

Fairlight Residents Association
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held in the Village Hall on 24th May, 2023 at 19.30

Committee Present:

Chairman	Chris Smart
Vice Chair (FN Editor)	Jenny Turner
Minutes Secretary	Alastair Mitchell
Treasurer	Louise Russell
Committee Members	Annette Holmes
	Geoff Holmes
	Carol Sharpe

Also present Susan Evans, who was later voted onto the Committee.

Attendance:

23 people were in attendance, in addition to those on the Committee (31 in all).

Welcome:

The Chairman, Chris Smart, welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance.

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members Kerry Gentleman, Alison Thomas, and Cas Barlow. Also apologies from Trevor and Jill Lewing, Irene Cox, Clr. Andrew and Carol Mier, Jennifer Annette, George Henshaw, John and Val Duffell.

Approval of the Minutes of AGM held on 6th April, 2022.

The Chairman asked for the Minutes for the previous AGM to be approved. The Minutes were approved.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Chairman's Report:

Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this Annual General Meeting of the Fairlight Residents Association held today 24th May 2023.

As you know, my name is Christopher Smart, and as Chairman of the FRA you would know that it is customary that I provide you with a short report. Since the last AGM I am very happy to report that no one as yet has left the Association, so I must be doing something right! So, I would like to take this opportunity to give sincere thanks to all my Committee Members for the time that they dedicated to the FRA and Village in the past year.

However, it is with a great deal of sadness that I must inform you that two of our wonderful team will be stepping down following this meeting. First, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding work and commitment of Sandie Vivian. Although not on the Committee, she has been silently working behind the scenes since 2018 as your sub-editor for Fairlight News. In addition to proof reading and liaising with the printers to get the magazine ready for distribution, it was her role to chase me for my quarterly reports. Not an easy task. She will be missed greatly.

Secondly, it is my sad duty to inform you that my vice chair and chief magazine editor Jenny Turner has also decided to step down this year from both positions. Jenny has been chief editor of FN since 2016. Jenny's duties were countless, and included, proof reading, liaising with the printers and many other associated tasks required to get the magazine over the line. Actually, if my investigations are correct, Jenny applied to become a co-opted member of the FRA in August 2015! During this time Jenny has worked on many of the FRA and village ventures and has always put herself forward to attend these functions that the FRA find themselves involved with. I would especially like to thank Jenny for the support that she has given me in the past couple of years in my role as your Chairman. Jenny will be sadly missed.

So, with your kind permission, I'd like to take a quick moment if I may to make two presentations to Sandie and Jenny with these small tokens of our thanks for their sterling work over the past years. Before we do this, I would also like to point out that as chairman of the Association, I have access to the address of both these individuals, so just remember Ladies, I know where you live, and if we get stuck, I'll personally be knocking on your doors for some help!

Moving on and on a more positive note, I would like to briefly mention the Wakehams Farm, East Field Development review that was held during July of last year. I was truly amazed and encouraged by the many emails I received that gave me your permission to attend and represent you all. I would like to thank everyone who entrusted me with speaking on their behalf at this hearing. I was personally able to tell the inspector that mine was not but a single voice, but he should imagine that my words echoed the support of some 500+ village homes. I am certain that this resonated with the inspector and I'm sure that it helped him to come to the right decision. On what was the hottest day of the year, I was extremely proud of all that attended the Bexhill Council Chambers that day. It was so full that I believe that some residents were disappointingly turned away. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support.

Additionally, since the AGM of last year the FRA have had the privilege to work alongside Fairfest and Parish Council, assisting in the production of the Queens Platinum Jubilee festivities. A long weekend of fun was enjoyed by many, and it really did feel like the whole village came out to play. In the spring, prior to this weekend, the FRA donated £140 towards seeds that were sown for people to grow and flower in the colours of red, white, and blue.

Later that year we held a Distributors Event where we were able to meet and thank those volunteers who deliver the Fairlight News magazine to your door. Your committee and I feel that this magazine still makes a fantastic contribution to keeping FRA members fully up to speed with what is going on in Fairlight. We still invite suggestions for inclusion and would welcome any ideas you may have.

Recently we held an extremely successful valentine dance. I'd like to give special thanks to Annette and Geoff who tended the bar on the evening. And I'd also like to acknowledge the great efforts of Cas, Kerry, Alison, and Louise who prepared the food that we had at this and other events. The profits of the valentine's dance went to help with the production of the new village sign. I will tell you more about the sign and how the project is progressing soon, I have a short presentation that I intend to give during the finance section of our agenda.

So, moving on through the coming year, we will be supporting an exhibition by the Fairlight History Group in August that will be celebrating the village centenary of the first houses built. This whole day event will be free to all visitors and for a small fee light refreshments will be available. Any profits

made on the day will be donated to the Fairlight Friday Lunch Club, or MOPP's as you may know it. Keep an eye out for posters and emails regarding the date and times.

We plan to hold a quiz night towards the end of October, probably around the Halloween weekend. Again, posters and emails will give more details closer to the time.

Our email scheme continues to be a success and keeps FRA members up to date with what is going on in Fairlight. My thanks go to Alison for continuing with this role and her diligence in keeping it running so smoothly.

