

Minutes of the AGM of the Fairlight Preservation Trust

Held in the Village Hall on 10th November 2024, at 14.30

Those Attending from the Committee: Trevor Lewing (TL) [Chairman], Issy Horsley (IH), Nick Booker (NB), Alastair Mitchell (AM), Lyn Cooke (LC), Jill Lewing (JL), Dominique Pichard (DP), Keith Somerville (KS), Martin Usher (MU).

In addition: 28 members were present.

1) Welcome:

At 14.30, the Chairman welcomed those attending the meeting.

2) Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from:

Heather Woolven.

Mr and Mrs Barlow.

Mr and Mrs Baines.

Jeff Diggines.

Chetz Colwell.

Mrs Val Hornsby.

Mr and Mrs Dengate.

Denise Lamb.

3) Approval of the Minutes:

The minutes for the previous AGM, held on 19th November 2023 were approved.

Proposed by Jill Lewing, seconded by David Shortman.

4) Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5) Chairman's Report:

The Chairman gave the following report:

Jill and I moved to Fairlight in 2009 and immediately joined the FPT, I had no idea then that in 2024 I would be Chairman of the Trust and I will strive to do a good job.

I was elected as Chairman at the last AGM - How quickly the last 12 months have passed us by. I set myself a couple of goals, not all achieved yet. I am still in a steep learning curve.

It has been quite a busy year. The Committee meets regularly and we frequently correspond with each other. My email box is taken up with the Trust's business.

The Trust was formed 1987 in slightly different guises. Its aims have remained the same since 2004 when the Trust gained charitable status.

That is:

The preservation of human life and property by procuring the provision of coastal defences in order to protect Fairlight Cove and surrounding areas from coastal erosion or landslip.

To promote the conservation protection and improvement of the flora and fauna in Fairlight Cove and surrounding areas.

The Trust is lucky to have a committee with various skills to bring to the table and I thank them all for their support and hard work over the last year. I am pleased to say that they have all accepted nominations to continue.

The Committee continues to monitor the cliffs and take readings from the compressor house. Rother District Council is the coastal protection authority, and they rely on the Trust to inform them of any issues.

Last November there was a number of slippages, and we informed RDC who quickly responded, but this will be a continuing problem. Coastal erosion has been slowed down by the berms and the pumps along Rockmead Road. We are continuing to urge RDC to fulfil their obligations in maintaining the pumps in Rockmead Road.

I'm tempted to say we and RDC have hit a brick wall, but it is probably better described by a stretch of water, the English Channel. We hit a crossroads this year by which the installers of the Rockmead Road system are based in France and have been slow to respond, not helped by the language barrier. The alternative is to look elsewhere but that is causing further problems because of the difficulty in finding a company with knowledge and expertise of the pumping system. There is an on-site meeting in 10 days time. We will persist.

More recently we have been involved with planning issues including the Market Garden project. We have raised those problems with the relevant bodies to help try resolve them. We attended an on-site meeting last Friday on Channel Way flooding problems.

Finally, thank you, to you the members for being here today and your continued support by way of subscriptions, and other fund-raising means and donations.

6) Report by Martin Usher on the Fairlight maintenance programme and related matters:

MU gave the following report:

On March 2024, there was a visit by the chief engineer from TP Geo to assess the state of the Rockmead Road system. They were on site for one day. Rother District Council (RDC) have a report and are now waiting for a quote for the necessary overhaul. TP Geo were concerned by the level of biofouling and have advised RDC that the wells need treating with a chemical called Boresaver before any remedial work is undertaken. There is to be a site meeting this month with the manufacturers which I shall be attending. This is welcome news as the less the pumps need cleaning, the less disturbance there is to the electrical and pneumatic connections.

A new company took over the compressor maintenance this year and have rectified the problem whereby the second compressor failed to take over when another shut down due to a fault, and also reduced the off load running time which will save electricity. The previous contractor could not achieve either corrections, and I have been assured that that company will not be considered next time the contract is up for renewal.

Annual maintenance of the pumps has been carried out by the RDC maintenance team. This consists of lifting all the pumps, jetwashing, checking the valves and pneumatic connections and replacing parts as necessary. The wells are dipped and the water levels recorded. We are now waiting for the spreadsheet.

TP Geo disconnected 8 pumps that were not working in March, and a further 11 are not working as of yesterday. Roughly 10 are known to be working from visual inspection of the control panel, but until I get the spreadsheet I will not know which pumps have water in them and should be working. Some pumps do start working after the annual maintenance but due to heavy biofouling of some pumps, this can be only for a short period.

Slope maintenance has been carried out by Chunnel Plant. More work this year was necessary to reinstate the access due to the

excessive winter/spring rainfall. A 14-minute video of the work is available on the news page of our website.

7) Treasurer's Report, Approval of the Accounts for the year to 31 March, 2024:

NB thanked Martin Cutmore for his work in preparing the FPT accounts at no cost to the Trust. The total funds in the FPT accounts is £37, 312, with the money held in the following accounts:

HSBC: £12,066

Barclays and Nationwide: £25, 231

With £15 cash in hand.

The Income at 31.3. 2024 was £1073, with expenditure at £649, and profit therefore £424.

Membership stands at 225 at the present time.

The accounts were approved.

Proposed by John Pulfer, seconded by Frank James.

NB encouraged those present to use the easyfunding scheme, which brought in a significant sum to the charity at no extra cost to the members. The scheme works when purchasing items online, and joining is a simple matter.

NB also encouraged members to leave used printer cartridges in the receptacles at the Village Hall. Their recycling brings in further money for the FPT.

8) Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee:

TL reported that there were no new nominations seeking to join the Committee, but that all the present members sought reselection. This was approved en bloc by the meeting.

Proposed by Carol Shortman, seconded by George Hensher.

9) Any Other Business:

On behalf of the Channel Way Residents Association, John Pulfer (JP) thanked MU for the useful meeting they had had recently, and for the work of the FPT in trying to sort out the problem of water flooding down Channel Way. He emphasised that this water comes not only from the Firehills, but also from behind. There had been ditches both down Channel Way, and behind, but these were no longer working. It was not clear how the situation could be improved, but NB assured JP that ESCC Highways was being encouraged to accept some of this water into its drainage system. It was also suggested that resurfacing the road might help, but JP said that the residents did not want a tarmacked road surface. JP again thanked the Committee, and confirmed that it had the full support of the Resident's Association.

His words were echoed by Maria Blain, who said she had been delighted with the concern being shown for the problem.

The meeting closed at 14.50, at which point Carol Shortman thanked the Committee for their work.