

**FRIENDS OF HORSPATH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 18th November 2020
at 2.30 pm via Zoom**

PRESENT:	Trustees:	Sheila Frankum (Chair) Ray Jackson Sally Humphrey	Anna Radcliffe Natalie Oakley Judy Kent (Minutes)
	Representing HPC:	Peter Dobson	Dick Burgess
	Friends of Horspath:	Chris and Margaret Drew	Nigel Montgomery
APOLOGIES:		Gill Gray Annette Miller	Carol Cuthbert Kelvin Barnes

1.0 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Sheila welcomed everybody and thanked them for coming. It was nice to welcome villagers who made up a quorum.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25th SEPTEMBER 2019

Sheila reported that Annette Miller had asked for her name to be changed from Andrew Miller in the list of those present. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman on Friday.

ACTION: Judy to amend previous minutes.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no matters arising.

4.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This had been a year of two halves. In the first half things were going extremely well with classes full, weekends booked for family celebrations and events. The Friday coffee mornings were busy and being enjoyed by a growing number of villagers, just as the Post Office continued to be well used especially during the run up to Christmas. In order for the smooth running of all bookings, we are grateful to Heather Palmer and Judy for keeping the website up to date. Another success was our markets, and the Christmas market was really well attended with all stalls taken up and a wonderful Santa's Grotto for the children (and adults!). Our thanks to Anna and the nursery for organising these.

At last year's AGM, we announced that the teacher of the art group had to step down after many years of teaching. However, John Underdown stepped into the breach and that group had flourished. With continued sponsorship from Horspath Parish Council (HPC), the Making Time Craft group had also flourished with up to 20 people attending trying many different craft activities.

Thanks to Peter Ewart, at last we had a mirror erected to make the exit from our driveway safe. We also had the drive vastly improved with a tarmac surface. The plan for the summer was to have the garden redesigned with a proper surface for a small car park.

The induction of our new vicar took place in Cuddesdon church and community hall this time, but we did take our part during the interview process. St Giles hosted the service and sermons, and we provided a sumptuous breakfast for all those taking part. After settling in, Karen enjoyed coming to the coffee mornings to meet people. We held a very successful pancake party in February attended by some of Horspath Primary pupils as well as many pancake makers. Had things been normal, I feel sure the Hub would have been quite a busy place for events from St Giles.

Our association with Age UK continued throughout the year with a Film Club one afternoon a month, which was very popular. With tea and sumptuous cakes, what isn't to like. Kate Hart, who organised this addition to our activities, had also attended a coffee morning once a month with plenty of advice for anyone requiring help from this well-established organisation.

Unfortunately, our successes came to an end in March when coronavirus took over and a lockdown was announced. We took immediate action for everyone's safety and were unsure how to help the village people. Fortunately, HPC saw to that and everyone was given the name of a neighbour who could help them. We were very grateful for such an immediate action. We were also grateful to the village store for staying open throughout. As spring was coming to an end and things were beginning to ease, we were able to reopen the Post Office and were grateful to Judy and Christine for organising this again and making it safe to be used.

With instructions and advice from Tessa Hall, our Community Halls Advisor, we were able to apply for a grant from South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) to tide us over this bleak period, as many bills were still coming in. Also, the insurance company wanted us to check the Hub on a weekly basis to make sure nothing untoward was happening. I would like to thank Lyn Drury for covering this task.

Eventually, in order to start using the Hub again, a Risk Assessment had to be put in place and certain aspects of the building had to be redesigned. The trustees met according to the rules and with a lot of work from Sally and Natalie, eventually all was put in place. After a very professional COVID clean, we were ready to slowly open our doors and let the building come alive again. It was very sad to walk into the building during lockdown (to read the meters). It didn't seem right for this usually welcoming and cheerful facility to be shut up and unused.

We sometimes had to make difficult decisions about the Hub's use, but by half term some classes were running, and we did manage to start a coffee morning following all the restrictions. Thanks to Anna and her team for organising that.

