

Stour and Orwell Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held at The Royal Harwich Yacht Club, Woolverstone

24th March 2011

In attendance were some 20 members including:

Chairman - Tom Hill
Treasurer - Stephen Clark
Honorary Secretary - Rodney Chadburn

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Tom Hill welcomed the members and thanked them for attending the Stour and Orwell Society's Annual General Meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jackie Harding, Oliver Paul, Tony Roberts, Jonathan Martin, Rosemary Raddon, Frank Norman, Carole Barbone, Mark Bostock and Gordon Smith

3. Minutes of the 2010 AGM

Tom Hill, seconded by Peter Ward, proposed that the minutes of the 2010 AGM be signed as a true and correct record. This proposal was passed unanimously and the minutes duly signed.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes

5. Chairman's Report

Tom Hill thanked the officers and committee members and officers for their efforts during the year. He also thanked Stephen Clark for the support given to SOS by his office staff. He reported that SOS had been very active during the past year and that the Society was becoming recognised by many people, local councils and other organisations in our area. Highlights of the year included:

- 1) GANGES INQUIRY – SOS has participated fully in the debate regarding the future of the site. Tom Hill, Simon Hewitt and Rodney Chadburn had attended the public Inquiry after which the Inspector turned down Haylink's proposals. A pre-application consultation is now under way and it is expected that the new application will comprise an hotel, other 'public' buildings and fewer houses – of which a proportion will be 'affordable'. SOS will continue to monitor matters as they evolve.
- 2) SUFFOLK COAST AND HEATHS AONB – SOS is now engaged in a dialogue with SCH Unit. Our Chairman spoke at their annual Estuaries Forum and, together with Stephen Clark, he met their officers with a view to identifying projects of mutual benefit where SOS can actively support the SCHU. For the longer term, the SOS committee will nominate a 'link person' to ensure that this co-operation is maintained.

- 3) AIR TRAFFIC – NATS has delayed its plans to review of air traffic over Eastern England. Tom Hill and Robert Erith (Chairman of the Dedham Vale Society) met key personnel of NATS at their Control Centre in order to express our concern at flights over the Shotley Peninsula and the Dedham Vale. They will ratchet up the pressure on NATS in advance of the next phase of consultation to ensure that our voices are clearly heard.
- 4) BABERGH CORE STRATEGY – We have expressed our views to Babergh District and will continue to do so as consultation continues.
- 5) SOS is actively involved in the matter of the possible closure of the Chelmondiston Household Waste Recycling facility. Members have been circulated with information and have been encouraged to sign an e-petition.

6. Treasurer's Report

Stephen Clark reported that our funds are adequate and the bank balance presently stands at £6,391.38. This may seem to be excessive but SOS is likely to become involved in joint projects with the SCHU and this will entail matched funding. These projects will form part of our long-term aim to raise the status of the Shotley Peninsula hinterland – presently a special project area managed in conjunction with the parts of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB along the banks of the Stour and the Orwell – so that the whole of the Peninsula will become part of the AONB.

Our Christmas and Summer Parties are always well attended and make modest contributions to our funds. Recently we have co-operated with other local organisations in order to cement relationships and to assist their fund raising efforts.

Membership stands at just below 200 and there will be a drive to recruit more members in the near future. The website continues to be developed and members can keep in touch by visiting it and encourage others to do so as well.

7. Election of Officers and Committee

All the officers and the seven existing committee members are prepared to stand for re-election. The Secretary has received four nominations from people wishing to stand for election to the committee. This means that total nominations exceed the twelve committee members (including officers) permitted under the SOS constitution. However, in discussions with those involved the Secretary has arrived at an agreement that Charlotte Stewart, an existing committee member, and Mark Bostock, a new nominee, will not stand for formal election but will agree to being co-opted at the first committee meeting.

