STAMFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

MINUTES of the Society's Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 9th October 2014 in the Court Room of Stamford Town Hall.

Members Attending:

Mr O Rock (President), Mrs I Bacon, Mr R Barry, Miss J Bateman, Mrs E Biggs, Mr K Blyth, Mr W Bunney, Mr C Cadman, Mrs C Camp, Dr J Chatterton, Canon & Mrs K Court, Mr & Mrs L Davis, Mr J Dawson, Mr & Mrs D de Gale,

Mrs E Douglas, Mr P Eastwood, Mr & Mrs R Freeman, Mr & Mrs J Gibbs, Mr E Gilman, Canon D Gray, Mrs L Grenfell, Mr M Grimes, Mrs A Hall, Mr & Mrs G Harper, Mr P Heyes, Mr & Mrs G Hopkinson, Mr J Hopson, Mr D Lambert, Mr & Mrs B Livock, Mr & Mrs R Mann, Mr & Mrs J Mason, Mrs B Meadows, Ms C Meads, Mrs M Mitchell, Mr & Mrs J Pattinson, Mrs R Quantrill, Mr J Roberts, Mr P Rose, Mrs P Sharp, Mr & Mrs B Smith, Mr & Mrs M Sockett, Mrs C Stanier, Mr P Stean, Mr P Stevens, Mr & Mrs D Taylor, Mr & Mrs R Teasdale, Mr & Mrs G Thompson, Mrs P Thomas, Mr & Mrs M Williams.

1. Welcome

The Society’s President, Mr Rock, welcomed everyone to the AGM and had to report with regret the deaths of founder member Stephen Hart and of John Plumb, to whom Stamford Civic Society gave grateful thanks for his great contribution.

2. Apologies for Absence

Mr D Baxter, Mr & Mrs P Dale, Mr & Mrs D Ellis, Mrs A Fairmann, Mr & Mrs J Gleeson, Mrs B Keene, Miss J Kent, Mr D Lankester, Mr & Mrs J Lessey, Mr & Mrs K Mayer, Ms P Pettit, Mr & Mrs M Pring, Dr & Mrs G Rowlands, Dr N Sheehan, Mr & Mrs H Smith, Mr J Smith, Mr & Mrs E Stanley, Mr B Thomas, Mr M Thompson, Mr A Williams & Mrs L Dunn, Mrs S Withers.

3. Minutes & Matters Arising from the 2013 Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the 2013 AGM were passed as read. There were no Matters Arising.

4. Minutes & Matters Arising from the 2014 Special General Meeting

Mr E Gilman, having circulated a paper before the meeting to every member present, requested that his alternative minutes of the SGM, which he stated indicated “what really happened” should be adopted. Mr Gilman requested a seconder and indicated that if no member seconded his proposal he would “let it drop”. No seconder being found, the President stated that the original minutes would carry and the matter was closed.

5. Chairman’s Report

Mrs Gibbs thanked Mr Rock for his help and support. She extended thanks to all the Committee for their help and in particular to the Secretary and Treasurer. She specially thanked the Planning Sub-Committee (Mr D Heeley, Mr J Heesom and Mr J Smith) which had had a particularly busy year with, eg the proposed Kier development on the south side of town, the replacement building on the old Newage social site, and the possible new-build on the Meadows.

It had been another successful year, with interesting talks and tours and the Members’ Meeting, now an annual event, which this year incorporated a Special General Meeting to accept an updated constitution. The Sundial Project had continued with projects involving the community. A brief presentation followed on the Media Project involving New College Stamford, introduced by lecturer Yvonne Davison-Clissitt with students Kai Scutt and Craig Dickinson.

The Stone Trail leaflet had been revised with Mr J Smith’s help and was now on sale at Stamford Library, with all proceeds going to the Library.

The Urban Group, now part of the Civic Society, continued to concern themselves with issues around Stamford, and had, for instance, managed the restoration of the planter in the High Street and the painting of the railings near the bus station.

As mentioned at the SGM as a possible project, the land by the Bastion was presently being tidied up with the help of LCC and with financial aid from the Skells’ Trust.

The Society’s first Annual Review, organized by Ms C Meads and Dr J Chatterton, would be published in January 2015.

Finally, she thanked all Members for their continuing support.

6. Treasurer’s Report and adoption of Accounts

Copies of the yearly Accounts with a formal report had been circulated before the meeting. Very little out of General Funds had been spent on projects this year as most had come out of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Sundial Project had a large balance, a lot of which would be repaid in due course as it was not needed. It was not proposed to make any increase in subscriptions. Mr Grimes also stated that, having been Treasurer for 15 years, he intended to stand down at the 2015 AGM.

