

Minutes of the Twelfth Annual General Meeting of The Guildford Institute

Held in the Institute's Assembly Room on Friday 8 November 2019 at 3.30pm

1. Introduction

The former Chairperson, Sandra Robinson, welcomed 'The Worshipful Mayor of Guildford', Councillor Richard Billington, who is patron of the Institute during his term of office. Sandra Robinson introduced the new Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Janet Crowe.

2. Library Presentation

2. Library Volunteer Jo Patrick delivered a presentation using Institute archive material regarding Frensham Pond and the several threats to its biodiversity through the years, including the historical trade of feathers and the use of motor boats.

3. Quorum

3. Janet Crowe confirmed that the quorum requirement (one 25th of the membership) as set out in the Articles of Association had been satisfied, with 61 voting members present.

4. Proxy Forms & Applications for Membership

Fifteen proxy forms had been received – a list is featured at the end of this document. All membership applications received during the year had been approved by the Board of Trustees.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 9 November 2018

The minutes of the eleventh annual general meeting held on Friday 9 November 2018 were approved. There were no matters arising.

6. Report of the Board of Trustees

Sandra Robinson presented highlights of the Trustees' Report 2018-2019.

The Institute's Strategic Plan continued to guide developments throughout the year. This ten-year vision for the Institute operates around five key strategic objectives to:

- Broaden the range of activities on offer (S01)
- Improve our image and make the Guildford Institute better known (S02)
- Strengthen our management and governance (S03)
- Strengthen our financial position (S04)
- Improve our building and facilities (S05)

- **S01: Broaden the range of activities we offer:**

- The course programme continued to grow this year. We worked with 45 tutors, including new tutors who added to the programme. New subject areas were introduced, including Psychology & Anthropology. In total, 187 courses were offered and 2,280 course places were booked.
- Our tutors delivered the highest number of teaching hours ever, which was a significant achievement.
- The special events programme continued to be successful throughout the year, with a particular highlight being the sold-out Wimbledon event in June. Partnerships have worked to enhance this area of the programme and also expose the Institute to new audiences. This included events with local organisations such as Silent Pool Gin, Ewbank's Antiques and Guildford Tourist Office. Our first 'Annual Arts Lecture' was successfully delivered in partnership with Guildford Arts to an audience of members and attendees from both organisations.
- More than 1,800 spaces filled on the Wednesday Talk programme – 200 more than the previous year. The programme was as eclectic as ever and included talks on subjects ranging from the light phenomenon of the Aurora Borealis, the link between ageing and immunity to the history of West Horsley Place.
- Four-hundred and thirteen people attended this year's visits. Our trip to the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking had a record 70 attendees.
- Volunteers and the professional team had worked hard to offer events, talks and displays to encourage greater use of the Library. We took part in Heritage Day and had displays at G-Live and Stoughton Barracks. Wednesday Talks given by the Library sold out very quickly.
- Work was also completed this year to enhance membership benefits available. From 1st May 2019, membership was made valid for one year from date of payment, eliminating the previously static membership year.
- A 10% 'Member Mondays' offer in V Café was introduced, enabling members to receive a discount on a weekly basis. Several member-only events were organised.
- In spite of this work, 2018-19 has seen a 10% reduction in membership.
- **S02: Improve our image and make the Guildford Institute better known:**
- We have been working on the launch of a new website (launched in October 2019). A vast amount of work went into this and it is hoped that this development will lead to more effective marketing going forwards, in addition to greater processing efficiencies for the professional team. Feedback has been positive regarding the new appearance and functionality.
- We have gained from working more with local partners, such as Experience Guildford.
- Our social media presence has grown: Instagram followers have increased by 60% this year.
- We launched *V Café at the Institute* in a blaze of publicity:
- The launch event was attended by 70 people and was reported in the local press.

- *V Café* won first place in Surrey Life's Food & Drink Awards *Newcomer of the Year* category, which in turn generated further publicity.
- **S03: Strengthen our management and governance:**
 - We recruited two new volunteer roles specifically to support management. Catherine Prest is a Coach and Mentor who is currently working with Amy Rice. Helen Stiven is a HR consultant who has been of tremendous help this year in advising on HR matters. Helen assisted in a significant piece of work to update the Institute's job profiles and contracts, and with the introduction of a new appraisal scheme for our office team.
 - We increased our spending on training and development for our office team and volunteers.
 - We contracted with Akiko to build a new database. This extremely large piece of work (finalised in the 2019-2020 year) means that the database is now attached to the back-end of the Institute's website, enabling greater efficiencies going forwards.
 - We conducted a governance review to check our effectiveness.
 - We recruited two new Trustees but we still need more - especially an accountant to act as our Treasurer.
- **S04: Strengthen our financial position:**
 - In the continued absence of a Treasurer, Mike Adams has helpfully acted as the lead in this area.
 - To aid sound decision-making, termly management accounts have been produced by chartered accountants.
 - Reserves have been maintained to ameliorate financial risk referring to RBS lease renewal.
 - We undertake an annual budget planning exercise assisted by accountants.
 - A new risk register was created and will be regularly monitored going forwards.
- **S05: Improve our building and facilities:**
 - Improvements in the building this year included:
 - The installation of reliable Wi-Fi, resulting in a significant improvement for room hirers and second-floor tenants.
 - Changes to the kitchen to improve the cooking space and the Assembly Room to improve its appearance.
 - The installation of CCTV to enhance the safety provisions for our team.
 - A new piano for the Studio has been generously donated by a member.
- Catering Offer:
 - Leone and Emma Palmer ceased operation of *The Beano* in December 2018.
 - *Delicious Dishes* provided an interim service in spring 2019.
 - Nick & Ian began running *V Café at the Institute* in March 2019.
 - *V Café* offers a daily-changing menu of vegetarian and vegan meals, plus cakes and morning pastries. The Board is really pleased with the new offering and has been delighted to see it recognised by the local press and by the receipt of the Surrey Life Food & Drink Award.

