

Bexhill Heritage Members AGM Online Wednesday 16th June 2021 at 7pm.

Committee:

Raymond Konyon	(RK)	Chair
Steve Johnson	(SJ)	Vice Chair/Treasurer
Alexis Markwick	(AM)	iT Support Officer/Historian
Simon Allen	(SA)	Projects Coordinator
John Swap	(JS)	Membership Officer
Anthony Lightly	(AL)	Chartered Building Surveyor
Geoff Tompkins	(GT)	Bandstand Co-ordinator
Jeanette Eason	(JE)	Committee Clerk

Business Agenda

RK welcomed those attending to the online AGM meeting. There was a brief introduction of Committee members for the benefit of members.

1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest – Peter & Vesta Darnell, Rebecca Cosier; David Beales; Christine Folley; Nick Hollington; Angela Hart; Phil Howard-Knight; Yolanda Laybourne; Cllr. Viv Taylor-Gee; Cllr. Christine Madeley; Cllr. Polly Gray; John Gray; Cllr. Brian Drayson; Justin Allen

Declarations of interest - None, except noted that RK is a Trustee of Bexhill Old Town Preservation Society (BOTPS).

2. Approval of minutes and matters arising from the 2019 AGM (No AGM was held in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic)

RK noted that due to Covid, BH had a 'hybrid meeting' in 2020 and found minutes were approved and are available on the web site.

3. Chair Report – RK – Thanked all for attending meeting. BH relies on its members. It was also noted that:

- Quite a challenging year not just for BH but all charities and organisations. Although enjoy face to face, have adapted to online meetings and developed a good strategy. Committee volunteers been very busy behind the scenes and managed to keep things going, busy maintaining.
- Thanks to the various individual committee members and highlighting the consistent work they have been involved with.
- Steve Johnson - Bandstand; civic pride; painting on shelter; liaison with RDC; preparation of various documents.
- Simon Allen - amazing practical skills, town clocks (Bexhill Town Council – maybe taking responsibility and funding), music in shelter (with SJ), detailed project condition reports.
- Anthony Lightly many skills on various shelter and bandstand projects and professional reports.
- John Swap - very pro active membership secretary. Currently busy manning pop up info points around the town, co-ordinating marketing of badges, maps, car stickers and other BH goods.

- Alex Markwick - many iT skills, mapping, graphic design, web site development, publicity materials etc.
- Jeanette Eason – Committee Clerk keeping the notes of the meetings.
- Geoff Tompkins – co opted as Bandstand Events Coordinator, ready for when the Bandstand is open and active.
- Yolande Leybourne – another recent co-optee with much experience in business.
- Others not attending meeting - also have a wealth of experience such as David Beales in Planning in Local Authorities, other history experts, co-ordinators along with a raft of volunteers. Many thanks were expressed to all BH volunteers for all their hard work.
- David Hattherall – Museum Liaison and fascinating local history talks.
- Paul Lendon – recently co-opted as Sussex Day and other events coordinator.
- Claire Baldry – Heritage Hub & TIP coordinator throughout most of the year but which is now put on ice due to Covid restrictions & loss of premises at the Methodist Church, Sackville Rd.
- Plus numerous others.

BH and RDC have managed to build a good working relationship, based on mutual respect and trust. RK highlighted this by advising that several councillors at the RDC Cabinet meeting in Jan 2021, praised the work done by BH so far on the bandstand project and gave agreement to funding (recording available on BH website).

RK emphasised that there are still many threats to our heritage, especially with planning and development projects and David Beales has worked tirelessly with some good results.

The new Bexhill Community Garden Group – “People’s Garden” Sea Road, side of St Barnabas Church. This is a positive contribution for all and BH is very grateful for the help it has received from the church. Church has been good to BH and will be included on the Bexhill in Bloom tour by the judges. Only current issue is the fact that there is no water supply to the gardens at present and often no access to the church either. Some thought needs to be given to overcoming the problem.

BH is lucky in that there were no staff, stock or overheads to cover during lockdowns. We have seen some reduction in membership numbers, but JS careful stewardship of finances is constantly looking to maintain and improve that situation. Memberships are the primary source of BH funding.

The Charity Commission application is still continuing, but the pandemic has not helped their own staffing/working arrangements either.

Looking ahead it is hoped that some of the physical work can recommence soon on a number of projects, post covid restrictions.

Bexhill Town Flag project reaching a potential positive conclusion.

Also looking forward too to face to face meetings and coffee mornings etc.

