



WOODFORD WAR MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE
Registered Charity no 520141

MINUTES OF THE 61st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
Wednesday 25th September 2013 7.30pm
Small Hall Woodford Community Centre

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| CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME | Colin Griffin (Vice-President) opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the WWMCC's 61 st Annual General Meeting. |
| ATTENDANCE | Colin Griffin, Evelyn Frearson, Brenda Mercer, Judith Craig, Jane Sandover, Kris Hayward, Rosalie Griffin, Helen Buszard, David Buszard, Stephen Taylor, Derek Snowdon, Pat Snowdon, Jacky Baker, Graham Farrand, Geoff Law, Mary Law, Jim Preston, Barbara Preston, Paula Mott, David Mott, Susan Hulme, John Cooke, David Trevor, Richard ?? (Jenny Lane), Neville Deauville, David Higgins, Jayne McCall, Louise Shaw, Sarah Turner, David Russell, Sylvia Brown, Sue Shierson, June Kirwin, Kate Wardle-Davies, Ron Beatham, Geoff Lawrenson |
| APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. | Liz Green, Harry Jenkins |
| ACCEPTANCE OF 2012 MINUTES | Kris Hayward proposed and Paul Rodman seconded that the previous minutes should be accepted. The acceptance was unanimous. |
| MATTERS ARISING FROM PREV MINUTES | Small hall clock hands are now black and clearly visible. |
| PROPOSAL TO AMEND CLAUSES 8.1, 9.4 & 10.3 OF THE CONSTITUTION | Colin Griffin introduced the proposals and Judith Craig explained the reasons for requiring the reduction in the quoracy requirements as per constitution. The reason the committee are seeking a reduction in these requirements is purely to facilitate the necessary business of meetings (regular Management Committee, AGM and SGM). It has proved difficult over recent years to obtain the necessary numbers and particularly in the case of regular Management Committee meetings has often caused considerable hindrance and delay in implementing necessary business. The committee are seeking to reduce the management meeting requirement from 7 to 5 voting members, AGM requirement from 30 to 25 and SGM requirement from 30 to 25. The votes were unanimous in their favour of all three amendments. |

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Evelyn Frearson presented the following report.

Good evening everyone and thank you for coming to help us conduct the business of our AGM. We can't do it without you.

As you are probably aware, 2013 is a significant year in the history of the Centre as it is 60 years since it was opened on June 27th in 1953. I am very pleased to report in this Diamond Jubilee year that the place is thriving and, as you can see from the accounts, the financial status is good.

Our income arises from two main sources which are the annual bonfire fund raiser and fees for hire of the facilities with the occasional bonus of donations.

Our outgoings consist of running costs and capital expenditure to maintain the building and grounds. The challenge for the committee is to meet these outgoings and retain a sensible emergency reserve. Jane will take you through the finances in greater detail.

This committee agreed to retain a reserve emergency fund of at least £65,000 this year. We recommend that it is reviewed annually so that it keeps pace with inflation. Funds over and above this reserve are available for use in an on-going programme of refurbishment of the Centre.

This year we took steps to improve sound insulation at the Centre following complaints about local noise disturbance caused by evening events. Opening of the front fire doors during an overly exuberant Christmas party seemed to trigger this particular round. We got scientific about it and purchased a sound meter in order to quantify the level of noise emitted and monitor the effectiveness of our steps to reduce it. Improved insulation of the doors, particularly the front fire-escape door, has resulted in marked improvements in noise emission and a cessation of the complaints.

There have been a number arrivals and departures during the year, which Jude will cover.

I would just like to say that we were sorry to see the departure in November last year of the caretaker Karl Allen and his wife Michelle, who was our cleaner. They had been with us for over two years and it was a shame that health problems eventually made it impossible for them to continue in their roles here. We wish them well in the future.

Management of employees is too onerous for the volunteers on the management committee, so we decided to meet the caretaking and cleaning needs of the Centre using contractors. A special thank you is due to Brenda Mercer, Jude Craig and Geoff Lawrenson who bridged the gap between the departure of Karl and Michele and the arrival of the cavalry in the form of Surety Key Holders to provide the lock-up service. Brenda and Jude gave many extra hours of their spare time to fill the gap.

We also said au revoir to Derek Blunt who was Chairman for 30 years from 1965 to 1995 and then became our President. Derek has now gone to live with his family in Eastbourne but earlier in the month we said thank-you to him with a get together at the Centre which Jude will tell you about. As you can see, the management committee invited Colin to step into Derek's role at this meeting and he kindly agreed.

