

FRIENDS OF HORSPATH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 22nd November 2017
at 7.30pm in the Horspath Community Hub**

PRESENT:	Trustees:	Mrs. Sheila Frankum (Chair)	Mrs Judy Kent (Minutes)	
		Mr Peter Ewart	Mrs Sally Humphrey	
		Mrs Rebecca Brown	Mrs Anna Radcliffe	
		Mr Lawrence Brown	Mr Ray Jackson	
		Accountants:	Mr Kelvin Barnes	Mrs Miranda Barnes
		Villagers:	Mr Frank Byrne	Mrs Mary Byrne
			Mr John Gray	Mrs Rosemary Gray
			Mr Paul Surman	Mrs Christine Surman
			Mr Donald Gray	Mrs Gill Gray
			Mr Chris Goss	Mrs Rosemary Goss
			Mrs Daphne Tilling	Mrs Heather Palmer
			Mrs Carol Cuthbert	Mr John Cuthbert
APOLOGIES:		Mrs Annette Miller	Mr & Mrs Adams	
		Mrs Janice Marshall	Mrs Christine Donnelly	

1.0 WELCOME

Sheila Frankum welcomed everyone to the AGM. Looking around, Sheila noted that most of the people here were regular helpers at the Hub. She thanked everybody for joining in and for everything they did. She hoped they got home safely because it was very windy outside.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 23rd NOVEMBER 2016

The minutes were agreed as a true record and subsequently signed by the Chairman.

3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Sheila explained that she was the Chair of the Friends of Horspath, but Lawrence Brown chaired the Trustees' meetings. He was also a director of the organisation. During the last year, she was pleased that most of the activities had continued and expanded.

3.1 Installation of Broadband

At the AGM last year, computer classes were requested, and they had started. Broadband had to be installed and Sheila thanked Anna, who had researched and arranged the installation. At present, broadband was used mostly during the

computer classes, but it was available to whoever wanted to use it. It had proved to be useful at Trustees' meetings.

3.2 Activities in the Hub

The Saturday Produce Markets had continued as well as Sunday Breakfasts and weekend activities including children's parties, which were a favourite, lectures, bridge competitions, bridge, school reunions, two baby showers, fitness mornings and family celebrations. Recently somebody who had used the Hub told Sheila "I didn't know it was such a superb facility".

3.3 Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) Award

One priority had been the prestigious OPT award, and for this reason the floor in the large hall had been sanded and re-varnished, and the stones on the front of the building had been re-carved with the names of the people who started the Methodist Chapel when it was first built. A detailed map had been erected by the bridge and eventually lettering would be put on the front of the board so that the Hub was signposted for people coming from the Village Hall car park. Rebecca would report on the OPT application and the award.

3.4 Losses in the Hub Community

We lost Neville Buckett and Marge Jones earlier this year. It was planned to hold a film show in March 2018 in memory of Neville because he was so keen on starting a film club.

3.5 Talk

John Woolley, a retired police detective, had given an excellent talk on the Great Train Robbery, but unfortunately not many people attended.

3.6 The Cross

In September, the Cross was carried by Daphne Tilling from the Chapel to St. Giles' Church. It had taken some time to obtain permission from the Diocese of the Church of England to erect the Cross in St Giles' Church. Daphne's uncle had made the cross. The Cross was made in memory of Percy Long, a notable member of Horspath Chapel. Sheila projected pictures of the procession and the Cross in its final resting place.

3.7 Coombe Methodist Chapel

Coombe, near Woodstock, had purchased their Chapel and had sought advice from our Trustees about the process. They had occasionally contacted us for help and we received an invitation to attend their Opening. Sheila, Rebecca and Judy had attended. It was a very different set-up, as they had a playgroup there every week day, restricting other activities. We hope to keep in touch.

3.8 Loans

A big priority for us all through the year had been making money to pay off loans. Last January, we started negotiations with Horspath Parish Council Stone Pit Trust in the hope that they would help us with the loans over the next three years.

Sheila thanked all the Trustees for all that they had done.

4.0 FINANCIAL REPORT (Appendix 1)

Sheila introduced Kelvin Barnes, Accountant. She thanked Kelvin and his wife, Miranda, for doing the accounts and for coming here tonight.

4.1 Kelvin reported that for the year ending 31st May 2017, the full accounts were about 15 pages and they would be submitted to Companies House and the Charities Commission. He had circulated an abridged version of the Unaudited Accounts for the year ended 31 May 2017 (Appendix I).

