

32nd AGM, 2014

Held in Hadleigh Old Town Hall on Monday 16th June 2014 at 8 p.m.

32 members attended.

Apologies for absence

Mr & Mrs Bloomfield.

Minutes of the 31st A.G.M.

Agreed by all.

Treasurers Report. – Chris Drake

Accounts to 30th April 2014

I am happy to say that it has been another good year on the financial front. In spite of Margaret's sterling work as Membership Secretary there has been a drop in membership figures and thus reduced membership income. Members helped save over half of printing and postage costs by receiving communications by email: thank you. We showed a surplus on the year and can comfortably cover our routine costs. Subscription rates are always under review because of the time taken for changes to produce results. No change is proposed this year but I cannot promise the same for next year.

The trip on SB "Victor" last August eventually resulted in a surplus of £120, but not without giving your Chairman and Treasurer some concerns along the way!

Expenditure from the Fighting Fund was dictated by activity on the Tesco front. The revised planning application was heard last September and the costs incurred preparing the refuting documentation almost exhausted the fund. Volunteers hand delivered the documents not so much to save money but to ensure timely delivery. Recognising that it is handy to have cash available quickly to meet urgent needs a generous donor topped up the fund for us. Legal costs associated with the application were met by others and do not show in the accounts.

Our congratulations and thanks go to the Town Mayor, Sue Angland, for another successful application to the Lottery Fund. This time it was £642 for audio equipment to use at public meetings. Acquisition is in hand.

My thanks go to Paul Garrard of Walter Wright Chartered Accountants for his help once again in the preparation of the accounts.

If you have any questions relating to the Accounts for 2013/2014 I will attempt to answer them.

Accepted by all.

History Group Report. – Sue Angland

The group spent the second half of 2013 fine-tuning the script for our talk 'Hadleigh during the Great War' which we presented in December. The talk was enjoyed by all who attended and we received some favourable reviews. The branch chairman of the Royal British Legion described the talk as '*superb, fascinating and informative!.....it was obvious that the entire town was behind the War effort*'. People seemed to particularly enjoy the extracts from the school log books. One member of the audience recognised her family name and discovered that it was indeed her grandfather who was described as '*a scout, signaller and sniper with a reputation for feats of daring*'. Since then she has researched his service records and discovered that, having survived the Great War, he lied about his age and enlisted for the Second World War. He survived that too!

Recently we have all learnt a lot about the Medieval Manor of Hadleigh from Margaret's excellent research, but what of our other manor, Toppesfield? The group has decided to explore the possibility of researching the Manor of Toppesfield for its next project. In the meantime, we are re-visiting a talk we gave back in the 1990s on 'Hadleigh Charities' with a view to presenting it to the Society at the beginning of next year.

The History Group has been asked by the Suffolk Local History Council, of which we are a member, to host a study day for their members in September. We shall present our talks on 'Hadleigh during the Great War' and 'The Medieval Manor of Hadleigh' as well as organising tours of the Guildhall Complex and the town itself including the Row Chapel. We also have to provide teas, coffees and lunches throughout the day. It'll be a very busy day, but it will be an opportunity to showcase Hadleigh and the work that the Society does here. If you could lend a hand on the day, with the teas and coffees especially, please let us know!

Planning Report. – Jan Byrne

When thinking about what to write for this report I thought that there was really nothing of importance to say only to be reminded that of course since our last A.G.M. we have hopefully seen off Tesco.

I suppose for the records I should state that after some fourteen years of opposing the building of a supermarket on the Brett Works site the Babergh District Councillors again refused permission for Tesco to develop the site, if only by one vote and against their officers recommendations. Had we not been able to acquire the money to buy in professional support and speakers there is little doubt that Tesco would have won, but our professional advisors made it quite clear that there was enough evidence to seek a Judicial Review if permission was granted, and they were also prepared to offer support to the opposing councillors in the face of thinly disguised threats from the Babergh Planning Officers.

Thankfully the outcome being in our favour Tesco decided not to appeal, I am not sure where we would have found the money to finance an appeal or a Judicial Review. Tesco appear to have stated that they will be talking to the Council about the site, though as yet we can find no evidence that any consultation has taken place. I understand that there is some private interest in purchasing the Brett Works site. I believe it is important to keep reminding people that Tesco only own that part of the site that was the Brett Works and that the rest of the ground in the application is in various other ownerships, not least that Town Council Allotments which block the access from Bridge Street and would require a Compulsory Purchase Order should anybody wish to gain access across them.

We can but await the future proposals to develop the site and respond as appropriate.

At the other end of the site of course is Bridge House which belongs to Babergh and has been used for storage. You will remember that originally it was planned to knock the house down to allow access across the Babergh Car Park, this was blocked and Tesco then received permission to knock it down but rebuild a similar building in a slightly different position, subject to Babergh selling them the land. At the monthly meetings called by Councillor Riley to discuss the future for Hadleigh I brought up the subject of Bridge House, and following investigation by Babergh Officers we are told that it is unsafe, the roof leaks etc. Having made a fuss about the District Council permitting a property of their own which is in the conservation area to become uninhabitable Councillor Riley is in discussion with Babergh about the building and possible community uses.

I doubt if we will hear anything more about this until Babergh have made their decisions on the future of their Corks Lane Offices, but his building could possibly be used for some of the Community purposes that the East House supporters group feel are lacking in the town.

We await any further proposals or decision on the Future of East House.

Whilst on the topic of planning the Town Council are at the beginning of starting the long and very complicated work on producing a Neighbourhood plan. The Government 'proposals on Neighbourhood plans' was brought in a few years ago and many towns and parishes are progressing with these plans. Simplistically the parish produces its own plans within the local District plan for the present and future of their parish. If the neighbourhood plan is passed then the District Council has to abide by it and also 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy comes to the Parish Council for their designated use.

To produce the plan there has to be full involvement and consultation with the community, when the plan is produced it then goes through an examination process by the government appointed inspector and then if passed the plan then has to pass a referendum of the residents. At the moment the process is taking at least two years, only a handful of parishes have gone through the whole process successfully, many failing the examination and the costs of producing the plan are high. Thame has produced a successful plan and are working to it, but at a cost of £100,000. Most parishes at the moment are around the £30 to £40,000 with a lot of the working being undertaken by volunteers.

I mention this tonight because in the next few months consultation will start in Hadleigh and I would urge you to become involved, answer questionnaires and put your views forward. The whole process is about Hadleigh taking ownership of its future, it is not about refusing new developments but making sure new housing is in the best place for the town, and while there may be some dreaming of what we would like for the future it must all of course take place within the finances available, so really best use of resources. Please watch this space and take part in any consultations.

Chair's review. – Jan Byrne

There is nothing exciting to report in this year's Chair's review. Membership remains stable and the numbers attending meetings are very good for a relatively small organisation.

Yet again our speakers and their topics have been varied and interesting and I am aware that you really enjoyed the Christmas meeting when the History group gave their presentation on Hadleigh in the First World War. We will never pull up a dandelion again without thinking of school children collecting the roots, or indeed conkers being used for munitions! It was interesting to see how a small town gave it's all to the war effort.

This coming year's programme is just as varied and we hope meets with your approval and continued support.

We are very grateful to Sue Angland for struggling through the mounds of paperwork required to acquire the monies for our new P.A. system. The equipment will be given to the Town Council for use in this building, which hopefully brings in a little more money for the struggling building, but we really hope to be able to persuade our speakers to use the equipment so that we no longer struggle to hear some of the asides that even speakers with loud voices make. Thank you very much Sue.

And thank you to all of the committee who have met regularly to undertake the work for the Society, we share the jobs out and everybody joins in so that no one role is arduous. Unfortunately under the five year rule Hattie has to stand down this year, but I have little doubt that we will keep her busy. Thank you Hattie, and all of the committee.

May I take this opportunity to wish Graham every happiness in his marriage in a few weeks' time, we hope that you have a really memorable day, and are delighted that you are not leaving Hadleigh.

Proposal to amend the constitution.

As you have seen in the Newsletter we would ask you to support the committee in this change to the constitution. The current relevant clause states:- The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and not less than six and not more than eight other members to include the representatives of study groups set up under item 9.

We wish to change this to:-

The Executive Committee shall consist of not less than six and not more than eight members to include the Officers and the representatives of study groups set up under item 9.

Over the last few years we have not had enough people offer to join the committee to achieve the required numbers and have often not been quorate. We hope that reducing the number will enable us always to be

quorate, remembering if at any time you inundate us with offers to join the committee we can always co-opt until the next A.G.M. when rules can be changed.

Please will you vote for this resolution?

Proposed by Jan Byrne,

Seconded by:-Graham Panton

Passed unanimously

Election of Officers and Executive Committee Members

The present committee are all willing to continue and have been nominated and seconded.

[Jan Byrne](#) [Chairman](#)

Margaret Woods [Vice Chairman](#)

[Chris Drake](#) [Honorary Treasurer](#)

[Graham Panton](#) [Honorary Secretary](#)

[Sue England](#) member representing the [History Group](#)

Barry Denny member

Agreed by all.

AOB

Congratulations to the committee on their opposition to the Tesco plans.

Before we continue the business of the evening may I remind you that our next meeting is on Wednesday 6th August when Pip Wright will be talking on 'Frolic, Fervour and Fornication'

Having finished the business of the Annual Meeting and before we have a drink and nibbles we are delighted that Margaret Woods has agreed to talk to us on the Courts and Petty Crime in Medieval Hadleigh.

Finished formal business 8:25

Finished talk: 9:25

Finished social meeting: 10:00