

WGRA Westgate Residents Association Chichester
Westgate, Henty Gardens, Mount Lane, St Bartholomew's Close, Tannery Close

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held by Zoom on Saturday
14 November 2020

In attendance:

There were 28 WGRA members attending by Zoom. These included the present WGRA Committee. In addition, there were 2 visitors: John-Henry Bowden, Councillor, (Chichester District Council and Chichester City Council) and Mike Evans, Chair, West Walls Residents Association.

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME BY ACTING CHAIR

Sarah Quail welcomed WGRA members and our visitors to the meeting which had to be held by Zoom this year due to the coronavirus pandemic restrictions. She thanked all the committee members, sub-group members and all those involved with the Westgate Helpers for their help and hard work during the year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| David Thornley | Des & Ursula Evans | Christopher & Hilda Podger |
| John Davies | Michael & Edna Baker | Clare Apel |

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of AGM ON 23 NOVEMBER 2019

All relevant AGM papers had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. There were no questions or comments regarding the Minutes.

24 Proxy forms had been returned and these unanimously approved the Minutes.

4. ANNUAL REPORT

This was also circulated in advance and contained a summary of the year's activities. There were no questions or comments regarding the report.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT, ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS AND CONFIRMATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINER

These reports were circulated in advance. Vince Waldron, the Treasurer reported that income from this year was similar to last year while expenses were slightly lower leaving us with total funds of £2,443. He explained, as his report mentions, that the funds may be needed for professional advice and for expenses in our campaigns to reduce traffic and speeding on Westgate. He confirmed that Gordon Jones had undertaken an independent examination of the accounts. Membership fees for next year will remain unchanged at £10 per household.

Anthony Quail said that there had been a last minute increase in the number of members paying their subscriptions and asked whether the Treasurer would like to comment on this. Vince replied that he welcomed the payment of subscriptions and the extra generosity of some members and added that it would be very helpful if members would continue to pay their subscriptions promptly. As it was not possible to renew subscriptions at this AGM as we have done in the past, members will be reminded that renewals are due.

Anne Dare asked how many members out of our total membership have paid their subscription. The Treasurer replied that about 70 households have paid up which is about half of our membership. Anne felt that this ratio was quite poor and that members should be encouraged to pay their share.

(The Secretary pointed out that Anne Dare had entered a question in advance to be dealt with under A.O.B. This was addressed at this point at the meeting but for the sake of the Minutes is recorded under A.O.B.)

6. ELECTION OF THE 2020 COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Nominations, properly proposed and seconded by members, were received for the following Committee Officers:

Sarah Quail as Chair

Vince Waldron as Treasurer

Bebette Jones as Secretary

24 Proxy votes were returned, unanimously approving these nominations.

The Chair gave a vote of thanks to the three committee members retiring at this AGM: Richard Brownfield, Anthony Quail and Fin Letts. Richard Brownfield has played a key role in setting up the reconstituted WGRA some five years ago. As chairman, his energy and enthusiasm, and, equally, that of his wife, Sue, has contributed much to the Association's successes. Anthony Quail, like Richard, was a founder-member of the new committee in 2015 and was a useful link with the Chichester Society. However, the demands of that organization have meant that he could no longer give the time to our Association that he could in the past. Fin Letts also felt he did not have enough time to continue to serve on the committee but will remain as the Website Facilitator.

7. ELECTION OF THE 2020 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nominations, properly proposed and seconded by members, were received for the following Committee Members:

Brian Raincock Julia Smith

Gabrielle Abbott Richard Staughton

24 Proxy votes were returned unanimously approving these nominations

Brian, Julia and Gabrielle are former members of the committee while Richard Staughton was welcomed as a new nominee. He is particularly interested in traffic issues in Westgate and will be joining the Planning and Traffic sub-group. There are now four sub-groups operating under the auspices of the committee, each with their own leader. They are Planning and Traffic, Community, Social (Beaux Belles) and Communications. Any members of WGRA who may not have the time or inclination to stand for the committee, are encouraged to contact the Secretary if they would like to join any of these sub-groups.

8. APPROVAL OF REVISED CONSTITUTION

The WGRA Constitution 2020 was circulated in advance and included the following amendments that the committee wished to make:

4 a) 'Annual Report' has been inserted instead of 'twice yearly Newsletter'.

5 f) This is a new clause referring to Associate Membership. The intention is that Associate Members will be appointed by the WGRA Committee to help with committee business under the direction of the committee. If approved, it is hoped that this new category of membership

will also enable more people to become involved in WGRA activities without having to take on the responsibilities of full committee membership.

Our intention is to appoint as our first Associate Members: Fin Letts (Website Facilitator); Katherine Kellagher (Community sub-group leader) and Louise Higham (Communications team leader)

24 Proxy votes were returned, unanimously approving the Revised Constitution 2020.

9. A.O.B.

2 questions were submitted in advance:

Anne Dare asked:

“The receipt of £10 from 70 households is woefully low for the number of households in our catchment area (280). Would the committee consider sending out a membership form for the collection of subscriptions? At present, there is no incentive to pay as everyone is treated the same apart from voting.”

Sarah Quail replied:

“There are in fact 245 households in our catchment area of which 139 are WGRA members which is 57% of total households and 70 of those are paid up i.e. 50%. So, yes, you can argue that this is not equitable. However, since the WGRA was reconstituted five years ago, it has been the wish of the committee to encourage participation in the Association and to prevail on the goodwill of households to chip in funds.

You say, Anne, that there is no incentive to pay but we have always felt that the right to vote was a very tangible incentive to pay up. In fact, over the last few years, several of our members have been mortified to discover they were not paid up members entitled to vote and have therefore paid very rapidly into the kitty!

The committee has discussed this subject at length on several occasions of late and we do take your point. However, the view is that this is not the best of times to make this a major issue and we would prefer to continue to rely on the goodwill of the membership in the interests of encouraging participation in activities.”

David Setchell asked:

“Can we press CDC re the state of the road at the east end of Westgate? Cars cause water damage to walkers.”

Sarah Quail replied:

“We are sure that a number of locals will agree with you!

Firstly, you must report an issue like this to the relevant local authority. This issue is one for West Sussex County Council’s (WSCC)Highways Department. You can either ring them up or log into <https://love.westsussex.gov.uk> which is probably the best option at the moment with so many staff working at home. There you can explain fully what the problem is and track your query.

If what you are reporting is posing a danger or there is a Health and Safety issue, WSCC is obliged to act. If you fail to get any response within a reasonable period, then do let us know

and if you have not been in touch with your councillor by then, we can give you their contact details.

Basically, you must report problems! There were issues not so long ago about the state of Westgate. Street cleaning is in fact a Chichester District Council (CDC) responsibility and once we drew attention to the problem, Westgate is being swept more regularly.”

Sarah thanked those members attending the meeting and thanked all members for their support over the last twelve months and hopefully in the twelve months to come.

The meeting ended at 10.30am.

bj/ 16 November 2020