

MINUTES OF THE 37TH AGM, 2019

The 37th Annual General Meeting of The Hadleigh Society held in Hadleigh Old Town Hall on Tuesday 11th June 2019 at 8 p.m.

Apologies for absence

Received from Margaret Jefferies (33 members in attendance)

Minutes of the 36th AGM

Approved as a correct record

Honorary Treasurer's Report

Report presented by Chris Drake

I am happy to say that it has been a peaceful year on the financial front. Income and expenditure were pretty well in balance. Mavis has continued to exercise strict economy as Membership Secretary so expenses continue to be low. We send most communications by email so there is very limited scope for further savings.

There is no need for a change in membership subscriptions unless we see the need for other changes that would increase our costs. An ageing membership brings access problems for this room. We get a concessionary rate so any other room in this building would cost us considerably more. Do we need a room with better car parking? Should we be looking to have meetings elsewhere if that meant holding subscriptions down?

Then there is the question of whether or not we should have a unified membership fee. The pros and cons were in the November 2018 newsletter so I do not propose to restate them here but doubtless you will let us know your opinion!

My thanks go to Paul Garrard of Walter Wright Chartered Accountants for his help once again in the preparation of the accounts. The treasurer asked for any questions, none were raised (Copy of Accounts to 30 April 2018 attached at rear.)

Proposed Motion not to change subscription rates.

At last year's AGM the suggestion was made that, for a variety of reasons, it was "unfair" to charge members who were part of a couple less per head than single members. The practice is still found in many clubs and societies. In our Society the discussion mostly concerns Senior Members as they greatly outnumber Full Members. If there were a change to a flat fee the question raised is how many of these joint members would we lose by carrying a flat fee? If we lost half the subscription fee would need to be increased from £8.50 to £10. Single senior members would not then have saved anything but the Society would have lost 17 or thereabout members. As our membership base is fragile it is considered the priority ought be

retention of as many members as feasible. Accordingly, it has been proposed that subscription rates remain unchanged for 2019/20. The proposal was agreed by the meeting with no dissension.

History Group Report

The report was presented by Sue Angland on behalf of the History Group

The History Group has had a restful year with no new research project on the go. However, we have not been entirely idle, as we performed two of our presentations as part of the Saturday morning fundraisers in the Guildroom. In August we presented 'Hadleigh in the 1960s' and in October 'Hadleigh During the Great War'. Both were very well received.

In August I was contacted by Marian Thornley who wondered if the History Group could contribute any information to her book 'The Hadleigh Boys'. As we had carried out a lot of research on our project 'Hadleigh During the Great War', we gave her permission to use our script from which she has taken some snippets of information. In particular, she has chosen to finish her account (as we did) with the powerful quote from Simon Dewes' 'A Suffolk Childhood'.

I still receive regular email enquiries – here's a typical one from 2 weeks ago:

“Hi from Australia! I have been tracing my family history and am wondering if you have any information on the workhouse that was in Hadleigh? Are there any records of the 'residents' or has it all been lost?”

So having taken a well-earned break from the History Group for a year, it is now time to tackle a new project. We plan to meet in two weeks' time for a brainstorming session and no doubt will come up with an idea for a topic to research. One of our members, Jessica Bailey, will not be joining us this time, and we should like to thank Jessica for all her hard work over the years in contributing to our presentations.

There is one date for your diary: on the weekend of 19th and 20th October, we shall be involved in displaying a 'Partridges Exhibition' in the Guildroom.

Environment and Planning Report

The report was presented by Richard Fletcher

The Environment Group has made comments on about 17 planning applications submitted this year and has been continuing compilation of a Local List of Non Designated Heritage Assets for Hadleigh

On the planning side, despite our and The Sudbury Society's representations, Historic England rejected our call for the modern architectural elements of the award winning Council Offices at Cork Lane to be Listed Grade II, and regrettably the most iconic parts are now programmed for demolition.

In terms of results in making comments on planning applications it has been a mixed year.

Despite our representations, the Council granted itself Planning Permission and Listed Building consent to create 53 dwellings in the former Council Office premises and to erect 4, poorly designed, houses in place of Bridge House and the council employee car park off Bridge Street

Similarly the Council granted itself planning permission for an uninspired block of 22 flats to replace the now closed Angel Street Care Home, despite the Society making several representations as to how the development could be improved, particularly where it badly overlooks residents in Meadows Way.

On a brighter note, 5 projects which the Society objected to, as they detracted from Hadleigh's heritage, were refused, most notable an attempt to erect a substantial dwelling in the treed grounds of the former Hadleigh Hall Gardens on the north side of the St. Marys churchyard.

In 8 other instances the Society supported proposals, subject to recommending modifications, of which some were incorporated as planning conditions.

Otherwise In addition to Cork Lane and Angel Court the Planning Department ignored our objections in 4 other instance during the year and approved the projects.

Finally we made design and layout comments on a possible residential estate for 120 houses on the west side of Aldham Mill Hill, north of Morrisons and we await to see whether a formal application will be made this year.

Progress on compilation of the Local List has been slow. We had however received the formal support of the previous Town Council and hope this partnership will continue with the new Town Council. Also the Hadleigh Archive Group has commenced undertaking the onerous task of researching into the history of many of the properties considered possibly suitable for inclusion in the Local List.

We expect, later in the year, to seek public involvement with a view to having an initial draft Local List by the end of 2019. It's hoped the Local List may be completed and formally adopted by Babergh by late 2020.

In other environmental projects for the town the Society has member participation on the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the newly formed Traffic Management Group, and of course we await details of the now long overdue new Local Plan for the District.

The forthcoming year could be interesting on the planning and environment front.

Chair's Review

Report presented by Margaret Woods.

During the past year, June 2018 until June 2109, we have had a varied & hopefully worthwhile & enjoyable range of talks. To recap briefly:

After last year's AGM [June 2018] Graham Panton introduced us to the lives & achievements of the fascinating & not widely known 'Gayer-Anderson Twins' of Lavenham.

In July several members much enjoyed a delightful visit to Polstead Mill Gardens arranged by Hattie Bawden.

Mark Mitchels then provided an excellent talk in August on the famous Norfolk Paston family & their renowned letters. Philip Avery took the October slot with his informative account of 'The History of Suffolk Farmsteads'.

Roger Kennell, one of our favourite & regular speakers as well as a Hadleigh Society member, delivered our Christmas lecture on 'Hadleigh Trades & Industry' – we always love a really local topic. As is now traditional, mulled wine & mince pies rounded off this festive evening.

For our first get-together of 2019 in February we welcomed Lynette Burgess to tell us about 'The History of Bawdsey Radar'. In March the Rev. Tony Redman regaled us with the fascinating, if not always comfortable, links between 'Purgatory & Church Buildings'. Much thorough research by Peter Wain provided our May topic with a detailed introduction to 'The Lost Medieval Port of Gosford'. All in all a rich & diverse programme of speakers.

Membership has fallen to 122 members and attendance at our meetings has varied between 45 and 59 reflecting a generally steady trend.

As we are a purely voluntary organisation we must use this evening to acknowledge and thank the colleagues who keep the society running and endeavouring to meet its aims. These colleagues are [in alphabetical order]:

Sue Angland who has pleasingly continued in her role as Chair of our History Group in spite of onerous Town Council responsibilities & now living some distance from Hadleigh.

Hattie Bawden has remained a loyal & very supportive committee member with a welcome involvement & sharing of her expertise in our Environment & Planning Group. Hattie also currently delivers newsletters.

Chris Drake, as treasurer, has thankfully remained in post, managing our financial affairs with his customary competence; he is also another newsletter deliverer.

Richard (Dick) Fletcher, as Chair of the Environment & Planning Group, undertakes the very demanding and important role of monitoring local planning applications & providing well-informed & extremely professional comments on behalf of the society whenever advisable or necessary. He has also cheerfully & efficiently minuted our committee meetings. Additionally, he is now set to take over from Graham as Society secretary.

Graham Panton fortunately has continued in the role of secretary with his un-matched knowledge of the society & its constitution. His considerable IT skills render him absolutely essential as webmaster as well as newsletter editor & distributor. Graham will now step down after several years as secretary but, I'm pleased to say, will stay on the committee. A special thanks to Graham for his much appreciated work in that busy role.

Ray Whitehand has now settled well into researching & arranging our interesting range of speakers; he also kindly offered to be this evening's speaker.

Mavis Winders who, as membership secretary, welcomes us to meetings & is meticulous in carrying out the associated administrative duties. She additionally produces the estimable resumes of each talk you find in your newsletters.

Our very sincere thanks to those wonderful folks for all their hard work & great commitment to aid the smooth running of The Hadleigh Society. We have also valued the input & support of our president Jan Byrne, thank you Jan.

Of course, you, the Hadleigh Society members, are a very vital resource and we do hope you will come along to as many future meetings as you can, bringing friends & relatives whenever possible.

Enjoy Ray's talk this evening 'Another Hadleigh Murder' as well as a glass of wine or fruit juice & a nibble of cheese. Grateful thanks to the lady members who helped with this evening's spread.

Thank you all very much indeed.

Margaret Woods was thanked for the great job she does as Chairman by Graham Panton on behalf of the Society.

Election of Officers and Executive Committee

For the coming year the Executive Committee will consist of:-

Margaret Woods	Chair
Chris Drake	Hon Treasurer
Richard Fletcher	Hon Secretary
Graham Panton	member
Hattie Bawden	member
Ray Whitehand	member
Mavis Winder	member

A vote in favour of the nominations was proposed by Michael Woods, seconded by Jane Haylock. The election of nominees was carried unanimously.

The official business was followed by the presentation 'Another Hadleigh Murder' given by Ray Whitehand, in turn followed by some excellent cheese and wine.