

**THE KNOWLE SOCIETY**  
**(a company limited by guarantee)**

Minutes of the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Society held on  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012, in the Village Hall commencing at 8 pm.

**1. Welcome**

Peter Ewin (in the Chair) welcomed the 71 other members.

**2. Apologies**

These were received from David Aitchison, Valerie Hamley, Susan Trucchi and June & Geoffrey Vaughan.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the AGM held on 22nd November 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**4. Chairman's Report**

A copy of the Chairman's last Report as Chairman is attached to these Minutes; he thanked the two retiring Trustee Directors, Gary Masters and Bryan Smart, who due to ill-health had both decided not to put themselves forward for re-election. He closed his report with his thanks to everyone for their support during his chairmanship.

**5. Treasurer's Report and receipt of Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2011**

David Watson introduced himself to the meeting as being a General Practitioner who had taken over from Peter Johnson during the year, Peter having taken over from Bryan Smart as Membership Secretary. David said that he had recently retired from a five-partner Birmingham practice in which he was responsible for their accounting, which was considered to stand him in good stead as Treasurer. David then presented the shortened version of the Accounts for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, a copy of which had been attached to the Agenda and handed to all present. He advised that this shortened version was for consideration now, as agreed at the September 2010 AGM. The full document of the Report & Accounts, this time of 14 pages, was prepared in order to meet current legislation of the Companies Acts and charity law. Copies of the full set of Report & Accounts were available on request. The Objectives and Activities on Pages 2 and 3 of the Report had also been attached to the Agenda and made an accurate assessment of the Society's activities.

Funds committed the year before last of £7,000 for the History Group's new storage cabinets had, under the item of Fixed Assets on the Balance Sheet, now been written down to £3,735. In addition, there remains £4,000 for the Knowle Green Community Project committed against the total of funds held by the Society.

One question was raised regarding the increase in Governance Costs, which had risen as a consequence of the increase in the Society's activities.

David also advised that the Trustee Directors were keeping the matter of subscriptions under review. The members present unanimously agreed to receive the Report and Accounts. They also unanimously agreed to maintain the current levels of subscription - £3 for individuals, £5 for couples and £25 for corporate members for another year.

**6. Election of Chairman for the ensuing year**

Peter Ewin informed the meeting that he had now completed his term of office of three years and consequently he was resigning his office today. He yielded the floor over to the President, Peter Ellis, who thanked Peter for his efforts over his time as Chairman and all those who served under him. The

President felt that Peter had been an outstanding Chairman and, supported by other Trustee Directors, he had played a major role in the organisation of the recent broadcast of Any Questions? from Arden Academy which had been a 'sell out' and a resounding success, and this example embraced the Society's reputation. The President felt it was a fitting event to mark Peter's time as Chairman.

The President went on to inform the meeting that there was just one nomination for the new Chairman over the next three years and that was for Leighton Jones, the previous Chairman of the Planning Committee. With no further nominations being received from the floor, Leighton's nomination was unanimously accepted by the meeting. Peter then handed the meeting over to Leighton Jones.

#### **7. Election of Officers for the ensuing year**

Before moving on to the Election of Officers, Leighton thanked Peter Ewin for the service he had given to the Society and from personal knowledge he also wanted to thank Peter's wife, Betty, who had supported him throughout his term. The Knowle Society has moved on and Leighton said that the Trustee Directors would try to follow the example Peter had shown during his Chairmanship.

The following members had been duly proposed to serve as Officers and had been seconded by members:

- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Deputy Chairman | Bill Bohanna     |
| 2. Hon. Secretary  | Elizabeth Linker |
| 3. Hon. Treasurer  | David Watson     |

No other nominations were received and these members were unanimously elected to serve in the positions shown for the next 12 months. They would also serve as Trustee Directors.

#### **8. Election of Trustee Directors**

There were three vacancies for Ordinary Trustee Directors:-

One member, Gary Masters, having completed his term but was no longer able to continue as a Trustee Director, had therefore not offered himself for re-election.

One member, Bryan Smart, was no longer able to continue as a Trustee Director due to illness and had therefore resigned.

One member, Bill Bohanna, had also completed his term, but for next year he had been elected as Deputy Chairman, so creating another vacancy.

Three members having previously been Officers had been duly proposed to serve as Ordinary Trustee Directors and had been seconded by members. The elected members are:-  
Peter Ewin, Peter Johnson and Andrew Marston

Two members had also been duly proposed to serve as Trustee Directors and had been seconded by members. The elected members are:-  
Elizabeth (Lilla) Baker and Martin Warr

These five members were unanimously elected to serve as Ordinary Trustee Directors.

#### **9. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

David Watson announced that the Knowle-based firm of West & Co has agreed to continue to act as the Society's Independent Examiner and their office can remain as the Society's Registered Office. Their services will be as before, and includes their check of the year's accounts and signing them off. The members unanimously agreed with the Proposal.

#### **10. Any Other Business**

Leighton Jones informed all present that the level of annual subscriptions was constantly reviewed and if they were to go up, then £5 was an easier sum to pay than say, £5.50. This would also be taken into

account if subscriptions were to be increased. It was very early days in this respect at present. Peter Johnson, to Stella Jarman's question, advised that some members would pay by Direct Debit but this is not possible at present due to the Society not meeting bank requirements. However, approximately 260 subscriptions are paid by Standing Order. Recent views from Collectors however, are that they feel members on the whole prefer not to pay by Standing Order.