4.2 Kelvin said the Chapel was now pretty much looking after itself. There was a surplus income of £33,959, as opposed to £5,367 in the previous year.

4.3 The Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet showed current assets of £37,933, an increase on the £19,618 six months earlier. Twelve months from the Balance Sheet, there were loans due for repayment within that year – quite a significant sum – and this was where the negotiations with Horspath Parish Council Stone Pit Trust were important. There were also loans totalling £75,978 outstanding which were due for repayment after 31st May 2018. There were surplus assets of £164,055.

4.4 Sources of Income

Kelvin reported that continuing grants and donations had been received and some loans had been converted to donations. Fund raising, the majority of which came from the café, had increased on the previous year and hire of the Hall brought in £8,993, as opposed to £6,273 the year before.

4.5 Expenses

Total expenses in 2017 were £6,413, compared to £27,147 in 2016. Kelvin explained that this was owing to the extensive refurbishments that were carried out in 2015/16. All the other expenses remained steady, so 2017 was an average year. He said the expenses of £6,413 were wholly covered from the income received from the Hub. Kelvin thought it was encouraging that the expenses from this year were covered from the hire of the Hub.

4.6 Sheila invited questions from the floor.

Mr Byrne queried how long it would be before the loans were repaid. Kelvin explained that there were different repayment dates on the loans. This coming year £102,000 was due to be repaid, but beyond that £26,000. Some loans were for a period of ten years. There was another four years to pay off the ACRE loan. Some loans were for five years. Whether loans were repaid by acquiring different loans remained to be seen.

Mr Byrne asked whether any of the loans could be paid from the surplus of £33,000. Kelvin explained that the figure of £33,000 was for accounting purposes and did not represent cash. Sheila explained that £33,000 was the surplus on 31st May 2017. We had, in fact, paid off one of the loans from that surplus. Kelvin said that South Oxford District Council had contributed £100,000 to be released over a period of 10 years. For accounting purposes, they were only releasing £10,000 a year. There was only £23,000 available at present. In response to a query, Kelvin said that no tax was payable because Friends of Horspath was a charity.

Sheila thanked Kelvin and Miranda for all their hard work.

5.0 **CLASSES, CLUBS AND EVENTS** **(Appendix II)**

Sally had distributed a chart showing Activities for Autumn 2017 at Horspath Hub (Appendix II). She thanked Heather Palmer for guiding us through all the bookings and keeping us on track through an increasingly busy time. Sally and Sheila thanked Heather for all her hard work and for the very accurate website.

5.1 **Classes**

Sally reported that the Pilates and Yoga classes were going very well. There were seven to eight people in the classes. Seated Yoga had 13 one day and Vinyasa Yoga had 12 one day.

5.2 **Yoga Classes**

Sally was sad to say that Alison Partridge, who had been with us from the beginning, would be giving up at the end of this term. She had told Sally that "Positive things always come out of change.". Alison had recommended a colleague, Alvira Khan Gordon, who would be taking over. Alison would have liked to have been here tonight, but she was taking another class elsewhere. Sally could not thank Alison enough for all the hours and back massages she had given to her students at the Hub. She wanted Sally to give this message tonight from her: "I would have liked to have come to thank the committee and say how much I've enjoyed teaching at the Hub and how Sally and Sheila have made me feel welcome and supported."

5.3 Computer Classes

All the Trustees had been in favour of installing broadband for the computer classes. Anna Radcliffe had researched the options and arranged the installation of broadband. Chris and Rosemary Goss had volunteered to teach. They started in May and have had four blocks of three weekly sessions with two separate one-hour sessions. The only way to achieve this was by asking students to bring their own laptop or tablet to class, so that they were learning on the computer they used at home. It had been a challenge for Chris and Rosemary to teach on so many kinds of systems. The groups had remained small, so they were able to give one-to-one tuition. Our grateful thanks to Rosemary and Chris for all the time and energy they had put into these classes. Sally quoted some comments from students:

“I am a complete novice. It’s all completely new to me, but I got it started (the computer) all by myself and I’ve been copying things, so I can practice typing.”

“I e-mailed my daughter in Australia last Sunday all by myself. I was ‘frightfully buffed’. The e-mail reply from my daughter was, “Well done, Mum.”.

“My problem is my memory. I have a job to remember the rules. But I investigated people I knew as a 10-year-old boy. I found out all about them on Google. There is another thing I want to look up next time.”

“I enjoy the classes very much. I learned how to put a picture on Facebook. Next time I want to learn how to put a caption under it.”

