

Hunstanton & District Civic Society - Minutes of the AGM

held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 9 December 2015

The Chairman, Andrew Murray, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reminded members that the name of the society was changed officially last year to Hunstanton and District Civic Society. Also thanks to Stephen Kent we have a new web-site www.hunstantoncivicsociety.co.uk with no hyphens and .co.uk. The Civic Society is now one of 329 societies affiliated to Civic Voice. We pay a capitation fee of £1.50 but that only covers about half the running costs.

Fortunately in the past year they have been very successful in obtaining extra Grants for several projects and been able to take on extra staff.

Civic Voice gains access to Government via the All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies. The 78 MPs who are members include Henry Bellingham. Having participated in the Department of Communities and Local Government Select Committee review of the operation of the National Planning Policy Framework they are now involved in the review of Community Rights arising from the Localism Act of 2011.

Prior to the election, Civic Voice produced their manifesto 'Localism for Real'. They are the leading member of the Localism Alliance promoting Community Rights. They produced 'Collaborative Planning for All' which is an approach to planning and public realm enhancement.

At last year's convention in Canterbury, the Norwich Society won an award recognising their achievement in producing a Local List of 122 buildings of historic or architectural significance. This year's Convention was held in Bristol. It was particularly stimulating because it was held in the St James Priory, the city's oldest building dating from 1170. It has been rescued from dilapidation with a £2.4m HLF grant. We heard a most moving account of how a teacher, Susan Jotcham met up with 3 monks and started working with social outcasts. This led her onto a multimillion pound project to renovate the dilapidated building and transform it into a vibrant centre for the community and an active place of worship and outreach. The next convention is to be in historic Chester.

Civic Voice has just held the first of what will be annual Design Awards competitions. It is co-ordinating the survey of 200,000 Grade II listed buildings.

The chairman made a final call for nominations for committee members.

1. There were 58 members and 5 visitors present and **apologies** were received from: Janet & Derek Bowyer, Martin Chown, Christine Earnshaw, Alethea Gillard, David Jones, John Maiden, Janet & Tony Roper, Ivy Scales and Adrian Winnington

2. The **minutes** of the AGM on 10 December 2014 were presented. The main points were :-at the Civic Voice AGM in Canterbury, Griff Rhys Jones launched the manifesto 'Localism for Real' McCarthy & Stone had won their appeal to develop the former garage site. A leaflet concerning the Ringstead Windmill had been produced; the interpretation boards had been renewed with the assistance of Viv Young and Paris Print.
3. A chairman's report was circulated in September. This suggested that the public face of the society had moved from the talks evenings to the Heritage Centre along with the interpretation boards, web-site and heritage plaques and trails. Since that time, the Hearings in Public of the Borough Council's Site Allocations and Development Management Policies have now concluded and the inspector will be writing his report to the Borough; Tony Armstrong and John Smith mounted an exhibition in the Le Strange Arms Hotel about the Gray family's involvement with Hunstanton; the shelter has been relocated from Chapel Bank; a consultation is in progress concerning a HLF bid to renovate The Green and Esplanade gardens. The year's activities were then presented on Power Point including the visit to 2 churches in London designed by Butterfield; the re-location of the shelter; the exhibition at the Le Strange; the permission for Hopkins Homes to develop on an area of Important Landscape Quality; the 9 talks; the fossil hunt; the Heritage Centre and its visitors; the background activities and other aspects of community involvement. An appeal was made for a new talks organiser to replace Martin Chown. The Trustees report was approved with a show of hands.
4. The treasurer, John Little presented the accounts of the Civic Society which showed an income of £2,438.35 including subscriptions of £1,454. An expenditure of £2,525.60 consisting of insurance £342, affiliations £352, web hosting £279, hall hire £335 and speakers' fees £353. As the Heritage Centre and Civic Society administration had been merged, Andrew Murray reported that the Heritage Centre donations were £2,779.84, expenditure £1,115.69 producing a surplus of £ 664.15 When the figures were combined the income was £ 5,218.19, expenditure £3641.09 and surplus of £1,576.90 giving total assets of £13,503.75

There was a query about the meaning of 'pier bed' – this represented expenditure on new plants in the pier bed maintained by the civic society. Mr. Ruston suggested that the subscription should be doubled but it was explained that we had experienced great difficulty in persuading members to alter their Standing Orders in the past and that is why there is now an admission charge of £1 at the meetings. The Financial Reports were approved with a show of hands.

5. David Boxell was thanked for his meticulous work in examining this year's accounts and it was unanimously agreed that he would be the examiner for the coming year.
6. **Election of Officers and Trustees** – Mr Murray explained that all committee members who are also trustees retire at the AGM, but may stand for re-election. He thought that it would be best if someone else became chairman but as no one else had come forward, he proposed that the chair should be elected at the first committee meeting. Alethea Gillard was elected as secretary and Stephen Kent as treasurer.
7. Committee Members: Anthony Armstrong, Terry Ashworth, Margi Blunden, John Maiden, Andrew Murray, Ivy Scales, Ann Stevens, Mavis Windibank and Adrian Winnington were elected to serve as Trustees.

The retiring committee members, Martin Chown, John Little and Richard Webb were thanked for their services over the years to the Civic Society.

The active helpers, David Jones, Brian Holmes and John Maiden were thanked for their hard work, together with the 30 volunteers who man the Heritage Centre. Thanks were also given to Lisa and the Town Hall staff and the Borough Council for permitting use of the meeting room at Valentine Road free of charge

The need for advisors with professional experience in architecture, planning, finance, heritage and history was emphasized. If you are a teacher or an educationalist, we need your help to enthuse younger people about their heritage and history. If you are a naturalist or a biologist, we need your help with Hunstanton's biodiversity issues.

An invitation was issued for members to come to the next meeting of the committee on Thursday 17 December 2015 at 2.30 at Valentine Road. An outline of future projects was presented including promotion of the important neolithic site at Oasis Way; the production of additional leaflets about the Le Strange family and architects William Butterfield and George Skipper as well as new displays for the Heritage Centre

8. **Any other business.** There was none. The AGM was closed at 19.05
An excellent buffet was then enjoyed. It had been prepared by Margi Blunden, and Ann Stevens.

Approved at the 2016 AGM held 14th December 2016