

Minutes of the 85th Annual General Meeting of The Wirral Society held at Wallasey Golf Club, Bayswater Road, Wallasey on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 at 7 p.m.

The President, Professor John Tarn OBE DL, opened the 85th Annual General Meeting welcoming everyone.

- 13/1 Present: There were 65 members and friends in attendance.
- 13/2 Apologies for absence had been received from 9 members.
- 13/3 The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held at St Nicholas' Church, Newport Avenue, Wallasey, on 6th March, 2012, which had been circulated by post to all members, were found to be correct and were signed by the President. The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Mr Terry Edgar and seconded by Dr Lilian Potter. The Meeting adopted the Minutes unanimously.
- 13/4 Matters Arising from the previous Minutes                      There were no matters arising from the Minutes.
- 13/5 Chairman's Report      The Chairman's report had been circulated in booklet format, by post or e-mail, to all members. Before making comments on his report the Chairman, Rod Tann, welcomed our Vice President, Mr Alan Brack, to the meeting. He also expressed the Society's sympathy to him over the passing of Mrs Edith Brack. The Chairman also expressed sympathy from the Society at the passing of Jim O'Neil. The Chairman then expressed pleasure in using the gavel presented to the Society by Mrs Brack.

Referring to his report, Rod Tann was concerned that the National Planning Policy Framework had significantly watered down former planning policies and said that the Committee will keep a watchful eye on its progress. CPRE was in financial difficulties and had had to get rid of Regional Officers. Andy Yuille, the North West Regional Officer, had been vital to us over many issues beyond our capacity to respond and Cheshire Branch will try to keep him on in some other way. In view of the fact that WMBC had revoked its planning 'Restraint Policy' implemented seven years ago, concern was expressed that builders will prefer to build in W Wirral, rather than in the areas in need of re-generation on the east side of Wirral. By stopping development in the rest of Wirral it has helped but WMBC had to show five years of building land availability. CW&C Council have had similar problems in rural Cheshire. There has been no development on the Wirral Waters scheme except for a new Trade Centre in the North End of the docks, which we welcome. Regarding historic buildings, Vineyard Farm plans seemed to be going well. Over Mostyn House there is going to be a public meeting shortly and the Society Committee will keep a watchful eye on the outcome. In the case of Burton Manor there has been no agreement over its sale and the Society has intervened. The building is in a poor condition but the grounds are being cared for by The Friends of Burton Manor. Over the Twelve Quays Footpath it has been good to see a happy outcome, partly through our support.

There were no questions on the Chairman's report, the President thanked the Chairman for his detailed report and said the Society owed him a great debt of gratitude for his work on our behalf. This was supported by applause.

- 13/6 Treasurer's Report      Peter Bowler spoke to his report, which had been circulated, by post or electronically, before the meeting. He reported that income from subscriptions in 2012 was slightly up on the previous year and continued to include a share of subscriptions paid to CPRE by Wirral residents. The total income was significantly less in 2012 than in 2011 but the latter had been inflated by the receipt of the residual funds of £3,885 of the Wirral Greenbelt Council on its closure. The Treasurer gave details to the meeting of the circumstances under which various donations were given to societies and friends groups. Printing expenses were down due to one less issue of Wirral Matters being sent out in 2012 compared with 2011. The Keith Davidson Award was not presented in 2012 but two have been presented this year. Other figures speak for themselves. Regarding the Balance Sheet the Treasurer reported that the increase in investments reflected the movement in the Stock Exchange over the year. Our total net assets stood at £38,548, an overall increase of £1,697 on the previous year.

After the Treasurer's report the President asked the Meeting if there were any questions. Mr. Michael Corfe asked whether the sending out of information electronically had shown any savings. The Treasurer said that the full effect had not been determined as yet because the change had only been introduced gradually over the year, but he would let the membership know what the saving is in due course. The President commented that take-up had been significant and that the Committee will continue to send information out by both methods. The Treasurer commented further with regard to Wirral Matters, saying that most of the expense is in the setting up rather than in the printing.