Most of the older generation suffered from a lack of confidence in using computers. Chris and Rosemary had made a big difference in raising the confidence of the students in the classes. As one student said, “It’s only £5.00. It’s **amazing!**”. The classes had stopped now for the Christmas break and would start again in the New Year.

Sheila said that the classes and computer classes were the essence of the Hub.

5.4 Evening Yoga Class

At the last AGM, evening Yoga classes had been requested. These started in October with Jacqueline Rice. There had been two sessions so far. The class would continue until 18th December and start again in the New Year. Sally suggested that potential students should contact Jacqueline or herself if they wanted to try this new Yoga class.

5.5 Creative Writing Class

At the last AGM, the Creative Writing Class was just getting started and it had moved from strength to strength. A consistent five members of the group continued to write and share their stories with each other. A big thank you to Paul Walton for giving his time free-of-charge to this much appreciated class.

5.6 **Table Tennis**

The Table Tennis group was thriving. They met every Tuesday in the year, except Christmas and Easter, and filled the room with up to 18 players. One week they even had 21.

5.7 **Art Group**

The Art Group needed some new budding artists, but had two new students just last Thursday.

5.8 **Line Dancing**

The Line Dancing Group did not stop growing. There were regularly 15 to 18 dancers and once there were 23. As Leo's husband, Keith, was still very ill, the joint dance performance of line dancing and Balkan dancing planned for 1st December had had to be postponed. It would be rearranged for some time next year.

5.9 **Dynamix Dance Academy**

Dynamix Dance Academy no longer met at the Hub. They had moved to two different halls in Oxford where they were able to expand. We were very sad to see them leave, but had to accept that.

5.10 **Frances Steepe's Youth Group**

The Youth Group no longer met at the Hub. They had had to move the group to Risinghurst, as there was no longer a bus connection to Horspath. Again, we were very sad they had to move.

Please let us know of any classes you would like to see in the Hub, and do come and try any of the activities that interest you. It was always wonderful to be part of a group doing something you enjoyed and learning something new.

5.11 **Footfall Figures**

From 1st November 2016 to 31st October 2017, 8,323 people had used the Hub. That was an additional 1,289 people compared with the same period last year. The increase reflected more classes and a big increase in the use of the Hub in the evenings and weekends.

5.12 **Clubs**

The **Senior Residents' Club** had decided to move their meetings to the Hub on the first Wednesday of each month and we heartily welcome them here.

The **Garden Club** continued to meet on the second Wednesday of each month, but attendance was falling. They would be making Christmas decorations here on Saturday 2nd December from 10.00am to 12.00pm and there were more activities planned for the spring. However, unless there was more interest, they may not be able to carry on. Any ideas were welcome to help keep it going.

5.13 Other Activities and Events at the Hub This Year

5.13.1 Christmas Market

There was a festive Christmas Market last December with 11 stalls including gifts, home-made cakes, Cornfield bread, Horspath honey, Shotover beer and a large raffle. There was to be another Christmas Market on 9th December this year from 9.30am-12.00pm with similar stalls and Father Christmas. There was a Saturday Market in May with as many stalls.

5.13.2 Great Train Robbery Talk

Police Chief Inspector John Woolley, a friend of Maurice Stone, gave a thrilling report of the Great Train Robbery from his viewpoint as the first police officer on the scene. Unfortunately, only 19 people attended, so many people missed an unforgettable tale.

5.13.3 Go Active Programme

Conor Grogan launched his Go Active Programme in the Hub and the Village Hall. Funded by South Oxfordshire District Council, Sport England and the Lottery, he encouraged people over 60 to take part in activities such as Senior Circuits, Nordic Walking and Learning to Bowl. He would be giving Fitness MOT's in the Hub on Thursday 30th November 2017 from 10.00am-12.00pm.

5.14 Events

The most popular use of the Hub was for children's parties, but also christenings and adult parties.

Three different Bridge Clubs used the Hub for matches and meetings.

Shotover Wildlife and Shotover Preservation Trust continued to use the Hub for their meetings. Shotover Wildlife held a three-day Bee Identification Course here last February.

Naturally Sweet had Sunday Breakfast Cafes and Yoga Breakfasts in the Hub several times a month.

The Holton Players held rehearsals here for their current play.

The Friday Coffee Mornings and Post Office were the most popular events of the week.

In July the Trustees gave a “Thank You Tea” for all the Hub volunteers. This was enjoyed by all. We can’t thank the volunteers enough for their loyalty and hard work, serving teas, baking cakes, cleaning, general maintenance and gardening, etc. Without such help the Hub absolutely would not manage to function.

