

Newtown Community Association Annual General Meeting Saturday 21st February 2015 at 10.30am, Belmont Hut

Minutes

Present: Su Aves (Secretary), Steve Aves, Joan Bond (Holding Trustee), Richard Branston, (Councillor) Derek Burnside (Treasurer), John Campbell, Pete Cann, Jill Christie, Jacky Cox, Julia Crockett, Chris Dent (Holding Trustee), Jo Farquharson (Holding Trustee), Muriel Forrest, Liam Garrett, Suaad George (Respect Festival), Katarina Grantham, Jackie Holdstock (Hut Bookings Manager), James Leigh (Hut maintenance), Rory McNeile (Chair), Elena Milego, Peter Montgomery (Webmaster), Sally Palmer, Steve Palmer, Michael Parrott (Vice Chair & Publicity), Gay Smith, Roger Spackman (Councillor), Saxon Spence, Richard Westlake (Councillor), Jo White, Maggie Wilson.

Apologies: Ian Harrison, Fiona Daughton, John Staplehurst, Marina Williamson.

27 present. 23 live in the area of benefit, Newtown ward and so were eligible to vote and so the meeting was quorate.

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by:</u>
1	Welcome from the Chair Rory welcomed and introduced all post holders. It was reiterated that the Management Committee can include up to 8 members, so anyone else interested in joining the team would be welcome to contact any existing post holders.	
2	Apologies. As above.	
3	Review of minutes of the previous AGM. The minutes of October 2013 were approved and signed by the chair.	
4	<p>The Annual Report of the Management Committee. Rory read his 2014 report, which is available on the NCA website. 2014 highlights included an updated and approved Constitution, reformation of the body of Holding Trustees, a refreshed pattern of management meetings, a wide range of events, healthy and encouraging growth in Qigong and Community Choir attendance, sustained daily hut use by numerous and varied user groups frequently involved in encouraging community and integration, and also more occasional large-scale users like the Respect Festival and the Great West Run.</p> <p>The Vision continues to be pursued, and Rory reiterated its purpose of providing a long-term, accessible, fit-for-purpose community building. Details are included in the report, including planned future bids to funding bodies. The goal is to have raised the funds by the end of 2015, with a build start goal of sometime in 2016.</p> <p>A presentation of flowers and wine was made to Su Aves in recognition of her excellent continuing work as secretary. All of the committee and volunteers were thanked for their support in running the hut and activities this year.</p>	
5	<p>Treasurer's Report and statement of Accounts</p> <p>Derek Burnside presented a summary of the 2014 accounts, which is available on the website. He reiterated that the full spreadsheet and bank statements are always open to examination by any community member. He also explained the thinking behind the proposed hire cost increase (covered in item 9 below), that our actual general fund income only just exceeded our general outgoings (before grants), and that an increase in hut hire costs was therefore recommended, particularly in light on the incoming full-year effect of substantially increased fuel costs.</p>	

6	<p>Appointment of independent examiners for the coming year to examine the accounts</p> <p>Derek proposed that Exeter Community Accounting are again appointed as Independent Examiners of the 2014 accounts. Su seconded. It was unanimously approved.</p>	
7	<p>Election of members of the Management Committee:</p> <p>Chair, (Rory McNeile) Vice-Chair, (Michael Parrott) and Treasurer (Derek Burnside) all stood down from their positions. All were willing to be re-elected, all were proposed by Roger Spackman and seconded by Steve Aves and were duly re-elected.</p> <p>Su Aves (secretary) and Jackie Holdstock (Hut Manager) are both looking for successors. No-one in the room was willing to stand as secretary. Su thus stepped down, and agreed to stand again. Rory proposed, Michael Parrott seconded, and Su was duly elected. As a non-management committee post the hut bookings secretary does not need to be re-elected, although we continue to look for an eventual successor to Jackie, who for the moment is happy to continue, for which we expressed our gratitude.</p>	
8	<p>Hut Matters –</p> <p>Proposed increase in rates. Su Aves proposed that from March 1st 2015 the charges are increased for regular users from £5 to £6 per hour, and for occasional users from £6 to £7 per hour. Peter Montgomery seconded. The motion was carried. Peter will update the website site booking instructions.</p> <p>New wording added to the hut rules were explained, aimed at reducing noise spillage (following complaints from local residents of late-night noise), effective clearing up of rubbish and the banning of naked flames. The new wording was agreed. Su will forward the new wording to Jackie and Peter Montgomery for website update.</p> <p>Su agreed to write to the council suggesting a better, quieter gate-closure mechanism on the Gordon Road entrance.</p> <p>Gloss paint cleaning: Thursday 26th February 2 – 4pm the gloss paintwork in the hut will be cleaned and refreshed. Anyone willing to help with that would be warmly welcome!</p> <p>James Leigh kindly agreed to paint a white line around the external step. An electrician is coming shortly to solve some ongoing problems.</p>	<p>PM</p> <p>SA</p> <p>JL</p>
9	<p>The Vision update</p> <p>Largely covered in the separate annual report. Cheaper build options have been considered, but are problematic, and the current goal is to proceed with raising funds for the building as currently envisaged. We are hopeful that, with the university's fund raisers' expertise, the committee will have the necessary expert support.</p>	
10	<p>Guest Speakers</p> <p>Suaad George reported on Respect 2015 (a festival celebrating equality, diversity and human rights) taking place in Belmont Park from 6th – 7th June 2015. More stalls are anticipated, so the park is becoming too small; Respect is planning on relocating in the mid-term. The hut will be the office and the centre for Real Food. NCA currently charges Respect £250 for the hut hire, but we also get a free stall. We will explore metering electricity and water usage during the weekend. We are happy with the stall location we had.</p> <p>Money to pay for the festival is a challenge, with public-sector users proving reluctant this year to provide sponsorship. Stall-holders will pay £75, caterers £500. ECC will charge £45 for gazebo hire. £10 for a table and chair. The lack of larger sponsors is currently a challenge. The festival will continue to be free to attend with a collection for donations.</p>	

