

EPSOM COMMON ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting

Held on 20th April 2023 in Christ Church Hall

1.0 Preliminaries:

1.1 Introductions: The Chair, David King, introduced himself and the other officer present: Cynthea Blunden - Secretary.

1.2 Welcomes: The Chair welcomed all to the 46th AGM of the ECA, especially The Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr. Clive Woodbridge, and guest speaker Stewart Cocker.

1.3 Apologies: Phil Martin (Treasurer), Jeremy Harte (Guest speaker but unable to attend)

2.0 The Worshipful the Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Cllr. Clive Woodbridge

Cllr. Woodbridge thanked the ECA for the invitation. He spoke of the close partnership of the ECA with the council and of how ECA contributes to the ecological importance of the area. He understood that the 50th anniversary of the association is looming and that the Council should celebrate with us. Cllr. Woodbridge noted that volunteers are the heart of the organisation and that the contributions of all are valued. Volunteering strengthens communities and encourages civic participation. He suggested that by volunteering you are voting for the type of country that you want to live in.

3.0 Minutes of the 45th A.G.M. held on 3rd May 2022:

Motion to accept the minutes

Proposed: Not recorded

Seconded: Sarah Clayton

Carried unanimously

4.0 Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

5.0 Chairman's Report 2022/2023 - David King:

The Chair, David King, had circulated his report. He summarised the main points.

The untimely death of Jane Garrod, committee member and ECoVol. She is much missed.

In 2022 ECA was able to resume a full programme of activities. Thanks to all those involved, who included:

- ECoVols, led by John Turner for the last 20 years.
- Cattle checkers responsible for four days each week, organised by Bruce Critchley.
- Road Representatives, organised by Martin Gandy, collected subscriptions and distributed newsletters to about 450 households.

Charcoal retort yields improving with experience. Thanked EEBC for funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Green Flag awarded for 16th year. Thanked Steve and Carol Bridger for donating the new flagpole in memory of their son, Richard.

Berry Pond was created with funds from a generous legacy from Dave Berry's family. Thanked the Lower Mole Partnership for their work on the pond.

Kestrel boxes were fixed to trees in Rye Meadow and Great Pasture. Thanked Roger Newman for making and donating the boxes.

Thanked *Waitrose* for donation of £1000 from *Waitrose & Partners Community Matters Scheme*.

The application for National Nature Reserve has come alive, potentially part of a scheme to designate several sites around South-West London

ECA had commented on the very damaging consequences of some of the housing proposals in the draft EEBC Local Plan.

Three heron nests active, the third year of the new heronry on Great Pond.

2024 will mark 50 years since founding of ECA. Will need new volunteers to survive another 50.

Thanked all ECA volunteers and the membership.

6.0 Treasurer's Report 2022 - Phil Martin had sent apologies. Martin Gandy read his report:

Highlights - 2022 returned to normal with finances back to pre-pandemic levels.

Subscriptions and donations had increased during 2021.

Charcoal income slightly down on 2021, which was increased by delayed sale of 2020 production.

Expenses increased moderately as full activities resumed.

£6,000 placed in a one year bond at 3% interest.

Would not go ahead with *PayPal*, due to cost and lack of clear advantage over online payment.

Subscription envelopes have been introduced

Motion to accept the reports.

Proposed: Colin Garrod **Seconded:** Roger Newman Carried unanimously.

(Due to an oversight by the Chair, acceptance of the two reports was taken in a single vote.)

7.0 Election of Officers and Committee:

Following the death of Jane Garrod, there was a vacancy on the committee. Colin Garrod had offered himself for election.

As there were no contests for any position on the committee, it was proposed to nominate the officers and members en bloc. No objections were raised.

Chair: David King **Vice Chair:** no nominees **Treasurer:** Phil Martin **Secretary:** Cynthea Blunden

Other committee members: John Turner (ECoVols Leader), Bruce Critchley (Cattle), Martin Gandy (Membership Secretary), Steve Nevard, Roger Newman, Colin Garrod

Ex-officio members: Conor Morrow (LMP), Stewart Cocker (E&EBC), Cllr. Steve Bridger (E&EBC)

To elect the committee en masse.

Proposed: Ant Frend **Seconded:** Paul Handford Carried unanimously

To approve the **Honorary Auditor:** Ollie Garrod

Proposed: Sarah Clayton **Seconded:** Cecilia Frend Carried unanimously

8.0 Guest Speaker: Jeremy Harte (Curator Bourne Hall Museum) was unable to be present so Stewart Cocker stepped in with a talk on the Horton Light Railway.

A few points:

1896 London County Council purchased Horton Manor estate for £35,900. Started development of what became the largest cluster of psychiatric hospitals in the world.

1904 Construction of Long Grove imminent, railway proposed to bring in materials.

1905 Foster and Dicksee constructed a temporary light railway.

1907 Closed & partly dismantled.

1909 Decision to construct a permanent light railway for construction of West Park, the last hospital to be built, and supply of coal and other materials to the hospitals.

1913 Construction completed.

1939-1945 Train mounted anti-aircraft gun on railway. Some bomb damage.

1950 Line closed.

9.0 Any Other Business:

9.1 There was no other business.

The formal part of the meeting drew to a close with the serving of light refreshments, donations being contributed to the funds of the ECA.