The President proposed the adoption of the accounts from the Chair and asked for a seconder. Mrs. Elizabeth Davey seconded the report and it was carried unanimously by the Meeting. The President thanked Peter Bowler for the continuing and excellent work he had done on the accounts again. This was supported by applause.

13/7 Election of Officers and Committee Due to there being no new nominations from the membership the President proposed that the Committee be re-elected en bloc. This was accepted by the Meeting and the following Officers and Committee Members were re-elected.

Officers:	Chairman -	Mr Rod Tann
	Vice-Chairman -	Mr Terry Edgar
	Hon. Secretary -	Mr David Casement
	Hon. Treasurer -	Mr Peter Bowler
	Membership Secretary -	Mrs Avril Wilmshurst
	CPRE Liaison Officer -	Mrs Yvonne Sanné
	Press & Publicity Officer -	Mrs Judith Railton
	Green Belt Matters	Mr Neil Parry

Committee: Mr Victor Basil, Mrs E Davey, Mrs D Grey, Mrs J Hockey, Mrs D Lane, Mrs J McIlhatton, Mrs A Platt and Dr L Potter

The Chairman reported that Dr Graham Gladden has expressed his wish to step down from the Committee due to family circumstances but would be willing to help on any matters we referred to him.

13/8 Keith Davidson Award and the Civic Award The Chairman explained why the Society presents the Keith Davidson Award and the Civic Design Award.

The first Keith Davidson Award of the evening was presented to Miss Susan Nicholson of The Bromborough Society. The President made the presentation to Miss Nicholson who thanked The Wirral Society. She then gave a brief outline of when and how the Society was formed and the difficulties encountered dealing with documentation these days. She expressed her hope that the right decisions will be made for the future.

The second Keith Davidson Award of the evening was presented to Mr Eric Forsyth, Chairman of The Friends of Storeton Woods. Mr Tann congratulated the Friends who had just celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of taking over the management of the wood that was once a run-down area. The President made the presentation to Mr Forsyth who accepted it on behalf of the Committee and members of FOSW. He reported to the meeting that work was on-going but they held six workdays per year when major voluntary work was done. Much of it was often costly and that he was grateful to The Wirral Society for the award.

The Civic Design Award was presented to St Thomas' Chapel, Parkgate. The Vice-Chairman, Mr Terry Edgar, described why St Thomas' Chapel had been chosen, briefly outlining its history and the recent work carried out there. The meeting was invited to visit the chapel and judge for themselves. The President made the presentation to Mr David Johnson, the Deputy Warden, who expressed his thanks. He reported that now that the inside of the chapel was finished they were working on the outside. He invited everyone to visit the chapel.

13/9 Election of the Scrutineer It was proposed from the Chair that Mr Michael Spencer be re-appointed as scrutineer of the accounts for 2013. This was unanimously accepted by the Meeting.

12/10 Any Other Business **Wirral Heritage Strategy 2011 - 2014** Mr Patrick Dowling asked if the Society had seen a copy of this document and had we responded to it. The Chairman replied that we had seen the draft and had made comments and that we would get a copy of our comments to him. The Committee has had a visit from a dedicated officer, Mrs Eileen Willshaw, whose post has now been made permanent. Her role has two main priorities. They are;- 1. Heritage Crime and 2. Preparing a List regarding the Local Listing of Buildings.

A letter sent to the Wirral History and Heritage Association by Mr William Meredith, archivist, relating to the **Transfer of archives to the Wirral Archives Service** was presented to the meeting and read out by the chairman. Mrs Elizabeth Davey expressed her concern that the letter was a one-sided view and that we were being told what was happening without any consultation with the users of resources at the three libraries with reference sections. A consultation meeting had been arranged for 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 and Mrs Davey will be attending.

The Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to the President, Professor John Tarn, for his continual support for the work of the Society. This was endorsed by applause.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.03 p.m.

*John Nelson Tarn*

*6<sup>th</sup> March 2014*

Signed .....

Date .....

There was then a 10-minute break. This was followed by the W Victor Smith illustrated talk by Mr Colin Simpson, the Principal Museums Officer, entitled "The Della Robbia Pottery, Birkenhead".