4. Governance and Financial report – Steve Johnson Vice Chair

Thanks were expressed by SJ for RK for his year as Chair and in particular the Royal Sovereign Lighthouse project.

SJ introduced Treasurers report – last year had a reduction in expenditure after a range of items for the shelter and as a result saw an increase in income. There were also some key charitable funds received e.g. Co-op from local customers nominations; a Covid support grant from Hastings Direct; refund from HMRC. This resulted in a surplus for the year of £7000+ which was added to the reserve from year before. Reserve now £11k +, but awaiting projects to commence. No questions received from the members.

SJ asked meeting if RVA could be nominated as our auditors for the coming financial year. Show of hands agreed and if RVA unable to do task, agreement sought to use a local firm, GMP instead. Agreed.

Approval of Treasurers Report - carried.

5. To elect trustees for the year June 2021 to June 2022

Trustees – SJ was elected in 2019 and still has year to go, therefore not on list.

a. To re-elect or replace Raymond Konyn and Simon Allen whose terms of office have expired. Both are willing to be nominated for a further three-year term of office.

Nominated - Dave Hattherall for both RK and SA

Seconded - Anthony Lightly.

No other nominations.

Vote for both RK and SA – carried

6. To elect officers for the year June 2021 to June 2022

a. Chair – currently held by Raymond Konyn who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated – Jeanette Eason Seconded Geoff Tompkins

No other nominations.

Vote – carried

SJ hand over meeting to RK as Chair for the next item

b. Vice-Chair – currently held by Steve Johnson who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated - Geoff Tompkins Seconded - John Swap

No other nominations

Vote – carried

c. Secretary – vacancy

Secretary post vacant at present – any nominations ? None

Minute secretary – JE willing to continue at present

d. Treasurer – currently held by Steve Johnson who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated - Rachel Hills Seconded - David Hattherall

No other nominations

Vote - Carried

e. Media and marketing officer – vacancy

Media and Marketing Officer - vacancy Any nominations? None

f. Planning officer – currently held by David Beales (not formally a member of the committee) who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated - Dave Hattherall Seconded - Geoff Tompkins

No other nominations

Vote - carried

g. I.T. Support officer – currently held by Alexis Markwick who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated – Steve Johnson Seconded – Dave Hattherall

No other nominations

Vote - Carried

h. Project co-ordinator – currently held by Simon Allen who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated – Rachel Hills Seconded – Carmen Keeble

No other nominations

Vote - Carried

i. Public education and events coordinator – vacancy

Geoff has taken on part of this role as Bandstand Events Coordinator

SJ asked if any others who would be interested?

j. Surveyor Consultant – currently held by Tony Lightly who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated – John Swap Seconded Alex Markwick

No other nominations

Vote – carried

k. Membership Secretary – currently held by co-opted committee member, John Swap who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nominated - Geoff Tompkins Seconded - Jeanette Eason

No other nominations

Vote - carried

l. Museum Liaison Officer – currently held by Dave Hatherell (not formally a member of the committee) who is willing to be nominated for a further term

Nomination - John Swap Seconded - Alex Markwick

No other nominations

Vote - carried

m. To consider ex-officio nominations to the committee

Other supporting roles – any volunteers? None at present.

7. AOB or questions - None raised

Comfort Break

Presentation with photos and discussion – David Hattherall

Bexhill in the Second World War

Included pre war preparations from 1938, building a level of preparedness from gas masks and local organisations. DH recommended new gallery at Bexhill Museum to all members.

Initially believed Bexhill would be relatively quiet, and suitable for evacuees of children and vulnerable people (pregnant women and blind people). DH shared photos from the time and a national timeline. With the invasion of France, many of the evacuees were sent to Wales. Roles of women increased during the period, particularly with organising various key activities.

During the bombing of the town throughout WW2 there was initially a lack of formal shelters provided for the public. Various enemy tactics were experienced over the years of the war e.g. attack on gas works (now Ravenside).

There were different 'campaign weeks' to raise funds, for various war necessities like tanks or ships etc. Bexhill contributions in today's money was the equivalent of £3.5 million.

DH then identified the contributions and work of Home Guard/LDV (Local Defence Volunteers or aka Look, Duck, Vanish).

A number of people involved in WW2 settled in Bexhill, post war.

Attacks from Doodlebugs later in the war lasted 80 days. 1944 saw disbanding of Home Guard, WRVS and other organisations.

Sadly, many of the Bexhill WW2 dead have no memorial.

Q&A s – RK thanked DH for an excellent talk.

There being no other questions or business the meeting closed at 20.45