

ALKHAM VALLEY SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Monday, 8 November 2021

Members present:

Richard O’Rorke (acting Chairman), Joanna Walker (Hon Secretary), Mark Loveday (President), Liza Loveday, Catie Webber, Harlan Webber, Frances Marcus, Rachel Fountain, Trevor Johns, Alison Johns, Martin Scherer.

Apologies for absence:

Jane O’Rorke, Janet Adamson, Steven Edwardes.

1. **Welcome and introduction**

Richard O’Rorke, the acting Chairman, welcomed members to the 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Alkham Valley Society (AVS), and explained that the reason why there were fewer Members present was because the notice of meeting had not been advertised in the Alkham Newsletter. It had been decided to keep a low profile while the Society was getting going once more, following a state of limbo since the disrupted 2018 AGM and the subsequent resignation of the Chairman and Treasurer, and then the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns. The intention now was to get the Alkham Valley Society back operating and into action again.

2. **Minutes of the Last AGM on 21 November 2018**

These were tabled and the Chairman highlighted the main points, referring to the cash position of £1,063, the flooding on Everden Road, updating on the limited progress on traffic calming in the Valley and the Pimlico Byways issue, the noise coming from the Great Everden Farm accommodation development, supporting the Parish Council in its housing development objections particularly on agricultural land being used for residential purposes, and the false, unfair and unwarranted accusation of the AVS being racist.

The Minutes were then approved by the Members, nem. con.

3. **Matters Arising**

- (i) Fern Lane, Ewell Minnis – the Parish Council had commented on this and it was an on-going matter in the hands of the Dover District Council planning authorities.
- (ii) Objections to the development of 19 houses in Fernfield Lane, Hawkinge had failed and the development was proceeding.
- (iii) The issues being tackled by the Traffic Action Group (TAG) and the Byways Group (Pimlico Way) had stalled, but were still on-going.

4. Election of Officers and Members of the Committee

The Hon Secretary tabled Nomination Forms which, as required by the Constitution, had been signed by proposers and seconders and the nominees, and dated. When the Chairman asked whether any other Member of the Society would be prepared to join the Executive Committee, Frances Marcus agreed to become a member of the Committee. The following nominees were then voted on individually and duly elected, nem. con:-

Richard O'Rorke - Chairman
Jane O'Rorke - Vice-Chair
Catie Webber - Hon Treasurer
Joanna Walker - Hon Secretary
Harlan Webber - Committee Member
Frances Marcus - Committee Member

5. The Accounts for 2019, 2020 and 2021

These were tabled. They had been kindly produced by the past Hon Treasurer and showed a healthy financial position with cash of £2,020.67. The Accounts were then approved by the Members, nem.con.

6. Authorised Bank Signatories

Given personnel changes, the Society's Bank, National Westminster, required new mandates for the Authorised Bank Signatories, which had to be approved by the Members of the Society. Two Signatories were required on cheques and other bank documents, so it was proposed to have three Authorised Signatories, who would be Joanna Walker (Hon Secretary), Catie Webber, (Hon Treasurer) and Harlan Webber (Committee Member). It was therefore resolved that:-

"The Authorised Signatories of the current mandate, for the accounts detailed in section 1.3. to be changed in accordance with section Authorised Signatories. The current mand will continue as amended."

This resolution was passed by the Members, nem. con.

7. The Executive Committee's Report for 2019, 2020 and 2021

This had been handed out to Members at the start of the meeting and its contents was obviously referred to throughout the meeting.

8. The Way Forward

There was a lively discussion regarding the matters and issues which the AVS should be concerned about going forward. The two most important ones, which it was felt would attract support and new Members to the Society, were traffic calming measures

through the Valley and Village, and the other being the damage, dangers and problems resulting from 4x4s using Byways for sport.

Martin Scherer outlined the difficulties involved in getting a solution to these two issues. On traffic calming through the Valley, Kent Highways would be resistant to any further measures as the road, now declassified, was an important link between north Dover and north Folkestone and between the M2 and M20. As regards Pimlico Byway, he said that the KCC had now decided to concrete the first 400 yards or so of the Byway to reduce the mud and flint problems, and they were unlikely to be receptive to any further change, such as closing it in the Winter months to 4x4s, as the current policy was to encourage open access for the public to the countryside. He also mentioned the matter of public liability which complicates the issue and, if the KCC close a public right of way (PRO), it reverts to the landowner who can control access, but runs the risk of public liability and the possibility of being sued

These were issues which the Parish Council should be dealing with, but if they were not, then there was no reason why the AVS could not take up the fight itself on behalf of Members. The AVS would not be working against the Parish Council, but supporting their efforts and those of the Traffic Action Group (TAG) and the Byways Group.

Harlan Webber made the point that it was important to attract those living in the Village and the Valley to join the Society, as numbers counted and carried influence, and this would necessitate active communications, a good website and making it fun and interactive.

Trevor Johns argued that it was important to have a clear strategy on traffic calming and the Byways and to prioritise and concentrate on getting one aspect changed rather than too many.

Frances Marcus made the point that the AVS should not lose sight of its other main aims, such as housing, the environment and protecting the woods, trees and hedgerows.

9. Future Programme of Events

The Chairman outlined possible events for next year, in order to make things interesting and fun:-

- (i) There would be a Christmas Walk on Thursday, 27 December 2021 for Members and their families and dogs around parts of the Valley, starting at 10.30 am from the Village Hall.
- (ii) A talk on a topical subject.
- (iii) A visit to a local site of interest.

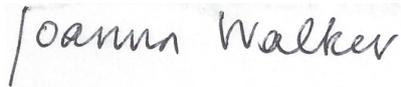
10. Any Other Business

Frances Marcus asked why traffic monitoring strips had been recently added and whether this meant possible changes on traffic control. No one seemed to know the reason.

11. Closure of the Meeting

In closing the AGM, the Chairman thanked the Members for their attendance and participation, hoped that the AVS was now up and running again and asked Members to encourage other people living in the Village and the Valley to join the Society and make it a more potent voice.

The President then proposed on behalf of Members a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the Executive Committee for their commitment and work, and added that he was much encouraged by the energy and enthusiasm being shown by Members. It was important for the future protection and preservation of the beauty of the Alkham Valley.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanna Walker". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Joanna Walker
Hon Secretary
Alkham Valley Society

Dated: 31 March 2022