

SAFFRON WALDEN INITIATIVE LIMITED
A company limited by guarantee. Registered Number 03340325

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COMPANY
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX
AT 8PM ON 4TH NOVEMBER 2009**

The following Members present at the meeting signed the attendance sheet:

Collette Biggs; Richard Bray; Valerie Clarke; John Collins; Pam Collins; Pat Dale; Gail Ellison; Catherine Flack; Dorothy Free; Maggie Garland; Paul Garland; Janet Gruber; Chris Hingston; Ros Hyde; Stephen Jones; Susan Kinmonth; Helen Larsen; Amanda Lightstone; Hilary Morrish; Ann Pickhaver; Brian Porter; Jill Porter; John Ready; Anne Richings; Peter Riding; David Sandys-Renton; Judith Rodden; Judith Rowland; Peter Sanders; Donna Sharp; Jennifer Taylor; Roger Taylor; Joan Van Hees; Nigel Weaver; Robert Welham; Joan Withers; Barbara Wilcox; Janice Wrigley

Apologies for absence were received from:

Pamela Bray, David Corke; Francis Deutsch, Malcolm Domb; Ernest Effer; Judith Effer; Ginny Eley; Martyn Everett; Zofia Everett; Beatrice Goldie, Charles Goldie, Harry Grayling; Val Hollings; Diana Hoy; David Jarrold; Janet Jarrold; Christopher Knight; Jay Morrish; Glenys Plummer; Sue Rooney; Anthony Skipper; Shelagh Skipper; Michael Swindlehurst; Job Tissot; Marget Tissot; Rebecca del Tufo; Sue Ullstein; Stephen Willoughby; George Wombwell; Maggie Wombwell; Anthony Woods; Louise Woods

Peter Riding was in the Chair and a quorum was present

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17th November 2008

On the proposal of Stephen Jones and seconded by Richard Bray it was unanimously agreed that:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 17th November 2008 were a correct record and approved for signature by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising

3. Chairman's Report

Your Board met six times in the last 12 months and the other Directors have been Ginny Eley, Catherine Flack, Chris Hingston, Helen Lawsen, Stephen Jones, John Ready, Donna Sharp and Barbara Wilcox.

A year ago the membership stood at 169 individual members. We now have 194 individual members which is an increase of 15%. I would appreciate suggestions for increasing our membership and on how we can make better use of the yellow recruiting forms. For example, if new neighbours move into your area, please put a form through their letterbox.

Events we have organised for members this year have been a visit to the Riverslade Gallery in January; a visit to Cole's Traditional Foods in Great Chesterford during a snow storm in February; a Cheese and Wine Social at the Youth Hostel in March; a visit to the County High Farm in April; a visit to Manuden in May; a visit to the local Sewage Treatment Works in June; a visit to the Audley End Iron Age Fort in July; an all day visit to the Henry Moore Foundation at Perry Green and the Gibberd Garden near Harlow also in July; a visit to the Audley End Walled Garden in September and a wine tasting at Adnams in October. The visit to the Fire Station also planned for October had to be postponed and we are now waiting for a new date.

Events which the Initiative has organised for the community in the past 12 months have been the Late Night Christmas Shopping last December, the Dance in the Square in August and the Societies Showcase in September. The feedback on all these events was very positive.

The Initiative played a part in the re-furbishment of the Market Square through the involvement of one of our Directors, the architect John Ready, and by donating to the Town Council the lighting for the fountain and also the three new seats which are now outside the old Eaden Lilley building. We also installed the fingerpost which is on the corner of King Street and Market Place. And the last of the eight fingerposts has now been installed in Hill Street next to the Laura Ashley shop.

The Initiative has received a grant from UDC for £1,000 towards the purchase of 4 seats to replace the existing older seats in the High Street. In addition, the Initiative will be contributing £1,330 towards these seats. This

leaves £2,400 still to spend on street furniture from the original grants from Action for Market Towns, the ECC Market Towns Fund and Saffron Walden Museum which totalled £35,800. All suggestions welcome please.

The Initiative has worked closely with District Councillor Alastair Walters to document street lighting columns, road sign columns and cast iron bollards in the conservation area which need painting black. We have also been told by Essex Highways that many of the surplus road signs which we documented a number of years ago are finally going to be removed.

The Initiative has recently applied to the Essex County Council Communities Initiatives Fund for a grant to help refurbish the Swan Meadow pond by removing the island and making some of the edges more sloping, by repairing the clay lining and by replanting with appropriate natural species. If the money comes through then the work should take place next Autumn.

This year the Initiative has given out two small grants - £231 towards the production by the Tourist Information Centre of a Galleries Guide and £250 towards the cost of screens for the Uttlesford History Fair.