The situation is summarised in the table below:

Post	Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	Tom Hill	Michael Barlow	Oliver Paul
Honorary Treasurer	Stephen Clark	Jamie Norman	Patty Shone
Honorary Secretary	Rodney Chadburn	Peter Ward	Richard Hoare
Committee Member	Rosemary Raddon	Susi Hines	Doug Selway
Committee Member	Tony Roberts	Wendy Sadler	Anna Long
Committee Member	Susanna Bishop	Jane Ingram	Peter Ward
Committee Member	Jeremy Pertwee	Henry Chancellor	Henry Huxley
Committee Member	Oliver Paul	Tom Hill	Stephen Clark
Committee Member	Simon Hewitt	Susanna Bishop	Rodney Chadburn
Committee Member	Jonathan Martin	Nick Angel	Anne Angel
Committee Member	Penny Hughes-Stanton	Rosemary Raddon	Susi Hines
Committee Member	Jacky Harding	Susanna Bishop	Rodney Chadburn

Other: Charlotte Stewart and Mark Bostock have volunteered to be co-opted

Tom Hill, seconded by Rodney Chadburn, proposed that the officers and committee members be elected en bloc. The meeting approved the proposal unanimously.

8. Any Other Business

- Susanna Bishop reported on the public meeting she had attended, with others on SOS's behalf, regarding the future of the Chelmondiston waste-recycling site. Key points were:

Lisa Chambers (Portfolio Holder for Waste) and Mark Deer (Household Waste Recycling Services Manager) represented Suffolk CC at the meeting.

The Shotley Village Hall was packed with some 200 people protesting against the closure.

Concern and anger was expressed over the County Council's high-handed actions that were taken with no consultation from November 2009, when the closure was announced, until February 2010.

After some heated exchanges Lisa Chambers agreed to attend a meeting that will include the contractors and members of all local parish councils.

Lisa Chambers will return to her cabinet and ask for a postponement of the 9th of May deadline for closing the site in order to allow proper consideration of alternative courses of action.

Babergh Councillors will be invited to attend discussions within Suffolk CC when this issue is to be debated.

The site running costs are presently £81,000 a year.

Suffolk CC, in the context of required budget cuts, cannot afford this any longer.

A locally arranged petition together with the on-line petition has attracted 8,000 names of people wishing to retain the facility.

Susanna asked Lisa Chambers if the special status of the Peninsula might affect the County Council's decision and the answer was a clear 'yes' - so she suggests that the SOS Secretary should engage in correspondence with Lisa Chambers to remind her of this undertaking.

From the floor Peter Ward commented that it was disgraceful that the public had not been consulted earlier. He had spoken by telephone with Mark Deere and told that 'costs cannot be divulged' – but Mr Deer subsequently showed a slide of the relevant costs at the public meeting. He said that the latest edition of the East Anglian Daily Times carried a long article about the issue of closing recycling facilities. In discussion it was pointed out that there had been adequate prior consultation over library closures and this had led to some being kept open.

- Peter Ward asked if the exceptionally cold weather had affected the Christmas Event that had been held at the Suffolk Food Hall as a co-operative venture with Harkstead Church. Stephen Clark replied that SOS's 'take' was down but that we did not aim to make large amounts of money from these functions. Harkstead Church had seemed to be satisfied with the outcome of the Doodle Auction. Susanna Bishop expressed disappointment that SOS had received no mention in any of the publicity for the event.
- Some members have observed that the south bank of the Stour is littered with trees and branches where trees have been felled. Penny Hughes-Stanton said that the Environment Agency seems to be stripping flood defences of trees and bushes. Stephen Clark said that he had spoken with the Agency and had been told that roots encourage rabbits whose holes weaken sea walls. He will ask the SCHU if they are aware of these actions.

- Penny Hughes-Stanton said that Mr Parker was not giving in over the matter of the fence erected at Mistley Quay but that it is a complex situation that will be difficult and expensive to progress. Tom Hill promised to raise this matter at the next SOS committee meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was declared closed at 8.27 p.m.