

THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

(A company limited by guarantee)

Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting of The Society in its 61st year Saturday 24th February 2024 in Knowle Village Hall

Trustee Directors Present	Apologies
David Bower, Chairman	Alistair Innes
David Fraley, Deputy Chairman	
David Watson, Treasurer	
Maria Brown, Secretary	
Gavin Allan	
Lilla Baker	
Angela Bird	
Leighton Jones	
Andrew Marston	
David Pinwell	Lis Heliar, John Blackhall, Bill Whittall, Cllr Edward Fitter
Martin Warr	
Members Present: 75	

1	Welcome and Apologies for absence: David Bower as Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and took the above apologies.
2	Minutes of the AGM held 25th February 2023 Approved, with one amendment to the Treasurer's Report – that the item concerning income from meetings and social events applied to the previous year end 2022 and not 2023 accounts.
3	Chairman's Report: In presenting his report, David Bower highlighted the society's activities over the previous year, thanking all for their support, emphasising the strong sense of community. He thanked trustees for their continued enthusiasm and support – particularly David Watson, as Treasurer and Dave Pinwell for the widely acclaimed newsletter. He praised the real unsung heroes, the volunteers who enabled the activities of The Society to be carried out – keeping the library open, newsletter distribution, planning, representation at KVHA and other community organisations, etc. He highlighted the major events which had taken place this past year – the coronation celebration and the annual Christmas lights event, highlighting the all-important co-operation with other local community organisations. A new gazebo had been purchased and, with the support of the Society, the half basketball court was going ahead as planned, with the Society underwriting the cost if necessary. He also touched on the two largest planning concerns – the precinct. which was currently stalled, and the housing developments planned for the areas of KS1 and KS2. He informed the meeting that the full annual report and accounts were already available on the website as well as those of Companies House and the Charity Commission. In conclusion, he felt that The Society is in good health, but its continued renewal through new volunteers was vital. He encouraged anyone with a particular skill or passion to feel free to speak to any one of the Trustees present.
4	Treasurer's Report David Watson presented the Society accounts for the year ending 30 th September 2023, available as hard copy for the purpose of this meeting, as well as on the Society website, and noted the following: Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, just short of £20K (including £3,300 donations for the Love Knowle Park project). • Member subscriptions as the largest part of the General Fund income had dropped a little and were slightly skewed but now caught up since the pandemic.

- Gift aid tax recovery was almost identical to last year
 - Bank interest had risen steeply during the year
- Expenditure**
- Total of £12,800 had resulted in overall increase in reserves of just over £7,000
 - Natural Environment donations to the Solihull Conservation Society and continued maintenance of Library Knot Garden
 - Breakdown of expenditure for General Fund: not a lot of change
 - £2,063 of donations including Knot Garden donations of £1,360 (£960 from General Fund and £400 from restricted Natural Environment Fund)
 - Planning committee expenses unusually low but would show in next year's accounts due to timing of the claims
 - Donations were a mix of one-off and recurring
 - Civic Voice as umbrella society – normal subscription of £500 plus further £250 to support recent loss of most funds through theft.
 - Arden Academy Prize Fund and Poppy Appeal – recurring donations
 - Visit Knowle and KDBH Forum support
 - Defibrillator appeal of £250; as well as donations to hospital charities and £350 to Parkinson's Society as the proceeds of a Quiz Night

The Treasurer thanked Angela for her display board and referred to the breakdown of current and spending plans shown:

Building Community: annual Christmas Tree lighting; Love Knowle Park project; Walks and Talks; Newsletter printing; website hosting; Telephone Kiosk

Celebrating Heritage: via Local History resources; storage and archiving; exhibitions; Heritage Days; early stages of archive digitisation

Thriving Ecology: upkeep of Knot Garden; bulb planting; litter picking; involvement of local children

Sustainable Development: work of Planning Committee with Local Plan and Development Plan

Vibrant Commerce: support and co-operation with Visit Knowle; village events, new gazebo, upcoming midsummer event

Balance Sheet

General Fund represented unrestricted spending, whereas the remaining four Funds were restricted. Equity stood at £109,257.

Creditors stood at: £1,100 owing, including a £250 annual reserve for the maintenance of the Telephone Kiosk.

In conclusion, the Treasurer would always welcome donations to the Society online, via the website, by cheque or bank transfer.

In answer to a question from Peter Johnson, who noted the large sum of reserves held by The Society, the Treasurer was able to reassure him that future expenditure plans included support for the basketball court and the history digitisation project.

Roger Cook as Chairman of the KDBH Forum expressed his grateful thanks for the donation made to the Forum during a particularly challenging time and wished his thanks to be recorded.

The adoption of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts was proposed by Peter Johnson, seconded by Andrew Marston and carried unanimously. A vote of thanks was recorded to David Watson, Treasurer.

5	<p>Appointment of Independent Examiner The appointment of West - Chartered Accountants as the Independent Examiner for The Society was proposed by Lilla Baker, seconded by John Hulse and agreed unanimously.</p>
6	<p>Election of Officers Peter Ewin as President of The Society took the Chair for this item and the following Officers and Trustee Directors were duly elected unanimously:</p> <p>Chairman: David Bower (nominated by David Fraley seconded by David Watson) Deputy Chairman: David Fraley (nominated by David Watson, seconded by Angela Bird) Treasurer: David Watson (nominated by Alistair Innes, seconded by Angela Bird) Secretary: Maria Brown (nominated by David Watson, seconded by David Fraley)</p> <p>Election of Trustee Directors: The following Trustee Directors were duly elected for a 3-year term of office:</p> <p>Rachel Marston (nominated by Maria Brown and seconded by Leighton Jones) Gavin Allan (nominated by Leighton Jones and seconded by Rachel Marston) Bill Bohanna (nominated by David Watson and seconded by Angela Bird)</p> <p>David Bower explained that the Trustee Directors were both Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity.</p> <p>Thanks were duly recorded to Peter for conducting the elections.</p>
7	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>7.1. Lilla Baker was pleased to report improvements in local bus routes and that as of 7th April all A3 services would now serve Purnells Way, Longdon Road and Tilehouse Green Lane and a new timetable provided. The A7 and A8 routes were also being amended to better serve the Care Home near Copt Heath and Arden Academy.</p> <p>7.2. thanks were recorded to the Society for encouraging the Local Authority to install the 20mph speed limit.</p>
	<p>That concluded the formal business of the AGM.</p>
	<p>REFRESHMENT INTERVAL – during which tea and cakes were served and for which a vote of thanks was proposed and fully endorsed by the meeting.</p>
	<p>Following the refreshment break, Guest Speaker Kim Hulse of Visit Knowle presented the aims and vision of “Visit Knowle” and its ongoing work in collaboration with local businesses and organisations to support the future of the High Street.</p> <p>This was much appreciated by the audience who recorded their thanks in a round of applause.</p> <p>Chairman, David Bower, thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 16.12.</p>