



Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2022

**Held at “The Mount Without”, St Michael’s Hill, at 19.30 on Tuesday
14 June**

Attendance

Apologies for absence were received from MT members Sue Ellis and Matthew Montague-Pollock; and also from members Gill Bodenham, Rose Boswell, Sarah Curnow, James Durie, Peter Floyd, Geoff Haslam, Dr Evelyn Lewis, Pauline Mousley, Felicity Pine and Anna Russell

1. Opening of meeting.

The meeting was opened by the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor Paula O’Rourke, who had kindly accepted the Society’s invitation to be its Patron for her term of office. She expressed her pleasure at being able to attend the AGM, and was particularly pleased that it was in such a wonderfully restored building, a restoration for which the Civic Society itself could take some share of the credit.

After formally opening the meeting, she handed over to Simon Birch (Chair) and Kim Hicks (a member) who co-chaired the rest of the meeting.

2. Minutes of 2021 AGM

These were approved without change.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Review of Civic Society activity 2021

In a Q and A session with Kim Hicks, Simon Birch reviewed the main items of the Society's Annual Report for 2021.

The text of the Annual Report is available on the website so what follows is only a summary. The areas covered were:

What is a Civic Society for? The chair set out the charitable objectives, but noted that in practice, what Society actually does reflects the enthusiasm of the volunteers
How was BCS affected by the pandemic last year? Very little- much activity went online, including many events, and Better Bristol kept members in touch.

Membership; slowly increasing, now over 600

Development- Major Sites Group: kept very busy, looked at 49 proposals

Transport & Placemaking Group: started in 2021 and doing well

Ashton Court Mansion: frustration- nothing seems to be happening

Western Harbour: contributed to the "visioning exercise"- awaiting developments

Events: a "stellar" programme! much of it online, but with numerous walks also; but extensive and very popular
Design Awards: three awards made

Blue Plaques; six put up

Challenges for the Future: the scale and pace of new development, the controversy over tall buildings, the whole issue of air pollution/traffic/public transport; and the ongoing sagas of Harbourside and Ashton Court. And in addition, the debate on whether the society should be more proactive, less reactive; and how it should structure itself and operate in a digital, online age.

The review was noted with approval and there were no questions.

5. Financial report

The audited accounts for the year 2021 were introduced by the Treasurer, John Jones, who said that the finances were very satisfactory, with a surplus of £6700 for the year and a closing cash balance of £43,200.

Membership subscriptions were the main source of income, and had grown 9%. And the Society had received £1000 from Downs for People, being a refund of a grant made in 2020 to support their (successful) legal action against BCC. As usual, Better Bristol was the main item of expenditure, slightly up at £5000, but other organisational costs were low as a result of online working.

The Society was in a strong position and had a healthy fighting fund if it needed it.

The accounts were noted with approval by the meeting.

6. Election of Officers for 2022/23

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 Peter Weeks and seconded by Stephen Wickham:

Chair: Simon Birch

Treasurer: John Jones

Secretary: Mike Bates

Membership Secretary: David Giles

All were unanimously elected.

7. Election of other Management Team Members

Alex Dunn and Stephen Wickham, who had previously been elected three years ago, presented themselves for re-election; they were proposed as members by John Payne and seconded by David Giles.

Both were unanimously elected.

8. Appointment of Honorary Auditor for 2022/23

Brenda McLennan was proposed by Philip Davies, seconded by Alan Elkan, and approved by the meeting.

9. Thanks and tributes

John Payne took the floor and expressed the Society's thanks to Sarah Birch for organising the catering for AGMs for many years; and to Simon Birch for his role in chairing and leading the Society.

Finally, Simon Birch thanked all those, the fifty or so volunteers, whose efforts keep the Society running; and he made a number of specific requests to the wider membership for help or ideas:

- **Awards Panel** – more volunteers needed
- **A Future event on accommodating housing** at a high density in the City – we can organise events but we need excellent speakers – who?
- **Communications** – we are good at hard copy + website – but other comms? We need to reach Generations Y and Z ! (understood as Gen Y 1981-1996; Gen Z mid 1990s to 2010 ish) ; Instagram?

There being no further business, the Chair closed the AGM, which was then succeeded by the presentation of the 2021 Design Awards (see relevant page on website).

Mike Bates
Secretary