

# Essex Historic Buildings Group



AGM Meeting Minutes

Zoom meeting

8.00pm on Tuesday 20 July 2021

Present:

Martin Bridge (MB) Chair  
John Payne (JW) Treasurer  
John Walker (JW)  
Jenny Bishop (JB)  
Brenda Watkin  
Elphin Watkin  
Tim Howson  
David Andrew (DA)  
Lee Prosser  
David Martin  
Billie Rochford  
Andy Hyde  
Bill Hardy  
Helen Corlett  
Anne Woollett  
Clive Hallett  
Andy Hyde  
ra'sipadpro  
deboras's ipad  
hughdot free  
Jane's ipad

## 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Marcia Payne

## 2. Minutes of AGM for 2019

Copies of the 2019 minutes were previously distributed via the Newsletter. The Minutes were accepted without any changes. There were no matters arising.

## 3. Chairman's Report (MB)

It is some 28 months since our last AGM, where we met in the very pleasant surroundings of Coggeshall Abbey, later visiting the mill. Little did we know then what was ahead of us, and just today, I have been back at the mill with our President, Lee Prosser, to do some dendro work at the mill, first suggested on that summer's day, funded by a VAG grant, and delayed by the pandemic.

We didn't hold our usual AGM in June 2020 – for obvious reasons, and of course, this 2021 AGM would usually have been held in June, but this was not considered sensible – or was it even possible? The restrictions having been changed so much and so often, I'm not really sure if it was even an option!

However, with two lots of accounts stacking up (the first lot dealt with via Newsletter), and no formal interaction with the membership, we thought we should hold an AGM sooner, rather than later – and hence this unusual online meeting.

We all know what we have been through, tragic for some families, inconvenient for all, so I don't intend to dwell on that, except to thank fellow committee members for their continued input, and willingness to continue.

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Those of you that have joined us online today are most likely to be those that join us regularly for the online programme of talks, but I have to say I am a little disappointed that we haven't had greater numbers joining us for these, as the offerings have been as varied and interesting as ever. Most members get their knowledge of these via the Newsletter reports, and we are grateful to John Walker for his continued work in producing such a professional looking publication, and thanks to those who volunteer to write up the talks for everyone.

Special mention too for Jenny and Terry who have revamped and updated our website – and in particular the addition of the online shop – which has meant our publications continue to be available, and have certainly generated a lot of interest. This involves yet more work by those packing and posting out the books. The updating and republication of the 'Green Book' on Cressing by John and David was offered at a favourable rate along with an annual membership, and this has resulted in several new members, often from outside the county. I hope they will stick with us.

The situation at Cressing Temple, where we have for many years provided free guiding at weekends to the wonderful barns and the rest of the site, is for ever changing. Displays, so useful in helping explain aspects of the barns, are being moved around, and the ever toll of ageing amongst the guides may mean that this is no longer viable – we'll be discussing that amongst the committee, but if anyone has views on that, this meeting may be a good opportunity to discuss the matter. Thanks to Alan Bayford who has been organising rotas and liaising with staff at Cressing.

A couple of months ago I dared to think that we might be able to resume our regular face-to-face meetings at Moulsham in the New Year – today I am less confident about that, and am not sure if people would be prepared to come to them in the winter months anyway – so perhaps we will continue with Zoom meetings for a while yet – we'll just have to keep monitoring the situation, but whatever, I hope it will not be too long before we can all meet again and chat and exchange ideas etc. in a way that is just not the same online.

### **4. Treasurers Report (JP)**

Report for the two years ending 31st December 2019 and 31st December 2020

We are all aware of the impact of the Covid pandemic on an organisation such as ours. Because of imposed restrictions it was not possible to hold the planned AGM for 2020 or, with continuing uncertainties, to plan a traditional AGM for 2021. With the Committee conscious of a need to return to the procedures required by the group Constitution, this virtual AGM will cover both years and allow for the accounts for 2019 and 2020 to be considered.

Members will have seen the accounts for 2019 which, together with a Treasurers Report for the year, was published in the May 2020 issue of the Newsletter in anticipation of a June 2020 AGM : there seems little point in reiterating this Report but I can do so if required, and the figures are available also with the published 2020 accounts. The Group balance at the Bank as at 31st December 2019 was £16419.

Members will have also seen the accounts for 2020 which were published earlier this year in the August Newsletter.

For 2020, with a normal programme planned and two meetings at Moulsham Mill completed, the programme effectively came to an end with the abandonment, in stages, of the remaining meetings. As a result income was hit by the cancellation of the two main cash generators aside from subscriptions, the Day School

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entirely (£1508 surplus in 2019) and the Book Stall reduced to an income of £217 (£1055 surplus in 2019). Subscription income of £1635 was slightly down against the preceding year (£1660 in 2019).

With these changes to income, expenditure has been more or less routine because of the need to maintain the best possible service to members. Reductions in costs have been made by the cancellation of venues and the recovery of advanced fees paid. Notable expenditure has been the dendro cost of Pinner Farmhouse, Burnham - on - Crouch (£415), residual costs associated with the cancellation of the Day School (£44) and preparatory work on the revised and enlarged book on Crossing Temple (£233) for publication in January 2021.

Because of the difficulties of the year and in particular the reduction in income, there is shortfall for the year 2020 of £177 against a surplus of £1368 in 2019. Group resources for the coming year remain robust with a Group balance at the bWe are all aware of the impact of the Covid pandemic on an organisation such as ours. Because of imposed restrictions it was not possible to hold the planned AGM for 2020 or, with continuing uncertainties, to plan a traditional AGM for 2021. With the Committee conscious of a need to return to the procedures required by the group Constitution, this virtual AGM will cover both years and allow for the accounts for 2019 and 2020 to be considered.

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I would like to thank Clive Hallett for his assistance and for reviewing the accounts for the two years.

The accounts for 2019/20 and 2020/2021 were adopted.

Clive Halllet agreed to continue as auditor

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### **5. Editor's Report (DA)**

DA reported that the green book has been a success. JW has digitised all the newsletters since 2004 as PDF's.. JB will investigate the possibility of loading these onto the web site.

It was agreed that the newsletters will be posted out in an A4 envelope.

### **6. Proposed change to the constitution**

The proposed change to the constitution:

'The Group shall appoint annually at the Annual or a Special General Meeting an Honorary Accounts Examiner, who shall not be a present or past member of the Group.'

was agreed.

### **7. Election of officers ad committee**

The existing officers were elected for the next year.

### **8. Any other business**

Meetings on Zoom have been arranged until January, JW will investigate the possibility of a meeting at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge in new year

JW is to find out the cost of scanning the pre 2004 newsletters.

After the meeting Martin Bridge gave a very interesting talk on his work on Post Mills.