As well as a deep clean, the garden area had a good clean up with hedges trimmed and borders rejuvenated. Thanks to Ray for organising this with a lot of help from Margaret and Chris Drew, and Sally.

It is with great sadness that I have to report some really good friends and devotees of the Hub passed away during this last year: Eileen Stone, Erena Hodges, Valerie Ives, Joy Mullins and our Man for all Jobs, Donald Gray. Gill and Donald had kept the Hub clean on a weekly basis and I wish to thank them especially for their loyalty and all their hard work. Maurice and Eileen were very keen supporters throughout our journey. We will greatly miss Erena, Valerie, Joy and Donald who attended and supported so many of our events.

I think it is my job to thank all of our trustees and our two new committee members for all their hard work this year. Sally for organising the classes and bookings, Anna for the Coffee mornings and organising our wonderful cake making volunteers, Judy for minute taking and the Post Office.

Thanks go especially to Ray who took on the mantle of Chairman of our trustee meetings. This was never an easy task.

We are grateful to Natalie for sitting on the group and for organising fund-raising events for the village. She had made them fun and safe for everyone taking part. We joined in as much as we could, and I do hope all the organisations will benefit from their efforts.

It is with a very sad heart that we are expecting the resignation of Peter Ewart just this week. He has contributed a tremendous amount to the running of this initiative right from the very beginning. A bridge builder extraordinaire, he has managed the grounds and done endless maintenance jobs within the Hub, as well as being a constant person to chat to during our Coffee mornings. If we were able to give out an award for outstanding community work (OCW), Peter would be the first in line.

Money, as always, is a continued problem but, as you can see from the report from our accountant, we are OK at present. Let's hope we will be able to continue successfully when this new life returns.

5.0 FINANCIAL REPORT

(Appendix 1 – Unaudited Accounts for the Year ended 31 May 2020)

In the absence of Kelvin Barnes, Accountant, Sheila Frankum summarised the Balance Sheet, Incoming Resources and Expenses.

5.1 Balance Sheet on 31st May 2020

Sheila said that there was £30,000 left remaining on the £100,000 loan from SODC. This had to be repaid only if the Hub was sold and was over a ten-year period with three years left.

The ACRE loan was paid every year and had three years to run.

Total assets were £223,810.

5.2 Incoming Resources

In 2019, our income was £14,617. In 2020, our total income was £27,000, which included a grant for Covid-19 of £10,000 from SODC. Sheila thanked Natalie for completing the application form.

Income from Gift Aid this year was £661.

We had received a grant of £300 from HPC for Making Time, the arts and crafts group.

The sale of calendars and Christmas cards had brought in £500.

The amount of £2981 for fundraising was mostly from coffee mornings.

Hire of the Hall brought in nearly £6000.

5.3 Expenses

The newsletter had cost £267 and donations had been made to MacMillan and Children in Need.

The driveway had been tarmacked at a cost of £3,286. We had received a grant from Stone Pit a few years ago for this.

Payments were still being made for an entertainment licence, broadband, fire, and electricity.

Expenses this year were £10,634 as compared to £10,367 in 2019.

6.0 CLASSES, CLUBS AND EVENTS

Sally Humphrey's report stated that classes and clubs had remained much the same as last year: three Pilates classes, one Yoga class, Move It or Lose it (a seated exercise class). The Art Group, Line Dancing, Table Tennis, Creative Writing, Making Time (an arts and crafts group), Hypnobirthing, Senior Residents' Club, the Film Club and the Wine Club, as well as Coffee Mornings every Friday morning.

Since the week of 16th March, all classes and activities were stopped because of the COVID-19 situation and in line with Government guidelines.

In September, the trustees thought that some groups might be able to begin again. We wrote a detailed Risk Assessment and arranged a professional deep clean of the entire Hub in preparation for this. After the deep clean, two classes, a Pilates class and the Art Group did start in October.

There had been birthday parties, baby showers, community AGM's, etc., taking place, but these events had to stop in March as well.

Sheila said the important thing was that we had got people who were prepared to start up classes again. Leo Richardson, who ran Line Dancing, was very keen to start again as it was a very popular class and was part of the participants physical activity.