As I have mentioned, we have an on-going programme of refurbishment to the Centre. Prioritising the order of tasks has been very much aided by the arrival of Jane who is a qualified architect. Jane has conducted a dilapidations survey and produced a comprehensive report which identifies features in need urgent attention and those which can wait a while. Using this Dilapidations Report and in consultation with user groups, we identified the kitchen as the next priority in the refurbishment programme.

While searching for funding on the internet one day at the end of last year, I was surprised and excited to discover that the WWMCC is eligible to apply for a grant from the Landfill Communities Fund, as we are within 10 miles of a landfill site at Gawsworth. To cut a long story short, the Landfill Communities Fund offsets some of the negative impacts of living very close to a landfill site by allowing the Landfill Operators to pay a proportion of their landfill tax liability to not-for-profit organisations that deliver benefits to the general public, biodiversity or the environment. That it seems includes the community centre. The fund is distributed in Cheshire by Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN) and Veolia Ltd (an international waste management company with offices in Warrington and London).

Having established that kitchen refurbishment was the next priority, and that WREN but not Veolia would fund a kitchen, we applied to WREN for a grant of £6,000, which should provide approximately 70% of the total funds needed. The difference will be paid from Centre funds. There is only a 30% chance of any application being awarded funding and we have to wait until the end of November this year to hear whether our application has been successful. If the grant application is not successful then the project will go ahead using Centre funds.

The committee would like to thank the WCC, the WI, the Woodford Bridge Club and the Players who all wrote letters in support of our grant application.

Being an outdoor girl at heart, I have taken a special interest in the grounds here at the Centre.

One of the highlights of the year has been the completion of the Jubilee Garden by the WI. It was officially opened this summer and has provided a tranquil haven and a lovely splash of colour this summer. Many thanks to the gardening enthusiasts in the WI who have worked so hard to set it up and maintain a succession of colourful flowers.

A particularly enjoyable feature of the year for me has been the Woodland project. It started with the planting of tree saplings donated by the Woodland Trust in 2010 to form a copse by the hard standing at the back of the Centre, which some of you here were involved in. After that a committee member said, almost as an aside, "Wouldn't it be nice to have a woodland walk". Two key words "Woodland" and "Walk" fired my enthusiasm and from there it became a family enterprise. We have hacked, chopped and sawn our way through the undergrowth to rediscover a seasonal pond and a nice little wood. We lost count of the bucket loads of broken crockery, glass, metal, polypropylene string and brick rubble which we removed from the site. The whole area appears to have been used for tipping for many years and we even found parts of an engine buried there and a cash register in the pond. Sadly, so far no buried treasure! In the end we decided clearance was not possible and the only option was covering it all up. A heap of earth located at the far end of the wood was perfect for the job and has been moved little by little by shovel and barrow so far. Paul Rodman has offered help with a digger so that should save time on our

backs! Our son, Adam, embarked on his first attempt at hedge laying with a hedge at the back of the field. Surprisingly, the hedge is still alive and well.

We invited committee members to join in grounds project when many hands were needed to make light work. A big thank you to all of those who braved the wind, rain and mud this winter to plant another batch of hedgerow saplings from the Woodland Trust and miniature daffodils which were very kindly donated by Brian Horrocks in the spring. Many thanks as well to the Centre's gardener Ian Barber and Brenda, who have provided bark for the path through the wood. We have sown grass and wild flower seeds on site and also transplanted wild flowers and trees from home. Rabbits have been working equally hard to spoil things but some plants have survived when suitably protected. It was a long, cold, brown winter and it all looked rather bleak for a while, but, finally, in the very late spring it all turned green again.

You might be interested to know that I sent a report with photographs on the project to the Woodland Trust who were delighted and asked if they could use it as a case study on their website as it represents exactly what they are trying to achieve with their free community tree packs, which is more green areas for the public to enjoy and a greater awareness of the importance of trees in our well-being. Although we got further in a year than my wildest dreams, there is still plenty more to do and work will continue. The next challenges include finishing the earth moving, more bark for the path and tackling the overgrown hedge on the other side of the field and defying the rabbits with an enclosed area of wild flowers in the grounds.

Finally, I would like to say that it has been the great pleasure to work with the committee this year. It is a great team with loads of energy and enthusiasm and more ideas than we have had time to execute. Although I am standing down from the committee, I am very happy, indeed eager, to continue to work on the Woodland project as a volunteer and very much hope that I will continue to see and have fun with my good friends who are remaining on the committee. I am confident that I am leaving the Centre in very capable hands.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Judith Craig thanked everyone for their attendance and asked everyone to feel free to help themselves to cheese and wine. The Secretary formally welcomed Jacky Baker and Rosalie Griffin onto the management committee as they were co-opted onto the committee during the summer. Thanks were also given to the rest of the management committee for their hard work and support throughout the year. Further thanks were extended to Geoff Lawrenson whose input into WWMCC is both endless and tireless. The secretary also wished Geoff well on behalf of the committee for a speedy recuperation following his recent knee replacement surgery.