We will continue to meet monthly for our FRA meetings, and as such it would be remiss of me not to personally thank Alastair for his role in capturing all salient points discussed at these meetings.

You will shortly hear a report from my treasurer Louise Russell, and I would like to thank her for her work this past year.

In closing, once again, I would like to give thanks to all committee members for their continued hard work and the support it has given me in this past year.

Christopher Smart

Chairman FRA

Treasurer's Report:

All figures in report rounded to the nearest pound.

Last year the AGM was being held much earlier than normal and as a result, only an interim end of year report could be presented. In June 2022 the audit was completed by Peter Norris as his last task as FRA Auditor. This year the role of FRA Auditor has been taken on by Arthur Miles who also does the accounts for Hastings RNLI.

Last year, FY 2022-23, two events were held. In August we hosted an afternoon's talk on the Fairlight War memorial which was presented by the History Club and in February 2023, a very successful Valentines party was held.

As agreed at last year's AGM we raised membership costs to £8 per household to take effect at the beginning of the FY 2023/4. Later in the year the FRA committee voted to increase costs to advertisers as from December 2022.

Our total income for the year was £10,364. This is £2,145 more than 2021/22. Advertising income for Fairlight News was £5488.00 which was £851 more than 2021/22. Membership income as at 31st March 2023 was £2903, £2510 was

raised in 2021/2022 but we need to take into account that many members paid the new membership fee prior to the end of March this year.

Total expenditure for the year was £9918. This is £2255 more than 2021/2022.

The cost of printing The Fairlight Magazine was £6763 which was £512 more than in 2021-2022 representing an increase of 8.2%. The cost after advertising income is taken into account is £1275, as opposed to £1613 in 2021/22 but we need to take into account the rise in advertiser fees in December 2022.

In 2017 we made a decision that profits from our events and ventures would be ring-fenced so they are available for donations and projects. This year we made donations totalling 641 to:

Jubilee seeds 2022 £139

Fairlight defibrillator £200

Fairlight War memorial £252

Fairlight Village Hall £50

There was additionally £1337 spent in FY 2022/23 towards the new village sign and I will address the finances and funding of this project on a separate slide.

Overall we made a surplus of £446 for the year. Our finances remain in a healthy condition with total assets at the year-end of £14689 representing about 2 years expenditure split between cash, our current account and reserve account.

The Treasurer also explained the way the new Village sign was being funded. The Parish Council had offered a grant of £800.00, to be match-funded by an equal sum from the FRA. It was hoped that the remainder required would be covered by the profit from the FRA Valentine event which had been held in February. But the Treasurer warned that estimates were given at the end of 2022 and may increase in line with the rising cost of materials.

The Village Sign:

The Chairman then gave a presentation explaining the process involved in creating the new sign for the village. The old sign had been erected to celebrate 50 years of the FRA, and was now 25 years old. The cost of the materials etc. for the sign in those days was only £400.00, which was donated

by Halifax Building Society. Chris noted that the original design was by Norman Dengate.

The old sign needed replacing, and the Parish Council asked the FRA to oversee the project. The Council offered a grant of £800.00, and asked the FRA to match-fund this sum. It is hoped that the remainder of the budget required was raised by the FRA Valentine Event in February of 2023.

Three designs for a new sign were offered to the village by the artist, Maggie Barnaby, and one was selected after a vote. The new sign was laser cut from sheet steel, and it then had to undergo a number of further processes to protect it from the weather. The post has been hewn from an old oak beam, the work carried out by Roger Dengate (no relative of the designer of the original sign).

Other expenses have included the need nowadays to apply for a license to replace the sign from East Sussex Highways, at a cost £600.00. Chris reported that the hole has recently been prepared for the sign, and an unveiling ceremony is scheduled for 3rd June, 2023. It will celebrate 75 years of the FRA, and 100 years since the building of the first houses that form the village as we now know it. The new design will form the logo of the FRA in the future.

Election of Officers and Committee:

The meeting was presented with the names of the new committee, and offered the chance to vote on them. David Shortman proposed that they should be voted en bloc, and the proposal was seconded by Margie Pocock.

The new committee is as follows:

Chairman Christopher Smart.

Vice Chair Annette Holmes (Elected, with Jenny Turner standing down).

Treasurer Louise Russell (Re-elected).

Minute Secretary Alastair Mitchell (Re-elected).

Committee Members:

Alison Thomas (Email Administrator and FN Sub-Editor).

Cas Barlow (Re-elected. Membership and FN Distribution).

Geoff Holmes (Re-elected).

Kerry Gentleman (Committee Member).

Carol Sharp (Co-Opted Member, elected. FN Editor)

Susan Evans (Co-Opted Member, elected).

Auditor:

The new auditor is Arthur Miles.

Any Other Business:

Geoff Holmes thanked Chris Smart, in particular for all his hard work on the sign project, and the Meeting was pleased to show its gratitude as well.

Lyn Cooke thanked in particular Alison Thomas who is the email administrator. Lyn thought this work was a particularly important facility for the village.

The Meeting Closed at 20.05.

It was followed by refreshments, and a fascinating talk on the Pett Level Independent Rescue Boat given by Steve Hill , to whom the FRA offers many thanks.