

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ELLISFIELD VOLUNTEER GROUP
HELD AT 7.30PM AT THE MEMORIAL HALL ELLISFIELD ON FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2020**

Present:

Committee:

Graham Simpson (Chairman)
Zani Robinson (Treasurer)
Paul Brown
Andy Webb
Janette Bacon (Secretary)

Apologies:

Ashley Turberfield
Tim Guinness (though he popped in later in the evening!)
Hannah Houstin-Lacey
Andy Swanston
Kevin Caldicott
Phil Self

Members:

Dirk Bacon
Diane Simpson
Suzie Dean
Steve Gould
Debbie Foster
Seamus Foster
April Carroll
Gordon Dunse
Dave Fripp
Sue Fripp
Dick Lunn
Paul Turner
Margaret Evans
Julian Evans

1. Introduction and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed them of apologies received:

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 1st February 2019

The Minutes from the meeting held on Friday 1st February 2019 were approved. Proposed by Dirk Bacon and seconded by Paul Turner. The Minutes were agreed and duly signed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

Hello everyone, welcome to this year's Ellisfield Volunteer Group Annual General Meeting, and thank you for coming along. It's very nice to see so many faces particularly after last year's heavy snow fall made it difficult for people to attend. From memory, I think the committee outnumbered the congregation!

During last year's mowing season the weather behaved itself and grass cutting pretty much ran to schedule. Certainly not like the previous year which was very dry and not much mowing needed doing. The equipment behaved itself last year with no incidents of failures or breakages, helped largely by the recruitment of Steve Gould who gave the machinery a full service at the start of the season and shall be doing the same this year.

Tony Matthews fitted a key safe to the Cannon Close garage making it more convenient for volunteers mowing the lower common to access the garage and equipment.

Zani and I did an audit of all the EVG equipment and where it's kept. So we now have a full inventory complete with purchase dates and service records.

We've had some new volunteers join the group last year: some new to the village, and some who have come back after a sabbatical. We've also had a couple of volunteers move away from the village: namely Ted Dowson, one of the originators and a previous chairman of the group who was a giant of a man in the village and is sorely missed, but can still be found running the monthly film club at Cliddesden Village Hall. Natasha and Mark Selby also moved away in the summer.

Dick Lunn reached a mile stone age and decided enough was enough and hung up his mowing gloves, but still takes part in attending the AGM. It must be the wine and cheese he comes for!

There were a lot of people unavailable for the end of year clear up in December. I guess there must have been an Ellisfield weekend away to which I wasn't invited! This left only four people, in addition to the coordinators, who were able to help out, resulting in the Lower Common being left, unfortunately, undone.

I like to think volunteering is good for the tidiness of the village, good for galvanising the community, good for integrating new people into village life and good for the soul. Paul Brown is stepping down as coordinator of the burial ground after four well executed years, due to work commitments. He will still be volunteering as well as using his mole catching skills. I would like to thank Paul for all his support and with that we have a gift of gratitude for all his help. Many thanks Paul!

Postscript:

Susie Deane reminded me at the meeting about the Three Castles Path finger post about half a mile along Alley Lane, which runs up the side of the Memorial Hall. Members from the EVG assisted Dave Ramm and his colleagues from the Three Castles Path Society to erect the sign in the August of 2019 for which he was truly grateful.

5. Treasurer's Report

EVG's main expenses remain insurance followed by new equipment, maintenance and the shared rental of the Cannon Close garage where the Lower Common equipment, including the Ride on Mower, is stored.

All EVG equipment was serviced in March, including the Burial Ground Strimmer which continued to be serviceable, so EVG did not have the expense of replacing it, as had been reported in the 2018 Treasurers Report.

In 2019 EVG requested an increased Grant of £1650.00, to cover the cost of replacing the Burial Ground strimmer, which EVG did not have to do. So in 2020 EVG can revert to the Grant requested in the five years prior to 2019 of £1,450.00. This will keep an optimum balance in the account to allow for contingencies.

6. Proposal: That the EVG shall continue operation in 2020

It was unanimously agreed that the EVG shall continue operation in 2018.

7. Election of Officers

Chairman: Graham Simpson expressed a willingness to continue as the EVG Chairman – proposed by Zani Robinson, seconded by Dirk Bacon and unanimously agreed – duly re-elected.

Treasurer: Zani Robinson expressed a willingness to continue as the EVG Treasurer – proposed by Margaret E, seconded by Suzie Dean and unanimously agreed – duly re-elected.

Area Manager Gravel Pits: Andy Webb expressed a willingness to continue as the Area Manager Gravel Pits – proposed by April Carroll, seconded by Sue Fripp and unanimously agreed – duly re-elected.

Area Manager Burial Ground: There is now a vacancy for the position of Area Manager Burial Ground.

Secretary: Janette Bacon expressed a willingness to continue as the EVG Secretary – proposed by Diane Simpson, seconded by Dave Fripp and unanimously agreed – duly re-elected.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Cleaning Equipment After Use

Julian had wanted an instruction to go out to all individuals who cut grass; that lawn mowing equipment be cleaned after use. While he was referring to the lawnmower that he kindly garages for the EVG, it was suggested that signs could be placed on each piece of equipment to remind people of this.

8.2 Informing People About the EVG

It was felt that we should discuss sending out a positive message to people in the village to let them know about the advantages of the EVG. The suggestion of preparing an article for Hill and Dale, to include, for example, the benefit of volunteers versus contractors is that the care exercised by volunteers encourages the expansion of cowslips and snowdrops in these areas. Further suggestions included introducing the Group at other village activities and meetings.

9.0 Closure

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.40 for refreshments.