6.1 Future Classes and Events

At the time of writing it was difficult to imagine what the future will be like, but we have booked a Magic Show with Magic Peter on 26th June 2021 from 3.00 to 5.00 pm. After twice postponing this event, we lived in hope that this will be able to go ahead. Sally added that it could be held in the garden if we were still in some sort of lockdown.

Christmas Grotto

Anna reported that Natalie had been planning a Christmas Grotto with Father Christmas on Saturday 12th December 2020. Natalie said that lots of people had said it was a good idea, but she had not sold any tickets. Anna said we were wondering if we could have a scaled down market, but maybe that was too complicated, as we did not know what we were going to be able to do.

Sheila said that at last year's Christmas Market, Barbara Lewis, Joy Mullins, and Esme enjoyed Father Christmas. Ray said we would have a better idea of what we could do when we went back to a tiered system.

7.0 COFFEE MORNINGS AND CHRISTMAS MARKET

7.1 Friday Coffee Mornings

Anna Radcliffe's report stated that the Coffee Mornings had proved to be very popular. There was a core of regular attendees and many casual coffee drinkers, some from the villages around Horspath. Our accounts began to depend on the money that came in from these occasions. The drinks and homemade cakes were of a very high standard and were sold at economic prices.

Then suddenly in March 2020, the virus arrived, and the Hub had to shut; so that was the end of the Friday coffee mornings for a while. Eventually I managed to reopen, for limited numbers and in a COVID friendly way, in October. The people who came

seemed to enjoy being out and among friends after being very isolated for the previous six months. Sadly, we have had to close again, but the Coffee Mornings will resume just as soon as the lockdown was relaxed.

7.2 The Christmas Market

We had a very successful Christmas Market in November 2019. All of our stallholders were local, and we had the bonus of Father Christmas in his Grotto which drew in the children.

Sadly, we had not been able to have a market since then, although it is hoped that we can have a Father Christmas and his Grotto again and maybe a few stalls. We are set to go as soon as we are allowed.

8.0 POST OFFICE

The total number of customers from September 2019 to August 2020 was 879. Obviously, the coronavirus pandemic had a dramatic effect on Horspath Post Office, as it had on every part of our lives.

The Post Office closed for eleven weeks during which there were two Bank Holidays. We opened again on 12th June 2020 following lockdown. So the lockdown took nine weeks of Post Office custom.

The footfall, month by month, was as follows:-

September 2019	104	April 2020	Closed
October 2019	104	May 2020	Closed
November 2019	132	June 2020 (3 weeks)	39
December 2019	124	July 2020	66
January 2020	113	August 2020	49
February 2020	81		
March 2020 (3 weeks)	67		

The average monthly footfall before lockdown was 104, and since lockdown 51.

The downturn in customers was to be expected and was not a threat to the service we provided. The Post Office would still be here throughout this current lockdown. Who knows how the next year would progress.

The new hours were 9.30 am to 12.30 pm.

Sheila thanked Judy for remaining open during this lockdown. Judy praised Sheila and Ray for being with her during the Post Office, for which she was extremely grateful. If they weren't there, the Post Office would not be able to open.

9.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Wine Festival

Nigel Montgomery said he had hoped to open the Wine Club again, but logistics had not permitted this. One of the things Nigel was looking at was a mini Wine Festival next year during the latter half of the summer for which he had worked out costings. Judy supported this proposal. Sheila said it could be done cost wise and logistically.

9.2 Tributes

Peter Dobson thanked the trustees for inviting him to the AGM and wished us all the best for 2021.

Margaret Drew thanked Natalie for all the fundraising activities she had arranged for the whole village, the proceeds of which went to the Church, the Nursery, and the Hub. There were ideas for next year. Natalie said it was a joy doing it and watch this space for next year!

Sally said how good it was that people had ideas about what to do when we were finally able to use the Hub in full, with Nigel's thoughts and tutors' ideas about how to restart.

Ray thanked everybody for coming today.

10.0 DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It would be in September 2021 in the Hub, the date to be arranged.