



**EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF AGM and PUBLIC MEETING
at St. Lawrence Church Hall on 29th April 2019**

40 residents present. Apologies for absence received from Ian Symes (Chairman, EPC), James Brennan, Ian Smith, Roy Donovan.

1.0 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1.1 Minutes of 2018 AGM: approved. Proposer: Jenny King, Seconder: H. Manton

1.2 Matters arising: none.

1.3 Chairman's report: Vivien White made some additional comments on matters arising subsequent to her report published in the April Newsletter, as follows:

- **1.3.1** Berkeley Homes have just lodged a planning application for 5 houses on the site of 408 & 410, Lower Road (the "farmworkers" houses at western boundary of Effingham lodge Farm (ELF). Comments/objections must be lodged by 24th May.
- **1.3.2** Millgate have withdrawn the application for 23 dwellings on Church St. field as it was going to be recommended for refusal by GBC Planning Dept.
- **1.3.3** Vivien expressed her thanks to the committee members for their support and work, and also to Bryan Sherwod (absent ill) who has kindly prepared the lay-out for Newsletters.

There were no questions arising from the report.

1.4 Treasurer's report: J N-S presented the annual accounts 2018/19. There were no questions and the accounts were adopted. Proposer: Lois Driscoll, Seconder: Sharon Dick

1.5 Election of Hon. Sec.: D. King was willing to continue in post and there were no other nominations. Proposer: C. Dick, Seconder: Diane Poole

1.6 Election of Hon. Treasurer: Juliet Newton-Smith was willing to continue in post and there were no other nominations. Proposer: P. Bergman, Seconder: Liz Hogger

1.7 Election of Committee: All the current members were willing to continue in post and the meeting approved en bloc unanimously, there being no other nominations

Proposer: Sharon Dick, Seconder: Barbara Henry

1.8 Election of Road Wardens: All Wardens were willing to continue and were elected en bloc. Proposer: H. Clarke, Seconder: T. Jones

1.9 Election of Examiner: R. Donovan was willing to continue and was elected unanimously. Proposer: D. King, Seconder: Vivien White

1.10 Any Other Business: none.

The AGM was declared closed.

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2.0 PUBLIC MEETING

“Effingham’s precious Commons and the threats to them”

Vivien White gave a brief introduction to a presentation with slides by Martin Smith, Chairman of Friends of Effingham Common. She made the following points:

- Contrary to popular belief, a Common does not belong to one and all.
- Many Commons derived from land which was waste and unproductive.
- Commoners have rights, but these are designated people, not simply residents.
- Commons came under threat in 18th century when Lords of Manors began enclosing them.
- An Act in 2000 vested a general “Right to Roam” on most Common land despite it being privately owned.

In response to a question, Vivien confirmed that Effingham Common is already a SANG, but without a car park. There is now have a SANG in W. Horsley which is an enabling SANG for the development of ELF. BH also own land on Effingham Common which it is believed they had originally earmarked to make into a car park.

Martin Smith then commenced his presentation.

Effingham Common is owned by 28 different landowners, of which GBC has the largest area. Only 4 houses have “Commoners’ Rights”, but do not all own land on the Common.

The Common is on clay soil and can become waterlogged in wet winter conditions. At one time there were clay pits and a brick/tile making industry at the western side. More information can be found in ELHG (Sue Morris) booklet entitled “Studies of Local History of Effingham Common”.

One of the main threats to the Common today is surreptitious enclosure. For example, Norwood Farm has fenced off an area and Slater’s Oak have erected gates and “Private” notices.

The Common currently has skylarks nesting, but many other species of birds have disappeared over the last 40 years, including turtle dove, lapwing, linnnet, redpoll, white throat, spotted fly catcher and yellowhammer.

Martin finished his presentation by firstly reminding the audience that the next “Commoners’ Day” will be in Sept. 2020 and then showing a fascinating range of slides of his photos of fauna and flora on the Common.

The business having finished at 21.15 hrs., those present socialised over a glass of wine.

David J. King (Hon. Sec.)

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