how to celebrate this, and invited volunteers to give a hand in organising the celebrations as they will be an additional task for the Committee.

Crispin thanked all Society members for their continuing support and encouragement and commended the Committee for its unstinting work and enthusiasm. He particularly thanked all the volunteers who make the Society the success it is.

## **Elections**

### **Chairman:**

Vice-Chairman Christopher Melchers took the chair and announced that Crispin Davies had been nominated by the Committee. There were no other nominations. By a show of hands, Crispin Davies was duly elected.

### **Vice Chairman, Hon Treasurer and Secretary:**

The Chairman announced that Christopher Melchers, Alan Joyce and Mary Hunter respectively had been nominated by the Committee. There were no other nominations. By a show of hands they were duly elected.

### **Executive Committee:**

The Chairman announced that Val Mercer and Mike O'Sullivan had resigned and gave them both the Society's best wishes and its sincere and grateful thanks for their past service on the Committee. The following persons had been duly nominated: Carol Adams; Betty Black, Sally Chesters, Ian Hill, Kim Merton; Anne Petrie, Michael Tubman and Jane Twist. There were no other nominations. It was unanimously agreed that all were elected.

The Chairman pointed out that there were 3 vacancies on the Committee and appealed to any members in the audience or otherwise to volunteer for what would be an interesting role.

### **Any Other Business**

Chris O'Connor proposed that the Society participates in a review of the Hythe Conservation Area as part of a national initiative by Civic Voice. This was welcomed and details will be in Newsletter 203.

Cllr Malcolm Dearden reminded members of the proposal to create a large ceramic poppy in front of the Hythe war memorial to mark the centenary of the Great War.

### **Closing Remarks**

The Chairman asked if there were any thoughts on how the Society may celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. All ideas would be welcomed by the end of July.

The Chairman reminded everyone every one about the Summer Outing to Bletchley Park on Wednesday 25 July and the Society's event during Festival Week.

Mr Pettinger asked how his suggestions for appropriate residential parking standards and for meeting water requirements in south east Kent were being taken forward. The Society had included both concerns in its comments on the Places and Policies Local Plan submission draft.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.40pm

Signed.....  
Crispin Davies - Chairman

Date: Tuesday 14 May 2019