The Secretary reported that the bookings remained healthy and that this was despite losing a couple of regular hirers as a result of increasing the hire fees in July 2013. She explained that the increases were necessary because of the ever rising costs that WWMCC faces. Plans are afoot to encourage the wedding trade as it was becoming clear that the Centre was proving a popular choice for wedding receptions. The secretary reiterated the Chairman's comments about the lovely Jubilee garden and once again thanked the WI for their maintenance of same.

The replacement “Alan Davies” bench has now been purchased and a new plaque is being organised. Alan’s wife Marjorie has “road –tested” the bench and is very pleased with it. Alan Davies made a huge contribution to the welfare of WWMCC until his untimely death several years ago and the bench is in recognition of this.

Christ Church held their summer fair at the Centre in July and it was a beautiful day and very successful event.

The secretary reminded the meeting about the annual bonfire and asked if anybody wished to help they would be most welcome.

The Woodford Community Centre litter pick is Saturday 28th Sept 10am from WWMCC and their AGM would be 14th November in the large hall.

The secretary informed the meeting that Derek Blunt had thoroughly enjoyed his leaving do 7th September and that she had spoken to Derek’s daughter a couple of days earlier and was happy to report that Derek was “out shopping” and absolutely fine.

Finally the secretary informed the meeting that Evelyn Frearson was leaving the Centre’s committee. She thanked Evelyn for her enormous, consistent and committed input to WWMCC and presented her with a thank you gift from the management committee.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Jane Sandover explained that we have added approx. £15k into the coffers. £76k in current account. New computer system now in operation. Bonfire (2012) made £19K profit. Burns Night (2013) was successful and enjoyable and made £700 profit. Costs have risen significantly eg heat light and power. Sound seals on door keep heat in. Committee keeps reiterating to hirers the need to conserve energy and the message seems to be getting through. Cheques have to be signed by two people but account can be viewed online. £65K kept in reserve in case of emergency. Weddings have been a very successful source of income throughout the year. The accounts were approved unanimously.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Colin Griffin thanked the outgoing members, Evelyn Frearson, Harry Jenkins, Liz Green, Richard Cooper and Melloney Lenk.
 First 3 positions on the management committee are Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. There being no other nominations, Brenda Mercer was elected unopposed as Chairman, Jane Sandover was elected unopposed as Treasurer and Judith Craig was elected unopposed as Secretary.
 The next four positions on the Management Committee are representatives of the four affiliated organisations Woodford Community Players, Woodford Women’s Institute, woodford Community Council and the Parochial Church Council. Graham Farrand was elected unopposed as the Woodford Community Players’ representative. Stephen Taylor is likely to be the nominee for Woodford Community Council. Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Woodford Women’s Institute (WI) are each putting someone forward to sit on the management committee but only after their own AGM’s in October 2013. Jacky Baker, Rosalie Griffin and Tim Tootle were also elected

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| | unopposed. |
| APPOINTMENT of AUDITORS / INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS | Jane Sandover informed the meeting that Hallidays were going to charge £2k plus VAT for the coming year whereas Booth Ainsworth (local company) have quoted £1200 including VAT and she recommended that Booth Ainsworth should be appointed as the new independent examiners. the proposal and the acceptance of same was unanimous. |
| ANY OTHER BUSINESS | Barbara Preston asked if anyone know who uses the dishwasher during the week and then leaves it full of dirty pots which, by the end of the week smell. Brenda Mercer explained that because there was no CCTV in the kitchen it was very difficult to determine which of the mid-week hirers was doing this. Brenda said that WWMCC would make extra efforts to see that dishwasher tablets were available. Jim Preston queried where the old pictures where from the small hall. Jude Craig assured the floor that the pictures were safe in the office and explained that they were removed temporarily to allow for the Woodford United exhibition boards to be displayed. Paul Rodman agreed to reinstall the pictures. |
| APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT | Brenda Mercer explained to the meeting that Derek Blunt's departure from Woodford left the Community Centre without a President and that Colin Griffin (existing Vice-President) had been asked by the management committee to be the new President. Paul Rodman proposed and Jim Preston seconded the appointment and the vote was carried unanimously. A new Vice-President will be sought in the near future. |
| MEETING CLOSED AT | There being no other business, Colin Griffin closed the meeting at 8.25pm. |