Looking ahead we have two new projects on the go. The first is a *Secret Walden* calendar for 2011 which will consist of photographs taken by members of the public. This is being co-ordinated by Donna Sharp with the close collaboration of the Tourist Information Centre and also Gordon Ridgewell who is making 2010 the last edition of his own local calendar. Our second project is a Maze Festival which we hope to hold in 2011. This is being co-ordinated by the small team led by Barbara Wilcox and they hope to announce more details soon.

On a wider front, the Initiative is represented on the Board of Saffron Screen, on the Committee of the Saffron Walden Arts Trust where we played a significant part of setting up last Summer's Arts Festival and on the Saffron Walden Partnership Board.

I would like to record my thanks to our Auditors, Shipleys LLP of Market Walk, Saffron Walden who do our accounts for no charge; my thanks to the excellent Board of Directors whom I have already listed; and my thanks to our Treasurer, Pam Collins, who has to deal with large quantities of cheques and keeps the accounts in good order. Pam has indicated that she would like to resign at the end of the current financial year, so we will need a new Treasurer then.

Our Company Secretary, Charles Goldie, has pointed out that under the Companies Act 2006, which reached its final stage of implementation on 1st October this year, we no longer need to have a Company Secretary position. Because of this he wishes to retire and we thank him very much for his many years of service.

Finally, I have a sense that our current model of operating might need reviewing. At the moment you elect the Directors and then wait 12 months to the next AGM to hear what they have achieved. I feel that members should be offered the opportunity to be more involved in discussing priorities and suggesting ideas for projects. Would an informal meeting in a pub every so often be welcomed by members? I look forward to your feedback and suggestions.

MEMBER SUGGESTIONS

Yes to the occasional informal pub gathering. Another visit to Cole's Traditional Foods and the Sewage Treatment Works. Seek a sign in the town to Audley End Station. Repair the lamp outside the Library. Have a suggestions book at the Tourist Information Centre.

4. Report by Barbara Wilcox, Chair of the Saffron Walden Partnership Board

Saffron Walden Partnership Board was established in 2005 with the initial purpose of overseeing the action plan from the 2004 Saffron Walden Healthcheck. It brings the 3 tiers of local government in Saffron Walden – Town, District and County Councils together with the community, as represented by the Saffron Walden Initiative. The Board acts as a joint steering committee for the work of the project officer Bruce Tice. Bruce has been working in this role, part-time, since August 2007, with funding from Essex County Council. The County Council has recently confirmed funding for a further year, covering the employment of the project officer for 10 hours per week.

The Initiative's representatives on the Partnership Board during the year have been: Catherine Flack (Chair); John Ready; Ginny Eley; Stephen Jones. Catherine resigned from the Board in September 2009 and was replaced by Barbara Wilcox.

The Board has met 8 times since the last SWI AGM in November 2008. Themes discussed at meetings have included open spaces, economic vitality, project planning and future-proofing. A number of projects have stemmed from these discussions.

Current projects include

Renovation of Swan Meadow pond
Empty shopfront regeneration - as seen in Eaden Lilley
Developing a local Food Trail
Audrey End Station signage
Promoting Saffron Walden - potential tourism forum
Battle Ditches & Castle
Town Entrance signs
Tree strategy
Bridge End Gardens Tree Trail

The Project Officer assists other organisations in the town in developing and delivering projects, for example working with the Skateboard Park group.

I should like to place on record my thanks to the members of the Initiative who have served on the Board, and in particular to Catherine Flack, who chaired the Board and maintained its momentum through a difficult period of financial uncertainty.

5. Financial Statements and Directors' and Accountant' Reports for the year ended 31st March 2009

The meeting received and considered the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2009 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports on those Statements.

On the proposal of Chris Hingston and seconded by Paul Garland it was unanimously resolved:

That the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2009 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports thereon be adopted and approved.

6. Election of Directors

The following Directors elected at the Annual General Meeting in 2008 offered themselves as candidates for re-election:

Ginny Eley, Catherine Flack, Christopher Hingston, Stephen Jones, Helen Larsen, John Ready, Peter Riding, Donna Sharp and Barbara Wilcox

On the proposal of Dorothy Free and seconded by Peter Sanders it was unanimously agreed:

(A) That the appointment of the candidates for re-election and election be decided by a single resolution, and

(B) That Ginny Eley, Catherine Flack, Christopher Hingston, Stephen Jones, Helen Larsen, John Ready, Peter Riding, Donna Sharp and Barbara Wilcox be elected Directors of the Company to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

7. Appointment of Accountants

On the proposal of Chris Hingston and seconded by John Ready it was unanimously agreed:

That Shipleys LLP be re-appointed accountants of the Company to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Hilary Morrish requested the Initiative do everything it can to help the town centre shops thrive in spite of the supermarkets. The Chairman said that it would work with the Saffron Walden Business Forum on this.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm