

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY
THURSDAY 8th JUNE 2017 IN THE ABBEY

Present: were 33 members.

The meeting began with The Friends prayer.

Welcome: The President Revd. Canon Tim Sledge welcomed all the Friends. The Vicar paid tribute to the work of the Friends, who are a critical part of the community and its growing maturity as an organisation. He explained our importance to the life and mission of the Abbey and the projects we have funded so far.

Apologies: Cllr Ian Hibberd, Romsey Town Mayor, Tim Rogerson, Mary Greggains, Jim Wilkes, Sheila Caine, Liz Wagner, Jane Hargreaves, Kathie Horner, John and Janet Hammond, Patricia Kerridge, Mike and Sue Halliwell, Grace White.

The Chairman introduced the Trustees:

Roger Rowe	Membership Secretary and Vice-Chairman
Dick Hewett	Chairman of the Events Committee and Treasurer
Jill Hall	Secretary
John Thompson-Hall	Chairman of the Projects Committee
Ken Gibson	

Minutes of the AGM on 8th June 2016 were agreed as a true record.

Chairman's Report was taken as read. John Twigg was stepping down as Chair and thanked all the members and the committee for their help and support during his past years. He said that Dick and Roger had transformed the financial side of the organisation by revising the accounts and the membership.

Treasurer's Report. Copies of the report had been distributed. Dick explained that changing banks from HSBC to TSB had been a challenge. The money from the events now goes to TSB and over time all the membership subscriptions will go there too as we will close the HSBC account. Any carried over funds are used on projects so we know how much we can spend. Dick thanked Tim Rogerson for his help.

The Projects Report was taken as read. A small effective group has been set up which has close liaison with the Vicar. Tim Sledge was thanked for his input and involvement. George Richford was now on the committee and is an invaluable help with ideas on how to attract new members. The report shows which projects are an annual commitment and which are for this financial year. Any ideas for new projects would be welcome.

Events Report. Dick Hewett explained that his report summarised the events which had taken place. Those who went on the canal trip this year would have priority booking for next year as the boat encountered some difficulty. Dick explained that he would now be Acting Events Chair as he had taken over as Treasurer, so a new Chair would be needed. He explained that the Chair has an over view and individuals organise the trips. He invited members to suggest and organise trips themselves. We have some future events, the Test Valley Churches 25th July, Tangmere 26th September and the Parish Tea on 25th June.

Membership Secretary's Report. As there are different rules about when people become members, it has been difficult to track the exact number of members at any one time. Last year 28 new people joined but we lost 13 plus 5 who died. The membership at April 1st was 352 compared to 337 last year. Those who have not renewed by 31st March stay on as members until the end of June. Roger will be setting up a new system of spreadsheets.

A new motion was proposed: To simplify the administration of the Friends for Subscriptions paid annually by cheque or internet transfer, subscriptions to 2018/19 will be due by December 31 2018. Members who have not renewed by then will be warned (in the February 2019 membership letter) that their membership will cease on March 31 2019 if they have not paid by then. This approach will be applied in the subsequent year too.

The motion was proposed by John Twigg and seconded by Dick Hewett and passed unanimously.

Election of Trustees:

Acting Chairman	Roger Rowe
Membership Secretary	Roger Rowe.
Secretary	Mrs Jill Hall.
Treasurer	Dick Hewett.
Acting Events Chairman	Dick Hewett
Projects Committee Chairman	John Thompson-Hall.
Committee members and Trustees:	Tim Rogerson and John Twigg.

All elected en bloc.

Website John Compton
Newsletter Ria Skelton

Thanks were recorded to Ken Gibson who was not seeking re-election as a Trustee and Mike Perfect for his role on the Events Committee but they will still help at the Coffee Mornings.

John Twigg handed over to Roger Rowe as Acting Chair. Roger paid tribute to John Twigg for his great communication skills as Chair over the last few years. We will be seeking a new Chair with the same attributes as John. The Friends have great potential. Roger thanked Ken and all the committee for their work.

AOB Geraldine Trayhorne suggested that the Friends should have a badge and a sample was passed round. It was agreed to put it on the next Trustees agenda.

Time Sledge elaborated on the projects, paid for by the Friends, that are improving the visitor experience in the Abbey.

- Ethelflaeda Festival - guest speaker and music
- Children's worker is part of partnership funding
- Audio guides for tours, what the guide is saying is relayed into the audio guide of the visitor
- Youth work equipment is for under 16's
- 'Firesticks' are available to connect the Abbey Services livestream to Nursing Homes.
- New member publicity and new visitor leaflets.