

FAIRLIGHT PRESERVATION TRUST

(Registered Charity Number 1107169)

The Annual General Meeting of the Fairlight Preservation Trust was held on Saturday 24 November 2018 at 2.30pm at Fairlight Village Hall.

Present: David Shortman, Chairman (DS), Leslie Kosmin, Vice Chairman (LK), Dr Ruth Kosmin, Secretary (RK), Nick Booker, Treasurer (NB), Jenny Batchelor (JB), Paul Capps (PC), Isabel Horsley (IH), Jill Lewing (JL), Keith Somerville (KS) and 35 other members.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman, DS, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting on a cold and wet afternoon. Apologies for absence had been received from Jennifer Annets, Paul Draper, Jacqui Lait, Stephen Leadbetter, Beryl Morris, Cllr Chris Saint, Bob Scattergood and Mary Stewart. Condolences were sent to Dr John Sinclair, the former Chairman, on the death of his wife.

2. Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the last AGM were proposed by George Hensher and seconded by Frank James. They were approved by the meeting on a show of hands without debate.

3. Chairman's report

DS reported that this last year had been one of consolidation. The Committee had been involved in negotiations with Rother District Council to agree the maintenance programme for the berms and other ancillary coast protection matters, together with the financing involved. DS wished to thank Deborah Kenneally, the new manager at Rother DC who was responsible for coast protection matters, for her help and co-operation.

There had been three Committee meetings, and one Joint meeting with Rother DC, as well as a separate meeting with East Kent Engineering Partnership (EKEP) who were now advising Rother DC on coast protection matters.

DS thanked RK who had performed the role of Secretary over the past year and had spearheaded the negotiations with Rother DC. She would be reporting to the meeting on her dealings with Rother DC and the current work of the Trust.

DS thanked both LK as Vice Chairman and NB as Treasurer. NB had made a very considerable contribution to the administration and working of the Committee over the past year.

DS thanked JL for her work as Membership Secretary and for organising the AGM. DS also thanked IH for her work in collecting and collating the data on the functioning of the wells and the Compressor House, which was so vital to the Rockmead scheme. DS then thanked KS, PC and JB for their work on the Committee in the past year.

Finally DS reported that unfortunately the FPT had not been able to man the stall at Fairfest in the summer owing to the inclement weather. Instead, following the conclusion of the AGM members would be able to watch a video of the work on the 3rd stage berm that had been carried out in the summer of 2016 and review various photographs of the construction.

4. Report on the activities over the past year

RK reported that 2018 had been a year of sustained progress. The Committee had enjoyed the benefit and enthusiasm of the new Committee members elected at the last AGM. The FPT was grateful for the support and involvement of the Parish Council and to all the current members for their continuing support of the FPT. The protection works now covered the whole of Fairlight Cove. Government funding for a berm such as this would probably be impossible to obtain in the

future, so we are very fortunate. But it would be necessary to keep eternally vigilant to monitor and protect the cliffs.

There had been close and regular contact with Rother DC in the person of Deborah Kenneally, who was now involved, with the assistance of the FPT, in monitoring the various contracts and maintenance requirements for works on the cliffs and in ensuring that the money in the Fairlight Maintenance Fund is carefully spent. We also have an excellent relationship with EKEP who are now contracted to Rother DC.

A series of work projects had been carried out in 2018, especially in the area of the Rockmead scheme, including work on the cliff slopes, the de-silting of the secondary ponds, re-cutting of the primary drains and some re-grading of the beach behind the berms. Further works were planned for the Spring of 2019 to install a new SmartDitch which would ensure no leaking takes place into the cliff surface. EKEP had reported that with the work already carried out there was now much less pooling and new greening at lower levels and more stabilisation. In addition, a new Aco drain had been installed in Channel Way. It is a heavier duty drainage channel with slightly larger capacity, as recommended by EKEP. The pipes had been rodded to the cliff edge to put the drain back in action.

The maintenance contract for the Compressor House and wells, which was due to expire in February 2019, was currently being reviewed with a view to saving costs and ensuring an improved service. IH had taken on the responsibility for analysing and checking the outputs from the Compressor House and was thanked for her efforts.

There followed questions from the floor from Lyn Cooke, Mike Webb and Brenda Dwyer relating to the first (eastern end) berm. Each of these was answered by RK. DS thanked RK for her report and her considerable work for the FPT.

5. Treasurer's report and approval of the Accounts

NB presented the Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2018. The Accounts had been approved and signed on behalf of the Committee on 29 October 2018. Total funds were £33,141. There were currently unrestricted funds totalling £21,668 in the bank accounts at Barclays and Nationwide. In addition there were restricted funds of £11, 473 designated for further coast protection works.

NB went through the accounts in detail, explaining each of the important items. Insurance cost £325. There had been a saving of about £100 as a result of the hospitality shown by DS in arranging for Committee meetings to be held at his home. Net income for the year was £277. NB reported that the FPT now had 169 members of whom 65 are yet to renew their membership this year. Hopefully people would be renewing their membership at this AGM. The cost remained at £10 for 3 years.

Michael Martin Partnership was thanked for their efforts in preparing the Accounts without charge.

6. Election of officers and members of the Executive Committee

LK proposed that DS be re-elected as Chairman and thanked him for his work for the FPT. This resolution was seconded by JB and carried unanimously.

DS proposed LK as Vice- Chairman. This resolution was seconded by Lyn Cooke and carried unanimously.

LK proposed NB as Treasurer. This resolution was seconded by Carol Shortman and carried unanimously.

LK proposed RK as Secretary. This resolution was seconded by Lyn Cooke and carried unanimously.

LK announced that there had been 5 nominations for members of the Committee – Jill Lewing (Membership secretary), Issy Horsley (Rockmead Road monitoring), Jenny Batchelor, Keith Summerville and Paul Capps. All were re-elected unopposed.

7. Any other business

LK raised the issue of the outstanding Planning Application to Rother DC for the development of 150 new homes on the East Field site of Wakehams Farm. He said that this was currently the most important issue facing the village and that it ought to be discussed at this AGM. He said the scheme was a serious threat to the village for a number of reasons which he outlined. These had been explained in the numerous objections lodged with Rother DC by local residents. LK suggested that a resolution should be put before the meeting that the FPT should itself formally lodge an objection to the Planning Application. The resolution was proposed by DS and seconded by George Hensher. The resolution was carried unanimously.

Keith Jellicoe of EFAG thanked the meeting for its support. He explained that the closing date for objections was 9 December 2018. Nearly 200 residents had objected so far. There was also the Rother Local Plan to consider which allowed for 30 houses on this site. Comments on the Local Plan needed to be lodged by 7 December 2018.

DS stated that the Fairlight Parish Council would be holding an open day in the Village Hall on 13 December 2018 for local residents. The Parish Council was currently awaiting the report from the consultants that it had instructed.

PC reminded the meeting that it was vital to ensure that there were no further soakaways in Fairlight as these only added to the drainage problems.

JB urged residents to stop further de-forestation in the village where a number of important trees had been removed in recent times. The absence of trees to soak up the water was the cause of further drainage problems. She was in contact with Rother DC to obtain tree preservation orders. DS said that the Parish Council was aware of the problem and had asked Rother to consider emergency tree preservation orders on trees that were under threat.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm and was followed by the screening of the video of the construction of the 3rd stage berm in 2016 and the viewing of historic photographs of the work. Refreshments were served.