	<p>Rory proposed and Roger seconded that NCA might become a partner-sponsor of Respect 2015, to express our support for the event and also to benefit from the increased publicity such a status brings. Our financial commitment would be to a maximum of £500, some of which might be offered in kind through, for example, not charging Respect for hut hire. This is to be contingent on having an NCA member on the Respect committee. Opinion differed on whether that would be an appropriate use of NCA funds, but opinion veered on the side of approval, on the grounds of the greater profile and credibility for our future Vision funding bids. The proposal was voted on and carried. 19 in favour, 1 abstention and 1 against. The committee will action.</p> <p>Joanne White spoke about Portland Street ‘going greener’. ECC & DCC have each pledged £300 to planting projects such as hanging baskets, and Waitrose have also been approached. There will be a planting session in the hut on 10th May with a cafe. Portland Street residents will be approached door-to-door to see if they will use hanging baskets outside their houses. The pledged funds when received will be managed through the NCA account, as is the case with the £300 currently being held by the Herschell Road residents’ initiative; no monies for the Portland St plans have as yet been received by the NCA.</p> <p>Richard Branston spoke on the local government boundary commission’s proposed changing of the district council ward boundaries in 2016. The number of wards are to be reduced from 18 to 13, to make the number of the registered voters and councillors in each ward equal (3 councillors per ward). This would mean the total number of Exeter city councillors would reduce from 40 to 39. The strong likelihood is that the Newtown Ward (currently Exeter’s smallest) will disappear and be subsumed into some sort of ‘central’ ward, possibly combined with part of Polsloe or St James. We may thus need to review our own title in time, and the constitution’s descriptor of who counts as being an NCA member. He encouraged people to comment on the proposals. It was proposed that the committee need to look at the ward boundaries and comment on them.</p> <p>Richard Westlake reported that county councils will also be reviewed in 2017, and that the city and council boundaries may not equate in the way they currently do. In Mid May the electoral commission will publish its proposals for the County Council, and comments will be invited.</p>	
11	<p>Exeter University Community Wardens – update:</p> <p>A Chinese New Year event is happening in Princesshay followed by a parade and 6pm fireworks, on Saturday 21st February. Any suggestions on how relations between students and other local residents can be enhanced would be gratefully received.</p>	
12	<p>Future Events for 2015</p> <p>Newtown Community Association Choir concert and social cafe 7.30pm, Tuesday 24th March – would anyone help run the café? Magic Carpet café and exhibition of art: Saturday 11th April Cycle Tour finish venue: Sunday 31st May 2pm-10.30pm Respect Festival: 6th-7th June Great West Run: Sunday 18th October 2015</p> <p>Upcoming NCA cafes: Amnestea - 19th April Sunday café –2-5pm - to support Amnesty International with Flute cake organising it (Jackie Holdstock with Sally Palmer) Seed and planting café - 10th May Sunday café – 2-5pm (Su Aves) Healthy Living café – June 14th Sunday café – 2-5 pm (Rory McNeile) July 19th – 2-5pm theme to be decided (suggestions welcome) August 16th – 2-5pm theme to be decided (suggestions welcome)</p>	

	<p>Food Festival – September 13th Sunday, 12-4pm SA , Michael Parrott and R McN Halloween Café, 31st October Saturday, 5pm- 8pm MP Craft Fair. 29th November Sunday, 2 – 5pm. Elena Milego and SA Winter Warmer 13th December Sunday, 6pm-8pm. Rory McN</p>	
13	<p>Any Other Business notified to the Chair in advance of the meeting</p> <p>Our Community Police officers sent their apologies. They have been stopping advising cyclists of the one way law coming down Clifton Hill, and alert us to an increase of car crime in the ward and to not leave anything on view in a car.</p>	
14	<p>Next Open Forum Meeting dates 2015 at 10.30am :</p> <p>The following dates have yet to be confirmed: Sat 23rd May, Sat 22nd Aug, Sat 21st Nov, AGM Sat 20th Feb 2016</p> <p>Confirmed dates will be published.</p>	