Please let us know if you would like to help in any way, if you have any ideas to share or if you have any questions.

6.0 GRANTS AND AWARDS

Rebecca Brown reported that Friends of Horspath (FoH) had applied for two awards this year; one was successful, the other was not. Rebecca explained the process and hard work involved in applying for grants and awards. Having done this for some years now, it was worth the effort whether or not the application was successful.

To complete an application, thought had to be given to what was wanted, how to do it, what was the purpose of doing it, what resources were available and whether there was sufficient need to justify the request. By the time the application was completed, the Trustees had done a lot of work thinking through a programme or project. Precision was required, and all the details must be researched. Something substantial had to be created in envisioning the project. If unsuccessful, these plans were ready when resources were available, or it could be implemented in a different way.

6.1 Oxford High Sheriff Award Scheme

An application was made to fund computer classes. Infinite detail was required on cost, staffing, potential students, what time of day was planned for the class, the equipment required and how the class was to be organised. The application was not successful, but momentum had gathered. It was decided to go ahead with implementation with Chris and Rosemary Goss volunteering to teach. Participants who had expressed an interest were asked to bring their own laptop or tablet. That was how an application could win, even if unsuccessful.

6.2 Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) 2017 Awards

This was our successful application for awards given annually by OPT to projects in four categories:

Building Conservation
New Buildings
Environmental/Landscape Enhancement
Small Projects

We entered the Building Conservation category describing the project as ‘The Purchase, Renovation and Conversion of Horspath Methodist Chapel into a Community Hub’. The building was purchased in 2014 and Phase I renovations

included all the alterations financed by the WREN grant in 2015 and completed at the beginning of 2016.

This year, Phase II comprised:

- Sanding and re-varnishing of main hall floor
- Touching up paintwork
- Capping off disused monitor wires dangling from ceilings
- Tidying the garden spaces
- Re-carving of names etched on foundation stones on front of building
- Scrubbing and bleaching of the entrance and kitchen floors
- Researching the history of names on foundation stones (now displayed in Hub)
- Erection of large sign beyond the bridge with weather-proof map of surrounding green belt area showing local footpaths.

There was no financial award in this scheme, only the prestigious recognition from a well-regarded organisation. Our Letter of Commendation stated:

“The panel were impressed by the way the community had come together to turn this important building, at the heart of the village, into such a useful space for different groups. They were interested to see how it linked to the adjoining sports field and offer their congratulations to all who have been involved.”

Rebecca said it was a proud moment being at the Awards Ceremony. The lecture theatre at St. Catherine’s College was packed. As the Chair of the panel described the Hub project, a huge picture of the building was projected onto the front wall. The panel Chair’s transcript had not arrived, but would be displayed in the Hub. From memory, there was about a five-minute description of our work with such comments as ‘truly inspirational’. There was the acknowledgement that there was ‘no architect in this case’ and they were impressed that all the contractors had come from the immediate area. They were all named, and we were asked that congratulations were passed on to them individually. They highlighted the bridge specially constructed to link with other village facilities, as well as the signage and the map showing local footpaths. They noted our success in re-establishing a Post Office, as well as all the uses the Hub now provided for the village. Over the course of the evening, three or four people living in villages no longer having a Post Offices spoke of their envy at our having retrieved ours.

Sheila thanked Rebecca for all her hard work in promoting this. Although there was no money involved, it was very prestigious.

Lawrence Brown added that it seemed to have built up our relationship between Horspath and the OPT.

7.0 COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Anna Radcliffe reported that the Friday Café continued to be open every Friday of the year except Christmas Day. It was run in conjunction with the Post Office so ably run by Judy. We had footfall of between 35 and 60 each Friday, which was pleasing.

The combination resulted in a very successful morning. We welcomed anyone who felt able to come and we had several vulnerable people who felt at home and visited us regularly. We tried to ensure that everybody had a happy time.

We supported two charities in the last few weeks and raised £300 for MacMillan Cancer Relief and £200 for Children in Need.

I have been indebted to my volunteers who made the coffee and brought in such sumptuous cakes. We would be making a few changes to the kitchen in the next few weeks, which would hopefully make it an even better place in which to work.

We had put up our price for cake during the year, but, although we needed to make ends meet, the purpose of the café was as a get-together rather than a commercial, so we would always keep our prices low.

Thank you all very much for supporting this venture and may 2018 be even more successful than 2017.