Mr Gilman, having looked at the new constitution, was concerned that as SCS was a charitable organization and not an organization which was “incorporated with liability” that the trustees and then the members might become financially liable. Member Mr M Williams interjected and assured members that they would not be personally liable, stating that no recourse could be made to members, except for the funds they had already contributed. Mrs Gibbs assured the meeting that SCS had public liability via The Civic Voice. The President then asked for the points raised by Mr Gilman and Mr Williams to be raised again at the 2015 AGM.

The Accounts were then adopted by a show of hands.

7. Election of Chairman

The election of Mrs Gibbs as Chairman had been proposed by Mr Grimes, seconded by Dr Chatterton and the motion was carried.

8. Election of Officers

The election of the Treasurer, Mr Grimes, had been proposed by Mr P Stevens, seconded by Mr M Sockett, and carried by a show of hands. The election of the Secretary/Membership Secretary, Mrs Sockett, was proposed by Mrs C Stanier, seconded by Mr Grimes and carried by a show of hands.

9. Election of Committee

Mr R Barry, Dr J Chatterton, Ms C Meads, Dr G Rowlands, Mr P Stevens, Mr M Sockett, Mr P Stean, Mr M Thompson and Mrs G Williams had been nominated for election to the committee (all papers with the Secretary). Each nominee present stood as their name was called so that members could identify them. They were all duly elected by a show of hands.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. At the close of AGM business, The President presented certificates to the following award winners:- Mrs J Brewin, Mrs L Bowskill and Mrs K Grey, Mr K Earl, Mr M Stanier, and Mr P Eastwood.

Mr D Baxter and Mr D Ellis were not able to attend.

2015 Chairman’s report

I would like to welcome you all to the 2015 Civic Society AGM.

As you have already heard, Orlando cannot be with us tonight, and I would like to extend a warn welcome to Jon Culverhouse, the Curator at Burghley, who has come at very short notice to talk after the formal part of the meeting, in Orlando's place.

My thanks also to all the committee members who, as usual have helped enormously; without their efforts we could not continue. In particular, my thanks to Melanie our Secretary for all the work she does.

Two committee members are retiring from the committee this year; Martin Grimes who has been Treasurer for many years and Richard Barry, who recently has been a major player in the Sundial Project. Both will be missed from committee meetings, though of course we hope they will continue to come to our talks and outings.

The major planning issue this year has been the proposed Kier development on the south side of Kettering Road; the original proposal has been refused on appeal, but they do have a second, very similar application with SKDC, though at the moment there is no apparent action on it. We continue to work with SDKC's Conservation Officer with the aim of preserving the essential Stamford, while still encouraging its prosperity.

Socially, we had a good year; events included talks by Canon Donald Gray, David Pennell from the Burghley Estate office, Collyweston slate expert David Ellis and Stuart Orme from Peterborough Museum. The annual members' meeting was held in March.

A summer visit to St Leonard’s Priory has turned into a regular event; this year it was in the evening of Midsummer’s day; we hope to do something similar in 2016, perhaps with some live music.

Other summer outings were a private visit to Island Hall, Godmanchester. and Peter Heyes' opened his garden for us. Unfortunately we had to cancel the visit to the Wedgwood Museum, but we will see if we can try again next year.

The Sundial project has been completed and signed off by HLF. The main activities since the last AGM were the publication of the Rachel Morely booklet “The stones of Stamford” and the Creative Writing competition. As Martin will report, we have some money left over from the project, thanks to HLF's method of accounting, and we propose to use this for future Heritage projects in Stamford.

The Urban Group, who concern themselves with issues around Stamford and are now part of the Civic Society have been busy as usual; the phone box by the George now has boards quoting famous visitors to Stamford, for example.

Last year we were able to report the start of the tidying up the land by the Bastion. I am delighted to tell you phase one has been completed, with the help of LCC and also financial help in the form of a grant from the Skells' Trust.. Discussions regarding the inside walls are ongoing (slowly) with English Heritage.

Can I remind you of two coming events Both are at Browne's Hospital, starting at 7.30 and the cost remains at £3.50. On Wednesday November 4th: there will be a talk by the Front of House Manager of John Clare's Cottage, David Dykes on the Life of John Clare, and on Wednesday February 24th, Lionel Wall will be talking about the Genesis of the English Church.

The rest of the 2016 program is under discussion, and will be covered in the newsletters as soon as possible.

January will see the publication of our second Annual Review; Carol and Jocelyn have been working extremely hard to put this together and I think you are going to be as impressed by issue two as you were by issue one.

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

Gwyneth Gibbs  
October 2015

