

**Minutes of a meeting of the Herne Hill Society Committee
held on Tuesday, 5 March 2019 at 7:30 PM at Herne Hill United Church**

Welcome and apologies

Present: Colin Wight CW (Chair); Henry Ferguson HF; Laurence Marsh LM; Jackie Plumridge JP; Pat Roberts PR (minutes)

Apologies: Dan Townsend DT; Val Suebsaeng VS; Martyn Hall MH

Minutes of last meeting

It was agreed that the minutes of the February committee meeting could be uploaded to the Society's website, subject to one small amendment. **Action: PR/CW**

Matters arising & actions from the last meeting

CW confirmed that Village Books in Dulwich had made some sales of *Grace's Story* and other Society publications, and that an invoice had been duly issued.

CW confirmed that he had applied to the organisers of the Dulwich Park Fair for a stand, following the agreement at the last meeting to attend this event again.

CW advised that the Herne Hill Music Festival were now planning to stage two Ruskin-related concerts. The first would be a song recital to be held in the Herne Hill United Church. This would be a ticketed event and would therefore not require sponsorship. The second could be a performance by St Saviour's School Choir of a new musical rendering of Ruskin's children's story, *King of the Golden River*, to be held in St Saviour's Church Hall. The Society had offered £500 sponsorship towards the Festival including the cost of this event because the composer required a fee. Negotiations and fund-raising were still in progress.

On corporate membership, CW said that he had met the Chief Executive of The Dulwich Estate and she had agreed not only to renew the Estate's corporate membership for 2019 but had also offered to pay by standing order. He would follow up the other outstanding corporate memberships in due course, including possibly The Half Moon Hotel, though some of these had not taken out membership until much later in 2018 - October, in the case of The Half Moon. But he would write to them all in due course.

Membership Survey: Results

The online survey had so far resulted in responses from 103 members, summarised in PowerPoint slides which CW circulated. This level of response - around one third of current membership - was agreed to be both satisfactory and likely to be indicative of the opinions of the wider membership.

Although some of the feedback was not unexpected, the Committee found other replies a little surprising. The survey revealed the age profile of the respondents, which was predictably weighted towards 60+ members. This was accompanied by a very high lack of interest in following the Society's news on social media such as

Twitter and Facebook, and little regularity, too, in engaging with the Society's website.

The scale of many respondents' membership of other local societies, particularly The Dulwich Society, had not been expected. It was probably not surprising that the membership attached great value to the Magazine and enjoyed its contents. And what the survey revealed about the value attached by members to different aspects of the Society's work, and to different issues covered by the quarterly magazine, was thought to be particularly useful in guiding the Society's activity going forward. The monthly talks seemed to attract a fairly limited loyalty, a number of members never or only very rarely attending. Responses to the question about people's willingness to join the Committee, or to help in other ways, were not particularly encouraging.

It was agreed that a selection of the slides should be presented at the Annual General Meeting on 13 March. **Action: CW/PR to edit and script**

Remembering Herne Hill 1914-18

CW reported that he had submitted a full evaluation of the project to the Heritage Lottery Fund as required. He had also submitted a shorter version to the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee inquiry on "Lessons from the First World War Centenary", which was trying to evaluate the impact of HLF funding.

It was agreed that the report to HLF should in due course be circulated to the Committee and released publicly. Further discussion was remitted to the April committee meeting. **Action: PR/CW**

Annual General Meeting, 13 March: Preparations

Various necessary preparations were discussed for the following week's AGM:

- Nominations for election to the committee: these were finalised.
- Annual accounts: these had been signed off by Rosalind Glover, and she was happy to print off copies for distribution at the meeting.
- Agenda + minutes of the previous AGM: PR agreed to print off the agenda, once finalised, and copies of the minutes of last year's AGM, for distribution at the meeting. **Action: PR**
- Report of the retiring Membership Secretary: CW would check with VS whether she wanted to present such a report this year. **Action: CW**
- Managing the committee elections: CW would check whether the Honorary President would wish to resume his traditional role in managing the election of the new committee, or whether he would be content for someone else to do it, for instance John Brunton as in 2018. **Action: CW**

It was agreed in general to aim to streamline the reports from the outgoing committee. Ideally these reports, plus the election of the new committee, and the statements by the new committee to the meeting could be finished by 8:30/8:45 pm to allow time for the break and the presentation by the invited speaker.