

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 20th NOVEMBER 2013**

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

Elaine Corke, Ginny Eley, Gail Ellisdon, Chris Hingston, Chris Knight, Helen Larsen, Jonathan Miller, Brian Porter, Jill Porter, John Ready, Peter Riding, Judith Rodden, Sue Rooney, Judith Rowland, Donna Sharp, Gordon Smith, Susan Smith, Job Tissot, Malcolm White, Kenneth Wilson, Tony Woods

Apologies for absence were received from:

Beverly Bernhardt, David Corke, Dominic Davey, Jane Knight, Chris Minett, Ann Pickhaver, Jane Ready, Ronnie Rip, Peter Sanders, Joanne Stone, Tim Stone, Sue Ullstein, Barbara Wilcox, Sue Wiseman, Janice Wrigley

Peter Riding was in the Chair and a quorum was present

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 26th November 2012

On the proposal of John Ready and seconded by Brian Porter it was unanimously agreed that:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 26th November 2012 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

The Board met seven times in the last 12 months and the other Directors have been Ginny Eley, Chris Hingston, Chris Knight, Helen Larsen, John Ready and Barbara Wilcox. Until August the Treasurer was Robert Welham and since then it has been Donna Sharp. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Robert for being such a helpful Treasurer for many years and wish him all the very best in his new life in Ely. Membership is down from 197 last year to 171. This is probably because we have not been active in seeking new members. Our recruitment leaflet is now out-of-date and is being re-designed. If any of you would like to help with membership recruitment, please let me know.

Events we have organised specifically for members this year have been a visit to No. 1 Myddylton Place, a guide to the Town Library, a Spring Clean of the fingerposts, a tour of Thaxted Church, a Clock and Dials tour of Cambridge Colleges, a visit to the Saffron Walden Alms Houses, a visit to the Cambridge University Press Museum, a visit to Saffron Walden Museum and a visit to the Fry Art Gallery. A project involving Initiative members and the Saffron Walden Camera Club to photograph all the listed buildings in the town is nearly complete. This will be used as an up-to-date record by the Planning Department at Uttlesford District Council.

For some time now Chris Hingston has been running, on behalf of the Initiative, free monthly Saffron Start Ups sessions in the King's Arms to help people who want to start a business or who have recently started a business. And, more recently, Chris has started Saffron Business Friends networking meetings in the King's Arms every month, also as a service of the Initiative.

Events which the Initiative has organised for the community in the past 12 months have been the Late Night Christmas Shopping last December, a Social Quiz in the King's Arms in January, a Town Treasure Hunt in June and the annual Dance in the Square on August Bank Holiday Saturday. And, of course, the biggest community project in the past year was the second Maze Festival. Barbara Wilcox has written a report for the AGM and, as she could not be present, Ginny Eley, the Deputy Chair, will present it.

The second maze festival organised by the Initiative was held from 16-19th August. The festival encompassed some 26 activities and events, organised by the committee and by other local groups and individuals.

Walden's third permanent maze, a labyrinth on the floor of the Jubilee Gardens Bandstand, was formally opened during the festival. The town was also full of temporary mazes and labyrinths - on the Common, in the museum grounds, in St Mary's Church and at Friends Meeting House, and on fingerposts around the town.

This year's festival was notable for the creativity it inspired. There were competitions for artworks and textile mazes, creative writing by members of U3A and new plays by local writers performed by Sheer Drop Theatre Company. The festival employed an artist in residence who ran three very popular creative workshops for children, and installed a hanging maze on the Common.

The out-turn budget for the festival is in process of being finalised, and should be around £11,250. Major funders were Awards for All (£6,150), Saffron Walden Initiative (£2,300), UDC Community Project Grant (£1,600), Croucher Needham (£1,000) and Saffron Walden Town Council. Around a dozen local businesses made smaller donations, and the raffle raised over £500.

Feedback from those attending the festival was overwhelmingly positive. For example, from Ed Simmons (38) and Daisy (5) from Charlton, SE London: "A totally surprisingly enduring theme of games and puzzles, totally brilliant idea. My daughter has been completely fixated and absorbed for the duration. Returning many times to her favourites. All made possible by local funding and heroic volunteering. Lovely crescendo of fire juggling and torch procession! All our friends from London are envious. Thank you."

The organising committee is grateful to the members of the Initiative who supported the festival in many ways. The Initiative Board has decided that, subject to volunteers and funding, a further festival should be held in 2016 following the Carnival in 2014 and the Arts Festival in 2015.

A community project which the Initiative had been pursuing for around two years led by John Ready was the design and installation of an initial six Blue Plaques in the town to commemorate significant former residents. These were launched by the Mayor in mid-June with grant funding from Uttlesford District Council. The Initiative is funding the design and printing of blue plaques leaflets to be distributed free by the Tourist Information Centre. And the Initiative has paid for the printing of another 20,000 Town Trail leaflets which are given away free to visitors by the Tourist Information Centre.

Looking ahead to next year, we are planning to play a part in the 1514 Town Charter celebrations in mid-May by organising a Tudor Trail involving talks, exhibits and visits. In June we plan to hold another Societies Showcase in the Town Hall. And in September we hope to develop a project which explores the impact of the First World War on the community in Saffron Walden, including an educational resource pack. And a longer term project on our list is the refurbishment of the Victorian fenced gardens outside The Close house in the High Street.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to our Auditors, Croucher Needham (Essex) LLP of Market Walk, Saffron Walden who do our accounts for no charge which is much appreciated. I'd also like to give a vote of thanks to our excellent Board of Directors and Treasurer and, in particular, would like to single out Helen Larsen who is not standing for office again but who has been a tremendous asset to the Board for many years.

4. Financial Statements and Directors' and Accountant' Reports for the year ended 31st March 2013

The meeting received and considered the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2013 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports on those Statements.

On the proposal of Ginny Eley and seconded by Chris Knight it was unanimously resolved:

That the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2013 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports thereon be adopted and approved.

The previous Treasurer, Robert Welham, was thanked for his helpful notes on the Statutory Accounts.

5. Election of Directors

The following Directors elected at the Annual General Meeting in 2012 offered themselves as candidates for re-election: Ginny Eley, Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, John Ready, Peter Riding and Barbara Wilcox. Jonathan Miller put himself forward as a candidate for election.

On the proposal of Gordon Smith and seconded by Job Tissot it was unanimously agreed:

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

That Ginny Eley, Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, Jonathan Miller, John Ready, Peter Riding and Barbara Wilcox be elected Directors of the Company to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

6. Appointment of Accountants

On the proposal of John Ready and seconded by Donna Sharp it was unanimously agreed:

That Croucher Needham (Essex) LLP of Market Walk, Saffron Walden be re-appointed accountants of the Company to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm