2018 Chairman’s report

I would like to welcome you all to the 2018 Civic Society AGM. We are as always grateful to Orlando for joining us. This year, the AGM is being followed by an Awards ceremony, and it is a pleasure to see those receiving awards here with us tonight.

I would like to start by thanking all the committee members and the members of the Urban Group for all their work and input during the year; without their efforts we could not continue. If anyone is interested in joining either the committee or the Urban Group, please come and talk to us after the formal business of the meeting is over.

This is a year of changes. As you know, I am standing down after 11 years as Chairman, and Martin Lander is standing down as Treasurer.

However, we now have the good news! Jim Mason, who is familiar to many of you will, subject to election in a couple of agenda items time, will be taking over as Chairman, and similarly, an equally familiar face, Andrew Moore will be taking over as Treasurer. Unfortunately, Jim cannot be with us tonight; this is history repeating itself, as I was unable to be here in 2007 when I was elected Chairman.

After the excitements of the 50th anniversary of becoming the first Conservation Area last year, this year has been inevitably a little quieter. As always, we have monitored and commented on planning applications in the Conservation Area. We continue to work with SDKC's Conservation Officer with the aim of preserving the essential Stamford, while still encouraging its prosperity.

We have installed another blue plaque in the town in St. Mary's Street, dedicated to Nelson Dawson, the artist and member of the Arts and Crafts movement. We are delighted that we have representatives of both the family and the owners of the property here tonight. There will be a short presentation about this at the end of the AGM.

Socially, we had a good year; events included talks by Simon Harris of Harris McCormack, Architects and Dr Melissa Thompson of Historic England. Visits included a tour of Cambridge with a blue badge guide, and a visit to the Spalding Gentleman's Society.

The annual members' meeting was held in March and the summer visit to St Leonard’s Priory was enjoyed by all who attended.

The Urban Group has continued to press for improvements in the Town; one of the most spectacular this year has been in conjunction with Harrison and Dunn to improve Mallory Lane. Less immediately obvious at the moment, but of great importance have been their efforts to influence LCC's ideas on how to maintain the road surface through Red Lion Square.

January will see the publication of our fifth Annual Review; my thanks go as always to Carol and Jocelyn for all the work they do to put this together.

Civic Voice, the umbrella organisation for Civic Societies is running a survey to find the beast Conservation Area. As you may know, Stamford has been short listed (top 18 out of 249 entries) and we need as many votes as possible. So please do go online and vote. You can either find where to vote from the Civic Voice website, or you should have received an email with a more direct link in it. Voting closes next Tuesday, so please make this a job for this weekend!

My final thanks are as usual to all our members, for all your support throughout the year. As usual, we will be serving a glass or so of wine after the AGM and Awards and I hope you will stay on for that.

I would like to end this report with two positive pieces of news. First, the restriction of parking between the Bottle Lodges and the William Cecil has gone through all the legalistic hurdles and this,along with the restoration of those verges will mean the best entrance to Stamford is going to look as it should again. We have worked closely with the Burghley Estates on this, and are grateful for their moral and financial support.

Second, although not quite through the various processes, it does look as though the central Conservation Area will get its Article 4 Directive soon. This will enable the Society, in conjunction with SKDC, to improve the consistency of development and appearance of the Conservation Area.

So, there we are. Next year, you can listen to someone else doing the Chairman's report, though I should warn you you haven't quite got rid of me, as I am doing a talk on Dr Fennell and the background to how we became the first Conservation Area on November 22nd at Browne's Hospital, and I hope to see you all there.

Thank you again.

Gwyneth Gibbs   
October 2018

Treasurer's report

The main item in these accounts is the expenditure on the very successful 50th anniversary exhibition which took place in September last year, and was therefore much celebrated at last year's AGM, but the outlay on the boards and the reception on 28 September 2017 is included in the 2017-18 accounts. We had received £500 in sponsorship which featured in last year’s figures. Otherwise we have made contributions from the Built Heritage Fund, which actually has few restrictions on the way it is spent, towards the new blue plaque for Nelson Dawson and the Mallory Lane boards, although £4,500 of that was merely a cheque received from the Skells Trust immediately paid out again to Harrison & Dunn. The carried forward balances reflect those items of expenditure, but overall the finances of the Society remain strong with adequate reserves.

My thanks to David Nicol for his review of the accounts.

STAMFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

MINUTES of the Society's Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 5th October 2017 in the Court Room of Stamford Town Hall.

Members Attending:

Mr D Baxter, Mr A Beeson, Mr K Blyth, Mr W Bunney, Mrs C Camp, Dr J Chatterton, Mr & Mrs P Dale, Mr J F Davies, Mr & Mrs J Davies, Mr P Eastwood, Mr & Mrs D Ellis, Mr & Mrs J Gibbs, Mrs M Gleeson, Canon D Gray, Mr M Grimes, Mr & Mrs G Harper, Mr P Heath, Mr J Hopson, Mr D Lambert, Mr M Lander, Dr & Mrs D Langridge, Mr D Lankester, Mrs B Livock, Mr P Loft, Mr R Mann, Mr & Mrs G Mayling, Mrs B Meadows, Ms C Meads, Mrs B Measures, Mrs G Meers, Mr A Moore, Mr Andy Moore, Mrs G Parsley, Mr & Mrs J Pattinson, Mrs R Quantrill, Mr O Rock, Dr & Mrs G Rowlands, Mrs S Sandall, Mrs P Sharp, Dr N Sheehan, Mr & Mrs M Sockett, Mr & Mrs A Springett, Mrs C Stanier, Mr P Stevens, Mr D Stimson, Mrs P Thomas and Mrs J Wood.

1. Welcome by our President

Mr Rock welcomed members and guests to the AGM and thanked The Mayor for allowing the Society to use the Town Hall.

2. Apologies for Absence

Mrs I Bacon, Ms M Couch, Mr & Mrs R Fuggle, Ms P Jelen, Mrs B Keene, Mrs E Lander, Mr & Mrs J Lessey, Mr & Mrs T Padmore, Mr & Mrs M Pring, Mr & Mrs B Smith, Mr J Smith, Mr & Mrs P Stean and Mr & Mrs M Thompson.

3. Minutes & Matters Arising from the 2016 Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the 2016 AGM were passed as read. There were no Matters Arising.

4. Chairman’s Report

Mrs Gibbs welcomed Mr Orlando Rock and members.

It had been an eventful year, with the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the historic core of Stamford becoming the first Conservation Area, culminating in the Society’s exhibition and reception in the Arts Centre. She thanked in particular Carol Meads and Paul Eastwood, plus all those who had manned the exhibition.

The Chairman thanked all the Committee for their work and input and welcomed Andrew Beeson on to the committee, who had been been co-opted during the year. She also thanked the Secretary Melanie Sockett, who was standing down after nearly ten years in office, and hoped to welcome Dr David Langridge to the role a little later in the evening.

As always, the Society had monitored and commented on planning applications in the Conservation Area and continued to work with SKDC’s Conservation Officer to preserve the essential Stamford, while encouraging its prosperity. The Society was working with LCC and Burghley to protect the verges on the southern entrance to the town. A blue plaque dedicated to artist Nelson Dawson was being planned.

A number of members had stood down from the Urban Group: in particular Don Lambert was thanked for his enthusiasm and hard work over many years – he would be missed. Councillor David Taylor had volunteered to chair this sub-group, which included Paddy Jelen (who had also volunteered to continue Peter Stevens’ efforts to combat graffiti in the town), and Graddon Rowlands.

Socially, it had been another successful year, with interesting talks and tours and the Members’ Meeting, now an annual event in the spring, with guest speaker Councillor Brailsford, and a summer evening reception at St. Leonard’s Priory. One highlight for fortunate ballot winners was the opportunity for a private tour of Burghley House and roof, arranged by the President.

Carol Meads and Jocelyn Chatterton were thanked for putting together the Society’s fourth Annual Review, which would be published in January 2018.

Finally, Mrs Gibbs thanked all members for their continuing support throughout the year.

A framed print, card and book token were then presented by Mr Rock to Mrs Sockett.

5. Treasurer’s Report and Adoption of Accounts

Copies of the yearly Accounts, checked by independent examiner Mr D Nicol who was thanked for his continuing involvement, had been circulated before the meeting.

The General Funds had broadly balanced out the expenditure. A very generous donation of £1,900 towards the project to replace four of the town’s bronze plaques had also increased the amount reclaimed under Gift Aid. £1,457 had been provided by the Society for the new information board in St. Michael’s Churchyard and the completion of that project had been a huge achievement for the Urban Group. £260 had also been contributed towards the cost of the new light on the Albert Bridge, with a free cleaning of the bridge also organized by Ms Jelen. Therefore the Society was well prepared financially for the costs associated with the fiftieth anniversary exhibition.

Members received the accounts of the trustees and had no questions concerning them. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mr M Grimes and seconded by Mr J Gibbs and passed unanimously with no abstentions.

6. Election of Chairman

The election of Mrs G Gibbs as Chairman had been proposed by Mrs C Stanier, seconded by Dr J Chatterton and the motion was carried by a show of hands, nem.con.

7. Election of Officers

The election of the Treasurer, Mr M Lander, had been proposed by Dr J Chatterton, seconded by Ms C Meads, and carried by a show of hands, nem. Con. The election of the Secretary, Dr D Langridge, was proposed by Mrs M Sockett, seconded by Mr M Grimes and carried by a show of hands, nem.con.

8. Election of Committee

Mr A Beeson, Dr J Chatterton, Ms P Jelen, Mr D Lankester, Ms C Meads, Dr G Rowlands, Mr M Sockett, Mr P Stean and Mr M Thompson had been nominated for election to the committee (all papers with the Secretary). They were all duly elected by a show of hands, nem. con.

9. 2017: 50 Years as a Conservation Area

As Mrs Gibbs had covered this item during her report, she was prepared to answer any queries or comments but there were none.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The formal proceedings ended at 7.55 pm and were followed by drinks and nibbles.