



Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2020

(Draft, for formal approval at the 2021 AGM)

Held online at 19.00 on Tuesday 8 September

Attendance

35 members participated online. Apologies were received from MT members Alex Dunn and Alan Morris, and Society members Judy Carver, Eunice de Vere Thornton, Dennis Gornall and Stephen Petter.

Business of the meeting

1. Chair's welcome

The Chair, Simon Birch, welcomed participants and thanked them for making themselves available.

2. Minutes of 2019 AGM

These were approved without change.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Review of Civic Society activity 2019

Simon Birch, the chair, made a brief report on activities in the year 2019. He highlighted the hard work of the Major Sites Group and the Planning Applications Group, both of which had had busy agendas. The Blue Plaques Group had also been very active. There had been an extensive programme of events during the calendar year, including talks, walks and visits. He highlighted the hard work of the Major Sites Group and the Planning Applications Group, both of which had busy agendas. The Blue Plaques Group had also been very active. There had been an extensive programme of events during the calendar year, including talks, walks and visits.

The publication of Better Bristol continued to attract a very good response and the AGM congratulated Mike Manson for his role as Editor. The website continued to provide a comprehensive account of Society activity.

The Society had taken a particular interest in two major issues, Ashton Court Mansion and St Michael's Church. The Chair reported that the City Council had decided not to market the Mansion, but to manage the Mansion and estate together in-house. The restoration of St Michael's Church as an events space had proceeded well, and he hoped that the Society would be able to have an event there next year.

Membership continued to grow steadily, standing at 550 (compared with 505 in June 2019).

The report was noted with approval and there were no questions

5. Financial report

The audited accounts for the year 2019 were introduced by the Treasurer, John Jones, who said that the finances were in excellent shape. Events had generated a considerable surplus in 2019 and the absence of activity in 2020 meant that income was not being spent. It was the Society's policy to keep a reserve of £15K plus 6 months' income, against the possibility of eg a campaign needing heavy spending; but the present bank balance of some £30K was well in excess of this.

In response to questions, the Chair said that the Society was always open to new spending proposals, as long as they were within its charitable objectives. On the possibility of having three editions of Better Bristol a year, he noted that the issue was one of finding people with the time to commit, rather than money.

The accounts were approved by the meeting.

6. Election of Officers for 2020/21

In accordance with the constitution, all officers stood down, and all presented themselves for re-election. There were no other nominations.

The following were proposed by Lori Streich and seconded by Susan Carter:

Chair: Simon Birch

Treasurer: John Jones

Secretary: Mike Bates

Membership Secretary: David Giles

All were unanimously elected. Simon Birch gave notice that he would be stepping down as Chair with effect from the 2021 AGM.

7. Election of Management Team Members

The following were proposed as members by Avril Baker and seconded by Steve Davis:

Alan Morris, who had previously been elected three years ago, presented himself for re-election;

Sue Ellis, who was currently acting as the Management Team's note taker and was standing as an MT member for the first time.

Both were unanimously elected.

8. Appointment of Honorary Auditor for 2020/21

Brenda McLennan was proposed by John Jones, seconded by Nic Billane, and approved by the meeting.

9. Patron for 2020/21

The Chair noted that, owing to the postponement of Council elections until 2021, Councillor Jos Clarke, who had been elected Lord Mayor in 2019 and had agreed to be the Society's Patron, remained as Lord Mayor for 2020/21, and hence remained as Patron.

10. Thanks and tributes

The Chair paid tribute to Anne Hicks, the artist and environmental campaigner, who had died in June 2020. She and her husband Jerry had been very active in the Society over many years. A full obituary will appear in the next Better Bristol.

He also paid tribute to Wendy Pollard, now no longer so closely associated with the BCS; but she had been very active for many years, including establishing the Newsletter and the Student Awards. Past chair Alan Elkan commented that "Wendy

was always a totally reliable and creative member, on the main committee and on the Amenities Group, which I convened for many years".

John Frenkel had stepped down as convener of the Major Sites Group in June, after 11 years. It had been intended to mark this with a presentation at the planned June AGM; in the event there had been an informal presentation of a gift at the time (at a cream tea in Simon Birch's back garden); but it was nevertheless right to note his contribution again at the AGM

Grateful thanks were also due to John Payne, who would be stepping down as convener of the Planning Applications Group at the end of the year.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all participants for their involvement, and closed the meeting.