Sheila thanked Anna for all the organising that she did, which could be very difficult at times. She said that the cafe was a very important part of the Hub.

8.0 POST OFFICE

Judy Kent was pleased to report that the Post Office continued to thrive. From 1st November 2016 to 31st October 2017, there was a total of 1,673 customers; an increase of 21 on the same period in the previous year. This was very encouraging, especially since she was unable to operate on 12th May 2017 because of a serious error by Open Reach. They had installed an uninsulated wire from the telegraph pole into the Post Office box in the Hub. All was well as soon as that error had been corrected. It was no surprise that December saw the highest number of customers with 204 and the second highest was March with 178. The lowest was 99 in April because of Easter.

During the past year, Judy had sold:

815	1 st Class Stamps
2954	2 nd Class Stamps
332	Paid Parcels
126	Home Shopping Returns
63	Bills Paid
1032	Cash Withdrawals

May was the lowest month for cash withdrawals and July was the highest. Fifty percent of 2nd class stamps were sold in November and December and 35% of 2nd class stamps were sold in November, but the bulk of her work was cash withdrawals.

Judy assured everyone that she did not make a note of customers' ages, but she had noticed a welcome increase in the number of younger people using the Post Office, who used it for sending parcels and home shopping returns. Her valued older customers, who often came every week, tended to use it more for cash withdrawals and buying stamps.

Once again, Judy thanked all her customers for their invaluable support. They had made this Post Office a great success.

Sheila added that a lot of people enjoyed a chat when they came to the Post Office.

9.0 FUTURE GROUPS, CLASSES AND EVENTS

Sheila said that we were going forward with the OPT award and computer classes last year. We had always got future projects in mind, e.g. kitchen and garden plans. A new drive was planned, but the Church was having their pathway done. If that contractor was successful, we would consider doing the same. It was quite an expense. Sheila asked for ideas about the use of broadband to help the community. In April, Go Active came to the Village Hall, and we supported this venture for the over fifties. I kept on promoting our table tennis to Conor Graham and mentioned our need for a new table tennis table. Go Active gave us a new table at no extra cost to us and Conor came along to take photographs. Sheila opened the discussion to the floor.

9.1 Film Club

Daphne Tilling asked if anything was happening with the Cinema Club. Sheila said not at present, but we hoped to have a film show in memory of Neville Buckett and we hoped that would start the process. It was fraught with problems because of copyright and the cost of films. We had got the projector and the wall to screen films.

9.2 Camera Club

Daphne said her husband had asked about a Camera Club. Brian wanted to learn from others. Sheila said if he came to the Garden Club in January, he would meet a very useful person who was a gardener and photographer, so that could be the start of something.

9.3 Book Club

Daphne said there was at least one big book club in the village. Could there be a male book club and a female book club, as men and women tended to enjoy different types of books? Anna said there were at least two book clubs in the village. Sheila said it

depended whether that would work here or in peoples' houses. We could promote from here and advertise it, even if it was happening elsewhere.

9.4 Fundraising Events

Ray Jackson reported that sign-up sheets had been circulated for Cribbage, Whist and a Quiz, but there was not enough support for Cribbage or Whist. Most of the support was for a quiz if the questions were not too difficult.

Mary Byrne suggested a Rummy Club. Sheila said we could have a Games Evening. We had to advertise and try it. If nobody came we would not do it again.

9.5 History of the Village

Peter Ewart said an initial aim was to capture the Hub history and the working life of the village. Peter proposed a Village History Society. Sheila undertook to put up photographs of old Horspath on the walls of the Post Office room. The following villagers would be a mine of information:

Brian Lowe
Joy Mullins
Muriel
Sheila Dandridge

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Date of AGM

Frank Byrne suggested changing the date and time of the AGM next year, perhaps in July in the afternoon, because of the dark evenings and bad weather in November. Sheila said the beginning of September would be better so that Kelvin and Miranda had time to prepare the accounts.

11.0 DATE OF NEXT AGM

Sheila announced that the next AGM would be at the beginning of September 2018, the date to be arranged.

Sheila thanked everybody for coming out on this dreadful night and thanked them all for their help. She said it was what went on inside the building that was important, and she hoped it would continue. We looked forward to seeing them at the Christmas Market on 9th December 2017 from 9.30am to 12.00pm. Anna listed some of the stalls that would be available: two craft stalls, a bread stall, a cake stall, a honey stall, a raffle and Father Christmas.

The floor thanked the Trustees.