**11. Close of the AGM**

With there being no items raised under this heading the Chairman closed this part of the meeting at 8.35pm.

Signed.....  
Chairman

Dated.....

**Notes on Notices given at the end of the AGM**

Janet Erzen wished on behalf of the Society, to thank artist Mike Humphreys for his support in providing the paintings included in the calendar from his selection of 98 paintings. The profit generated by the sales was £1,182.20 and the selected Charity to receive these funds was the Stroke Association. Mike took advantage of the meeting to thank the Society for adopting his paintings.

The History Group said that their new exhibition would be complete by the week-end. Any enquiries about family or buildings would be welcomed.

The Planning Committee has had another busy year. When asked by Peter Ewin to take over the chairmanship, Leighton was told — 'it will be fine'. However, more applications were submitted than expected. Consequently, Leighton wanted to thank the Committee for their experience and efforts. All applications made to the Council are considered — there has been something between 700 and 800 over the three years of Leighton's chairmanship. Only those with an impact on the village as a whole are considered in any great detail. The two marina applications were both lost on appeal and he understood that the Committee had not previously been so involved with individual applications as they were with these two. The second planning application made by Sainsbury's for the Forest Court site in Dorridge had been approved, subject to the conditions being agreed. Leighton felt that this development will affect Knowle but only time will tell in what manner. Kimberley's second application for a Waitrose in Knowle (the first having been withdrawn) is on 'hold' pending the final responses to the consultations being provided and time will then be given to Kimberley to respond. Longdon Hall is undergoing a sympathetic refurbishment. The draft replacement Local Plan issued by the Council shows that the three sites mentioned at last year's AGM and considered by the Council to be suitable for residential development would be released during the first five years of the new plan. Arden Academy will most certainly be affected by increased intake demand should this be approved. In addition, the long-proposed by-pass from the Warwick Road/Wychwood Avenue roundabout is regarded as being no longer required which will mean the land itself will be the subject of a re-designation. The Society is attending to this matter through its Natural Environment committee.

John Rowley advised that the Community Services Committee maintains a careful review process on matters

regarding the airport, police, roads and bus services. The new air traffic control tower has been erected and the runway extension/A45 re-routing commences this year with its completion due in 2014. A new Noise Report had been issued with similar results to the last one. Flight routes are to be checked. Regular meetings are held with the police which include the exchange of ideas relevant to current events. The roads have seen no real change over the past year. Centro has carried out a review of bus services with a tentative view of them being increased from Knowle to Solihull with some of them terminating at the railway station. The future of free Council-provided car parks is being considered but no decision has yet been made. The potential example of Shirley may be extended to Knowle, with charging for 'long-term' parking — watch this space!

The Natural Environment Committee's Chairman, Ian Simmonds, advised that this was his third AGM and the Committee is now well established and has worked hard in entering good working relations with Council Officers. They are looking at fifteen open spaces, road verges and footpaths in Knowle.

The Wychwood Avenue/Warwick Road roundabout had a draft plan for the open spaces but was stopped by just one resident who did not want to see any changes. Attempts are being made to see if the proposals can be put in hand this year. Four out of five new trees are now well established. The Streamside Trust has £250,000 in hand. The route of the Knowle By-Pass is an important issue to be discussed by the Council this month — the Committee would like to see a through path to the Park with the land given 'Village Green' status. The Committee has also commented on the proposed Waitrose store. A site has yet to be found for the Society's Jubilee Tree. Finally, the question of maintenance of open spaces is being considered — 'more new trees' is just one idea.

Charles Robinson advised that the monthly meetings held last year saw an average in the high sixties of members being present. The 2013 calendar is under preparation. By the time of the next Newsletter being published, it was hoped to see 75% of the meetings booked.

Peter Johnson wished to thank the 'army' of 84 volunteer distributors for their efforts last year and reminded the meeting that new volunteers were always welcome. He mentioned that a future promotion would be to see if the present 60% of subscriptions being Gift Aided could increase to 70%. Peter also expressed his thanks to Martin Warr in ensuring membership remained at just over 3,000. David Bower advised that the database had been improved.

David went on to say that he had been up-dating the website over the last year but he felt there was still room to improve with the inclusion of pictures. He also advised that a change to the Newsletter was under consideration after nine years of being in the present format.

Dave Pinwell informed the meeting that the Society was not alone with very poor representation in the local press. This was a continuing challenge but new marketing material and leaflets had been prepared and the Festival in the Park together with the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee will be used to create interest from the Press. The Library will also be used as a potential publicity outlet.

In his first report of his work with Community Liaison, Bill Bohanna said that there had been twelve regular volunteers to man the library enabling it to open on Saturday afternoons between midday and 4 pm. This number was to be increased by ex-Chairman Peter Ewin joining that number, Bill also appealed for more Volunteers to come forward.

The Chairman's closing remarks included a brief reminiscence of him attending his first AGM ten years ago; being involved with Village life ever since has been very gratifying.

**The meeting finished at approximately 9.50pm.**