Our People

- **Trustees**

- Two Trustees sadly departed at the last AGM due to moving away:
 - Janice Hurdle
 - Susan Roche

- Two Trustees left due to personal commitments:
 - Michael Jackson
 - Alison Venables

- Sophie Chapman resigned from her role as Vice-Chair, with Janet Crowe taking on this role from November 2018.

- This year, the Board have been joined by:
 - Brian Creese
 - David Cheeseman
 - These Trustees will stand for election later during the meeting.

- **Professional Team**

- Vicky Pursey returned from her maternity leave in June.
- Sarah George's fixed-term contract has been extended until February 2020.
- Emma Sutcliffe left her position of Programme & Deputy Manager in August and was replaced by Garazi Donlo.
- Mark Finn was recognised for his long service of thirty years.

- **Volunteers**

- A huge thank you is due to all of our volunteers.
- A special mention to Colin Callegari this year for his help with the transition to a new database.
- We are keen to develop new volunteer roles in the future, so please do get in touch if you have any particular skills that you believe will be of use to us.

Since the end of the 2018-19 financial year:

- Following three and a half years as Chairperson, Sandra Robinson stepped down from the Chair position on Thursday 5 September.
- Janet Crowe, former Vice-Chair, took over as Chairperson.

Looking forward – upcoming plans:

- We hope to secure a new lease with our tenants, The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS). The RBS lease is due to expire in March 2020.
- Work to reduce our reliance on the income from RBS going forwards, in order to reduce to above-mentioned risk to our organisation.
- Continue to maintain our Grade II listed building. Most notably, to begin investigating issues with damp within the building.

7. The Financial Report of 2018-2019

- Mike Adams delivered the Financial Report of 2018- 2019. The following bullet points outline the key items of note:

Income

- Total income of £322,350.
- There has been a reduction in the room hire figures due to the change in the conditions of the operation of the *V Café*.
- Membership numbers have dropped from 500 to 461.

Expenditure

- Building project loans: there is a total outstanding balance of £35,000, which is repayable by 2022.
- The works to address damp issues in the building will mean a considerable expenditure.
- Legal and professional fees were particularly high this year as a result of the project to build the new website and database.

Summary

- The surplus for the year was £21,866, significantly less than the previous year. This is explained by looking at the expenditure, which had been very low for the previous year, whereas this year it included costs such as the new website project (over £20,000.)

8. Members' Questions

- Trevor Jones enquired as to why the audit fees were higher than the year before. Mike Adams replied that they had charged a reduced rate in 2018.
- Trevor Jones also noted that the membership income was down considerably compared to 2018. Mike Adams explained that there hasn't been an increase in the membership fees and the period of time that a membership is valid for has been extended to a year from the day it was purchased. He also mentioned that there is a working group focused on membership to continue to focus on ensuring that the membership package remains attractive.

The Report of the Board of Trustees and the Financial Report were unanimously accepted.

9. Approval of the appointment of Auditors:

- To approve the appointment of AJ Bennewith & Co as Auditor
 - Proposed by Jennifer Margrave. Seconded by Lesley Myles.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

10. Approval of the re-election of Trustees appointed to serve as Trustees since the previous AGM:

- Brian Creese
 - Proposed by Lisa Taylor. Seconded by Sue Yearley.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- David Cheeseman

- Proposed by Sue Yearley. Seconded by Lisa Taylor.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

11. Any other business

There had been no items of business submitted by the deadline.

The meeting closed at 4.20pm

Trustees in attendance

Janet Crowe
(Chairperson)
Mike Adams

Sandra Robinson
Lisa Taylor

Susan Yearley
Brian Creese

Members in attendance

Mike Adams
Lawson Aldred
Mavis Archer
Linda Baker
Chris Blow
Timothy Bryers
Neil Chambers
Stephanie Chambers
Amanda Creese
Brian Creese
Janet Crowe
Ann Fearey

Beverley Hanrott
Douglas Jack
Margaret Jack
Michael Jackson
Trevor Jones
Jon Korndorffer
Mary Korndorffer
Kathleen Lamb
Jennifer Margrave
Robin McDermott
Valerie Monaghan
Lesley Myles

Pamela Palmer
Graham Robinson
Sandra Robinson
Dorothy Seymour
Belinda Singleton
Lisa Taylor
Margaret Westwood
Michael Wheatley
Reginald Wholey
Joan Wrenn
Susan Yearley

Patrons in attendance

Richard Billington (Mayor of Guildford)

Non-Members known to be in attendance

Amy Rice (Institute Manager)
Sarah George (Marketing & Events
Assistant)
Jo Patrick (Library Volunteer)

Garazi Donlo (Deputy Manager)
Amy Mason (Membership & Events
Assistant)
Nina Hammond

Proxy voting forms were received from

Patrick Acheson-Gray
Annette Armstrong
John Bannister
Gaye Elvidge
Sybil Jubb
Jean Jupp

Marjorie Kirby
Phyllis Morris
Doreen Shaw
Peter Slade
Linda Stevens
Jane Thorp

Graham Thorp
Carol Werrett
Bill Yearley (Sue Yearley)

Apologies – in addition to those submitting proxy forms

Sophie Chapman
David Cheeseman
Heather Earl
Hilary Fletcher
Janice Hurdle

Tessa Johnson
Jacquelynn Luben
Liz Markwell
Samuel Pake
Pauline Read

John Shorto
Anne Stortt
Harry Wickens
Jean Wickens