



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
15 SEPTEMBER 2023
GREENWOOD CENTRE at 7:30 pm
MINUTES

Attendees: Councillor Angela Page

Trustees: Margot Rohan (Secretary), Olive Yang (Treasurer), Yeside Adebisi, Dr Juana Kabba

Associate Members: Ken and Rosemary Bullen, Susan Davy, Elizabeth Downie, Richard and Anne Dunstan, Jennie Engbarth, Jackie Fawcitt, Diane Fielder, Alan Garelick, Stephen and Jo Gates, Richard Gibbons, Patrice Grace, Kathy Hamilton, Barbara Hillman, Linda Laurence-Tozer, Sharon Luck, Brenda Newman, Sarah Porter,

The Chair being vacant, the Secretary, Margot Rohan, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Botting, Jean Garelick, Barrie Newman

Councillor Angela Page attended from 8pm.

2. **MINUTES OF AGM HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2022**

The Minutes of the AGM held on 16 September had been posted on the website and copies were available at the meeting. Agreement of the minutes as a true record was proposed by Alan Garelick and seconded by Barbara Hillman and the meeting **AGREED** them unanimously.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

- It was noted that no further action had occurred yet regarding replacement of the bollards and re-installing the grass verge outside No.2 High Street. However, Cllr Mike Botting has been persevering and hopes it will happen shortly.
(This was finally carried out by the Council in mid-October)

4. **TRUSTEES REPORT AND INTRODUCTION OF NEW TRUSTEES**

Margot Rohan presented a report, highlighting:

- Membership over 400 and remaining stable over last two years
- Only 70 outstanding subscriptions for this year
- Majority of members now pay online or by cheque

- Chuckletots pre-school had closed due to financial difficulties and had admitted that many parents who visited liked the setting but wanted all day
- Plans to replace the pre-school with an all day nursery which currently operates in residential premises was progressing, pending the Ofsted application being approved, which could take up to 12 weeks
- Crowdfunding was being attempted but not very successfully so far
- Picnic in the Park on 23 June was a huge success enjoyed by everyone who attended – volunteers and visitors alike. £300 was raised in donations and a couple of new members joined the GSGA
- Three Trustees had resigned:
 - Uma Datta had found another local charity with the opportunity to be more involved in offering community services
 - Molly Simpson was instrumental in getting Picnic in the Park off the ground and her event organisation skills were much appreciated. She had recently been promoted to a high level role as Head of Fundraising and felt she could not devote the time needed to being a Trustee. She will however still be available to help with fundraising events, when needed
 - Alan Garelick had been a stalwart member of the Village Society Committee, a Trustee/Treasurer and Road Contact since 2007 but had decided it was time to enjoy a more relaxed retirement, although he continues to pursue various village issues, such as the bollards next door! He was presented with a Thank You Certificate but refused the voucher which was also offered.
- The new Trustees introduced themselves:
 - Olive Yang joined in January and took over as Treasurer in June. She moved from China to the UK two years ago and wanted to be involved in the local community and to understand our culture
 - Yeside Adebisi was appointed in June, having been a member of the Association for several years. Now her children were grown up she had time on her hands and had already been organising the Quiz evening for 23 September
 - Dr Juana Kabba was appointed at the beginning of September, having recently returned permanently to his family in Orpington, after spending many years in Sierra Leone as a General Surgeon, the last five at The Adventist Health System, Waterloo Hospital, Waterloo, Freetown, latterly as the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Medical Director. He was keen to get to know about British communities, having worked with disadvantaged communities in Sierra Leone.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

The accounts for 2022-23 had been finalised, independently examined and would be posted on the Charity Commission website, as required.

Olive Yang gave a summary of the accounts. GSGA has been facing financial difficulties. She explained about the grant for the refurbishment of the lavatories being amortised over 5 years. Rent receivables had increased, with the pre-school fees (Lillybrook) providing £10,000. Donations reached £192 and local businesses covered the cost of the flower baskets. The Christmas raffle raised £1,000.

A member raised a question about why fundraising was needed for maintenance of the hall. Margot Rohan explained that the figures in the accounts showed the total funds which included the assets – the hall itself and the value of the refurbishment – whereas the actual cash funds had been depleted due to costs arising from sewer works which were found to be needed in addition to the refurbishment, during the works.

6. **THE VILLAGE SOCIETY**

Margot Rohan explained that The Village Society Committee, which was the community arm of the charity, had been reduced to four members over the pandemic. It was proving difficult to find anyone prepared to chair it and get it up and running again. In the meantime, the four Trustees were fielding local issues and maintaining contact with local authorities but could not continue to organise events, produce the newsletters and keep an eye on planning applications and conservation issues indefinitely. It was proposed that, instead of a formal committee, The Village Society should be reformed as a group with sub-groups covering the following:

- overseeing environmental issues;
- keeping abreast of community concerns, such as planning applications and high street improvements;
- producing the newsletters; and
- organising events.

Members could join any or all of these sub-groups in which they had an interest and the sub-groups would meet as needed, with a lead member taking a chairing role, to report back to the Trustees.

Three people present expressed an interest. Members will be emailed with details for attending a meeting to progress this.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Richard Gibbons was invited to speak. He had lived in Green Street Green since 1978 and was Co-Chair of the Friends of the Priory and Priory Gardens. He had helped to look after the Gardens and iDverde has asked if he would help regarding litter picking in Green Street Green.

Every month, on the first Saturday, a group gathers at 10am for a couple of hours, to litter pick on the Green and in the High Street. He had noticed an increase in substance containers, such as FastGas (used in catering), and vapes increasingly used by children attracted by the flavours and colours.

There is a campaign to ban FastGas being sold to children. Illegal vapes are also easily available online, which have 3,500 'puffs', compared with legal ones with 900 puffs.

Other litter included disposable drink cups (discarded by bus drivers), glass and plastic bottles and cans.

The Council provides litter picking equipment to those who register as a Street Friend.

Gardening Club – Richard is trying to form a green fingered group to help with keeping the village tidy, particularly around the village sign, trimming the hedges at the roundabout, to improve sight lines. Anyone interested can contact him via GSGAssn@gmail.com.

Councillor Angela Page gave some updates:

- Vapes to children – Trading Standards involved
- Ulez – the Council want to know how it is affecting individuals
- Public footpath by the bus stand – dangerous wall, so path cut off – trying to get it resolved
- Parking by buses outside the bus garage – Metrobus has been asked to stop buses parking by the bus stop overnight

- Metrobus – 40 years celebration – open day on 23 September
- Complaints about lack of police on the beat – teams should be no more than 20 minutes from their station – Council looking into this as Green Street Green police check in at St Mary Cray and many have to catch a bus to Green Street Green!
- Check Councillors' Facebook page – Council concerned about parking on grass verges, outside schools etc – link to report inconsiderate parking put on GSGA website: [Report inconsiderate parking](#)
- Enforcement Officers will visit schools when enough reports about illegal parking are received.

The Meeting closed at 8:55pm.