

FRIENDS OF PETERSFIELD HEATH

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 28 APRIL 2015 AT 7.30pm
IN THE ROSE ROOM, PETERSFIELD FESTIVAL HALL

Present: John Pike (Chairman), Nevill Brooke (Treasurer), Vivien Pike (Secretary), Deputy Town Mayor, Councillor Lesley Farrow, Councillor Peter Marshall, George Anelay (speaker), Lyn Pease (speaker), Ian Baker (The Plump Duck), Gordon & Nancy Barker, Judy Barrow, Ann Brooks, David Burstall, John Crowhurst, Gerald Cordingley, Eric & Joy Francis, Bruce & Janice Glass, Mark Greef, John Gummerson, Robin Hart, Mary Herdman, Jeremy Mitchell (Museum representative), Mary Morgan, Melanie Oxley, Andy Robinson, Gerald Samuel, Prue Scurfield, Alf Smallbone, Mary Steel, Paul & Jackie Strawbridge, Gavin Thomas, Heidrun Warton, Richard Warton, Josie Wright,

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from the Town Mayor, Councillor Sue Harwood, Councillors James Deane, Mary Vincent and George Watkinson, Kay Blake, Les Bowden, Mike & Sheila Gadd, Derrie Greef, Fiona Harvey, Tony Luggier, Donald & Patricia Mantell, Lewis Morgan, Delphine Olphert, John & Brenda Paul, Tom & Rosemary Roberts, Eric Skipper

2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6th May 2014**

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None.

4. **Chairman's Report**

Attached to the Minutes.

5. **To Approve and Adopt the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2015**

Nevill circulated the Accounts which showed a balance of £1,685.08, with a reserve fund of £1,000.00 which is ring-fenced for maintenance of the raised paths. He said that subscriptions were up and we had 137 paid-up members. The largest items of expenditure were Hedging Stakes for the dead hedges: £237.60, Tools & Maintenance: £210.00, and the purchase of a Smart Cart: £384.37. This year there was an excess of expenditure over income of £392.92.

There were no questions.

Robin Hart proposed and Andy Robinson seconded that the Accounts be approved and adopted. Agreed unanimously by show of hands.

Nevill wished to formally record the group's thanks to Mr Alistair Stewart for auditing the Accounts again.

John thanked Nevill for his clear and concise presentation of the Accounts, and asked that his thanks be passed on to Mr Stewart.

6. **Election of Officers and Committee Members**

(a) **Election of Chairman**

Nomination for Chairman: Richard Warton, proposed by David Burstall, seconded by Peter Price.

Richard introduced himself to the meeting.

Approved unanimously by show of hands.

Richard then took the Chair.

On behalf of the Grounds Committee, Cllr Lesley Farrow presented the retiring Chairman, John Pike, with a gift and thanked him for the close co-operation between FoPH and Grounds over the past 10 years.

Richard then took the chair

(b) **Re-Election of Officers**

In the absence of nominations, the following officers were willing to stand for another year:

Vivien Pike – Secretary Nevill Brooke – Treasurer

Lesley Farrow proposed that the two officers be re-elected. Seconded by David Burstall. Approved by show of hands.

(c) **Election of Committee Members**

Three nominations had been received for the Committee:

Melanie Oxley	Proposed by Heidrun Warton	Seconded by David Burstall
John Gummerson	Proposed by John Pike	Seconded by Nevill Brooke
Gavin Thomas	Proposed by Mark Greef	Seconded by Vivien Pike

The three nominees introduced themselves to the meeting.
Election en bloc approved unanimously by show of hands.

(d) **Re-election of existing Committee Members**

The following members were willing to stand for another year:

David Burstall, Mark Greef, Robin Hart, Peter Price (Newsletter Editor), Alf Smallbone, Heidrun Warton (Membership Secretary)

Quentin Jay is retiring from the Committee. Richard wished to record the Committee's thanks to Quentin for his support.

Gerald Samuel proposed that the present members be re-elected en bloc, seconded by Janice Glass. Approved by show of hands.

7. **Any Other Business**

Jeremy Mitchell, Finance Trustee at Petersfield Museum, wished to record the Museum's thanks to FoPH for our help in clearing the barrows and surrounding areas in preparation for the People of the Heath surveys and excavations in 2014.

8. **Talk**

People of the Heath

Vivien introduced George Anelay, lead archaeologist of the PotH project, and volunteers Lyn Pease and Richard Warton to talk about their participation in last year's activities.

George led the talk, explaining that the purpose of the project is to try to find answers to why there is the large concentration of barrows on Petersfield Heath.

Before the first excavations took place last year, the following preparatory activities were carried out:

Scrub clearance Richard spoke of FoPH's involvement in clearing branches, scrub and leaf litter from Barrows 11, 18 and 21 and their surrounds, preparing the flat tussock grass area to the south of the Little School (Site 24) and also the flint site on the mound to the west of the School (Site 23). Some work was also carried out on the Music Hill complex of three barrows. He gave special mention to Andrew Williams and Jordan Bleach for their work with brushcutter and machete on these sites, and the South Downs Rangers who cleared the holly copse on Barrow 21. In total 388 man hours were spent on this mammoth task.

The Community Payback Group have completed the clearance work on Music Hill and its adjacent barrows, under the supervision of three members of FoPH.

This year's FoPH work parties have been devoted to turning the huge piles of brashings from the clearance work into dead hedges.

Topographical Surveys George then explained that topographical surveys have been carried out by a firm of professional surveyors, and these result in the visualisation of the contours of the land and the barrows.

Geophysical Surveys Lyn had taken part in the geophysical surveys led by professionals Nev and Mary Haskins. She brought along the machine – a resistivity metre - which is used to gauge the moisture in the soil. (less resistance means more moisture). Each area to be surveyed is marked into 1m grids, and the machine is used in a 'lift and plonk' method. Its findings are fed into a computer.

Excavations Lyn worked on the oval enclosure in the tussock grass area, and found wood and twigs preserved in the water at the bottom of the ditch. These have been radiocarbon dated to the Early Bronze Age. Richard worked on the Mesolithic flint site. This was marked into chequerboard grids. Each 50sq.cm square was dug to a depth of 10cm, the soil then sieved and every shard of flint examined, with significant pieces retained for expert analysis. He also worked on Barrow 11 where the archaeologists identified traces of a wooden coffin and grave goods including fragments of a bronze dagger.

George said that, in all, six excavations will take place, 2 barrows per excavation. The next in June and September this year.

George answered questions from the floor. In reply to one question as to whether there would be more information provided so that the public understood why sites were being cleared, George said that there would be notice boards at each site with information about the digs.

David Burstall gave the vote of thanks.

Presentation to Retiring Chairman

David then presented John with a generous retirement gift and thanked him for his ten years in the Chair.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm and was followed by refreshments and informal discussions.

VAP
03/05/15