

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 7.30PM ON 22nd OCTOBER 2019**

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

Ginny Eley, Chris Hingston, Anne Hughes, Richard Hughes, Gillian Mulley, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding, Judith Rowland, Anthony Skipper, Isabella Warren, Tim Wood

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Lorraine Chitson, David Corke, Dominic Davey, Patricia Gregory, Chris Knight, David Laing, Jane Laing, Sue Lambley, Barbara Leckenby, Jezz Leckenby, Sheila Nightingale, Inger O'Meara, Jane Ready, David Sandys-Renton, Sally Sandys-Renton, Sue Ullstein, Cindy Whife, Barbara Wilcox, Kenneth Wilson

Peter Riding was in the Chair and a quorum was present

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22nd November 2018

On the proposal of Richard Hughes and seconded by Jacqui Portway it was unanimously agreed that:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 22nd November 2018 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 **six** times since the last AGM and the other Directors have been Chris Hingston, Chris Knight, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, John Ready and Cindy Whife. Cindy has also been the Treasurer and I have been acting as the Membership Secretary.

Saffron Walden Initiative is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee which means that we are a Company with no shares and so can be regarded as a **non-profit making organisation**. The Board is elected by the Members. There currently are **198** registered Members - up from 182 last year.

Events organised specifically for **Members** in the last 12 months have been: A tour of the service wing and stables of Audley End House organised by one of our members, Nina Martin; a visit to the Bell Ringers at St Mary's Church; a visit to the Radleys company in Shire Hill; a visit to Saffron Walden County High School; a visit to the Contamac company in Shire Hill; a visit to Noakes Grove Nature Reserve in Swards End; a visit to the Henry Moore Studios & Gardens; a visit to Audley End Iron Age Fort & Temple of Victory; a visit to Saffron Walden Cricket Club; A 'Saving the Children' talks & visit to Lodge Farm in Thaxted; a visit to Toppesfield Vineyard; a visit to Fairycroft House in Saffron Walden.

Events organised for the **wider community** in the past 12 months included the first **Christmas Shop Windows Competition** in November which had 42 entries and involved 12 judges; the **Late Night Christmas Shopping** event last December with the charity stalls organised by Patrick Hawke-Smith and the musical entertainment organised by Jacqui Portway; another enjoyable **Social Quiz** in the King's Arms in January organised by Barbara Wilcox and Ginny Eley; a **Music Saturday** event involving buskers in a number of locations around the town centre organised by Jacqui Portway; and the 17th **Dance in the Square** on August Bank Holiday Saturday organised by Jacqui Portway and myself which featured The Freddie Hall Band, with the young dancers from Stagecoach performing mainly at the start and Darren Stammers singing in the interval.

Specifically for the **Business Community**, Chris Hingston has organised monthly Saffron Business Friends networking meetings in the King's Arms with a different speaker each time.

Following on from the **Maze Festivals** organised by the Initiative in 2011, 2013 & 2016, it had been hoped to organise another one in August this year. However, it became clear quite early on that there would not be sufficient people power available to plan it, raise the considerable funds, organise the publicity and programmes

and then run it. This was a real pity but major projects such as the Maze Festival need a dedicated team working intensely for at least 12 months before the event.

This year John Ready has continued to put together **Welcome Packs** for new residents to the area. They are distributed through Estate Agents and the Tourist Information Centre. We give them free to the TIC but charge Estate Agents to help cover our costs.

The **Listening Bench** in the museum grounds continues to be popular. This is where you can hear a range of oral history recordings which the Initiative set up with the help of Essex Record Office.

Another ongoing project has been the **photographing of all the Listed Buildings** in Saffron Walden. This was started off by Barbara Wilcox from the Initiative and then taken over by Dominic Davey from the Camera Club who is also an Initiative member. The photographs, along with copies of their Historic England listings, have been sent to the Planning Department at Uttlesford as well as the Town Council and Essex County Council Archives. It is hoped that before too long they will appear on the District Council's website.

Looking ahead, we are organising the first ever **Family Lantern Walk & Carol Singing** on The Common on Sunday 15th December in the early evening. This will fit in with this year's town Christmas theme of 'Light It Up' and should be an enjoyable and free community event.

On the **financial income** side the Initiative received grants from the Town Council as follows: £300 for 200 Welcome Packs; £300 towards the Dance in the Square and £283 to cover the Initiative's Public Liability Insurance. The Initiative also received a total of £850 from Uttlesford District Council and £200 from the Saffron Walden Arts Trust, both for the Dance in the Square.

On the **financial expenditure** side the Initiative paid £450 for a re-print of the Blue Plaques leaflet given out by the Tourist Information Centre and £250 was paid to the Town Council to sponsor the flower tubs outside Boots for a year.

Around a month ago I contacted Initiative members by email asking for **suggestions for member talks and visits** and I am delighted to report that we received a range of suggestions which we are following up. We would also welcome ideas for **new community projects** to improve the quality of life in the area. In the past we put up all the Fingerposts in the town; created the Town Trail with pavement plaques and free leaflets; organised Town Maps at the main car parks; arranged for the attractive Town Entrance Road Signs; funded and managed the refurbishment of Swan Meadow Pond; provided numerous public seats and benches; and organised the lighting of the statue in Market Place. **We are always on the lookout for future project ideas and people who can lead them.**

I would like to end my report by first recording many thanks to our Accountants, **Croucher Needham** of Market Walk in Saffron Walden, who prepare our annual accounts for no charge which is much appreciated. Last but by no means least, I'd like to give a warm vote of thanks to the excellent Board of Directors.

4. Financial Statements and Directors' and Accountant' Reports for the year ended 31st March 2019

The meeting received and considered the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2019 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports on those Statements.

On the proposal of David Pearl and seconded by John Ready it was unanimously resolved:

That the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2019 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports thereon be adopted and approved.

5. Election of Directors

The following Members offered themselves as candidates for election as Directors: Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding and Lucinda Whife.

On the proposal of Ginny Eley and seconded by Gillian Mulley it was unanimously agreed:

That the appointment of the candidates for election be decided by a single resolution and that Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding, and Lucinda Whife be elected Directors of the Company to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

6. Appointment of Accountants

On the proposal of Anthony Skipper and seconded by Jacqui Portway it was unanimously agreed:

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

7. Any Other Business

John Ready reported that some of the finger mazes on the planters at the Swan Meadow Maze had been damaged and so he had removed all of them until he can provide stronger fixings for them.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm