**LEWES HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 23 August 2018 at 2.00 p.m. at 208 High Street, Lewes**

**Present:**

**Executive Committee Members:**

Heather Hicks (Chairman)

Diane Crowhurst

Christine Moon (Hon Secretary)

Jenny Pigott

John Pigott

Liz Pinkney

Nigel Scott (Hon Treasurer)

Other members of the Lewes House of Friendship signed the register of attendance – copy attached. A total of 29 attendances was recorded.

**1 Apologies**

Marie Bartholomew, Mr & Mrs Bishop, Judy Brent, Fred & Joy Burgess, Val & Les Coppard, Bill Dorkings, Linda Douglas, Des Foord, Linda Fuller, Patricia Gamble, Daphne Haffenden, John Hinton, Sandra Holden, Carol Holloway, Carole & Ray Isted, Josie & Keith Richardson, Roger Roser, Janet Smith, Bunty Unstead.

**2 Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the apologies noted above were acknowledged. She introduced her fellow Officers - Nigel Scott, the Honorary Treasurer, who was appointed a year ago but had not been to an AGM before, and Christine Moon, the Honorary Secretary.

**3 Minutes of the AGM held on 17 August 2017**

Subject to the correction of Jack Stabler’s name in the list of apologies (for which apologies were expressed), the minutes were agreed to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Minute 5, a garden seat had been purchased in memory of Peter Swan who had left a most generous bequest to the House of £19,660.

**4 Chairman’s Annual Report**

The Chairman drew attention to the Annual Report of the Trustees which would be considered along with the Annual Accounts for 2017/18 at the next item on the agenda. She, however, wished to report on a number of matters as follows:

1. Pleasingly, there are currently 230 members of the House of Friendship.
2. The Extend exercise classes continue to be popular and the new teacher, Mary Bachoo, had settled in well.
3. The number of people participating in the various social events that take place as the House seem to be reducing which is a matter of concern. She stressed the importance of members feeling they can make suggestions for new activities at what is *their* club.
4. The monthly film shows had been running for almost a year but only a handful of people have come to them. She advised that the shows would be shifted to Tuesday mornings in the expectation that this might be a more popular time. She also asked people to propose films that might be shown as it is important that the interests of the members are met.
5. The outings, organised twice a year thanks to the generosity of Dignity Funeral Care who loan us their minibus and driver, have also attracted a relatively small number of people. The Executive Committee believes it is now time to accept the minibus loan just once a year during the summer when members may feel more inclined to go on an outing. In later discussion of this issue, there was some disappointment at this possibility and it was decided that we would try two outings for one more year in the hope that more people could be persuaded to join in. We would seek to arrange two dates possibly in late Spring and Summer if that was acceptable to Dignity. Members would be asked to make suggestions for places to visit.
6. A suggestion had been made to refurbish the patio garden in an attempt to make it a more attractive place for members to sit in fine weather. Rather than spend a significant sum on such a project, the Executive Committee had decided to start by cleaning the furniture (for which we have cushions and a parasol) and asking Liz Pinkney to tidy up the pots and the planting. The Chairman was pleased to report this had already been accomplished by Liz and members were encouraged to use the patio when the weather is fine.
7. The Chairman offered her warmest thanks to the following people:

Members of the Executive Committee

The kitchen staff – Keith, Carrie and Sophie (who also cleans the House)

The volunteers who run Reception and arrange social activities

The members - who are central to the whole operation and without whom there would be no House of Friendship

1. The Chairman made special mention of Jenny Pigott. She organises Reception and fills in there when necessary; organises regular Coffee Mornings; ensures there are always fresh flowers in the House and usually neglects to claim for any of the costs; organises and runs the film shows and is to be seen in the House on most days helping out with a whole range of work. She is absolutely crucial to the operation of the House and deserves very special mention.

She also commended Keith Stenning for continuing to provide excellent lunches and being able to cope with wildly fluctuating numbers – some days fewer than ten, others in excess of thirty. He manages this on a tight budget and achieves very little food wastage.

**5 Trustees’ Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018**

The Honorary Treasurer introduced the Financial Statements noting that the House depended significantly on the rental income from the flats. He was pleased to report that the income remains stable and secure for the future.

He drew attention to the total funds available to the House as specified on Page 9 and advised the *apparent* drop of £19.4K in 2018 when compared with 2017 was not a cause for concern. The higher figure for 2017 included the one-off bequest from Peter Swan - the refurbishment of the kitchen had been funded from the bequest.

The Treasurer reported he had introduced a better process for reporting income and expenditure throughout the year and this had enabled the Executive Committee to fulfil its role in ensuring the solvency of the House more confidently. The Committee had observed that the meals service had been running a deficit of c£14K annually for a number of years. This had been minuted at the previous AGM. While the Committee accepted the need to ensure the lunches remain affordable and believed that cross-subsidy was appropriate, the committee members did not believe the deficit should be allowed to grow in an unsustainable way for the future. It was therefore proposed that, with effect from 1 January 2019, lunch prices should increase by £1. Members would therefore pay £7 and visitors £8 for a two course lunch. The views of members were sought on this proposal and there was general acceptance with those present believing it to be reasonable given the increase in food prices and the fact that the price of lunch had been held for three years.

The Treasurer reminded the meeting of the importance of ensuring significant investments be maintained to enable the funding of unplanned repairs which are inevitable given the age of the building.

Further to a comment from John Pigott, it was clarified that the Tangible Fixed Assets listed in Note 7 (Page14) include the building itself. The sum shown (which conforms to accounting practice) is far lower than the market value of the House as a result of the annual depreciation of 2% on a valuation made many years ago.

**6 General Data Protection Regulations Policy**

The Honorary Secretary introduced the GDPR Policy and Register of Systems which had been agreed by the Executive Committee and were available to members in hard copy and on the website. She advised the regulations came into force across the EU in May 2018 and were designed to ensure that personal data is processed lawfully, and held securely solely for the purposes for which it had been collected in the first place. She was able to assure members that the House asks only for essential information about its members, holds the information securely, uses it only for matters relating to the House and its activities and doesn’t share it with any other organisations except in very rare cases of emergency.

In response to a query from a member, it was confirmed that, in no circumstances, would we divulge the phone-number of a member to anyone without the prior consent of the member concerned.

**7 Election of Officers**

The Chairman advised that the three officers were willing to stand for re-election. The following individuals were elected unanimously to serve for the coming year having been proposed and seconded as follows:

Chairman Heather Hicks Proposed by: Wendy Peat

 Seconded by: Evelyn Dickins

Honorary Treasurer Nigel Scott Proposed by: John Pigott

 Seconded by: Liz Pinkney

Honorary Secretary Christine Moon Proposed by: Rosie Taylor

 Seconded by: Jenny Pigott

**8 Appointment of Professional Advisers**

Professional advisers were appointed as listed below, with unanimous approval, having been proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Honorary Secretary.

Bankers CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) Bank

Solicitors: Mayo, Wynne, Baxter

Financial examiner: C.R.Tyler FCA, DChA

**9 Date of next Annual General Meeting**

Thursday 22nd August 2019

**10 Any other business**

Evelyn Dickins asked whether it would be possible to run two Extend classes as numbers were sometimes rather high for the space available for the single weekly class. The Chairman advised that this had been considered when the new teacher was appointed. However, since numbers had dropped a little at that stage, the idea was not pursued. It would be reconsidered should the numbers exceed the space comfortably available for the future.

John Pigott wished to record thanks to Christine Moon for the work (largely concerning administrative and governance issues) she carries out as Honorary Secretary.

A bouquet was presented to Jenny Pigott in recognition of all that she does for the House and which was commended in the Chairman’s Report. There was a round of applause for Jenny.

HH/CEM

27.8.2018