

**Minutes of a meeting of the Herne Hill Society Committee
held at 6:00pm on Tue 1 April 2025
at the Half Moon Hotel**

PRESENT: Rebecca Tee, Chair; Lyndon Fothergill, Treasurer; Ros Glover, Membership; Susie Perring, Secretary; George, Martyn Hall, Kara Tritton

1. Apologies:

Lin Proctor, Henry Ferguson, Laurence Marsh

2. Minutes of the meeting of 4 March 2025

LF's comments not yet incorporated. Action: RT to post minutes. Action: LF outstanding advertising invoices.

3. AGM debrief and feedback

KT: The raffle at the AGM was very successful, raising £242. We also sold three books (2 x *Sunset over HH* and 1 x *Short History*). On the selling of books, we should push a bit more, plan for the next time – promotional material? KT: perhaps produce a video, interview with the author.

RG: We had 7 new members from the event, plus more afterwards. The giveaway seed packets were much appreciated and will be used at future events.

Adrian Gibson and Nikky Catto (guest speaker) brought people to the event, who were also local tour guides. The guides all joined on the night. There was some noise from the bar area, which always has regular club members using the bar.

53 people came to the AGM. The event was well-attended, this shows that the brand we are building is attractive to people. The venue was welcoming and friendly. The speaker was excellent and the event was run very professionally.

It was obvious that at this 3-hour event there was no time for food. Half an hour breaks between items was enough to socialise briefly.

LF: The only problem for me was the mic, which was very difficult to use. We should look at this next time.

RG: Spoke to a new member who said the Society was very welcoming.

A big thank-you to Vicky Tee for all her help.

We need more helpers to cover the book sales, raffle tickets and membership.

In future all members of the Committee should have pre-allotted jobs.

For the 7 May Awards, we need to focus on selling books and recruiting new members.

LF: Will prepare the total figures (sales/expenditure) for the next meeting.

RG thanked the Committee, on behalf of her partner, John Brunton for the President's Commendation, glass trophy and certificate. John is a long established writer, activist and supporter. RT /LM will prepare an article in a future magazine, giving background on John and his contribution to the Society.

MH: The event flowed smoothly, and was very impressive apart from the noise from the bar area. Regarding the sale of books, we have very few opportunities to sell books. Only two events last year at which we could have a stall.

Should we have book events? Possibly with Jon Newman as a speaker. Should we have history events and invite people to explore their house/family history?

RT will explore this further. Events team : GD, RG, HB, SP, LP, KT.

GD discussed whether the interest in the AGM stemmed from the media promotion?

Adrian Gibson and Nikky Catto both have a large Instagram following.

KT has found another bookshop which might take our books, Bookmongers on Coldharbour Lane near the Ritzy. GD: Bookmongers follow us on Instagram.

4. Awards Judging (RT)

RT has prepared information packs for the judges, plus a copy of all 67 nominations for each judge, plus a five-page briefing note. Judging will start at the end of April. The 67 will be reduced to 33 in an initial sift. RT will contact those not on the shortlist and send a certificate – “Worthy of Congratulations”, saying well done, do apply again next time. Plus a Save the Date, asking “Where did you hear about the event?”

RT will write an article for the magazine on the range and type of nominations received.

RG The next magazine will cover the period covered by the Dulwich ‘Gardens and Walks’ inserts we have accepted for distribution.

5. Finance (LF)

We need to have a discussion re the figures of the February presentation.

If we continue as we are, we will fall below our reserve level by 2028. Charity Commission guidance is to maintain reserves of £12,800.

One considerable saving would be the £800+ p.a. for storage. LF will take photos of our existing storage needs for discussion. RT will discuss with the storage company ways of reducing the bill, e.g. a smaller unit.

The PO Box costs £350 p.a. However, despite the low number of letters we receive, this is the official address for the Society (the alternative being to use someone’s home address). Decision: leave as is.

Should we put up the subscriptions from £10 p.a.? RG to check what other local societies charge. Direct Debit would help maximise our membership receipts.

We have 413 members (30 have not renewed); 70 members are outside hand distribution area to whom the magazine has to be posted. Should we charge postage or offer online magazines to this group? This is acceptable according to our constitution.

NB. Postage rates are due to go up on 1 April 2025.

We also have 70 life members, who having paid up at the start of their membership, no longer pay anything. Should we ask for more donations and legacies?

Should we hold off on grants until our finances are more stable?

We would need to communicate a year ahead if we put up subscriptions. This needs discussion. MH: We should have 6 months/yearly detailed review of our finances, with focus on raising our income.

RT: we need more discussion with a full Committee on how to cut costs and increase our income, modernising our approach to finance.

LF: to prepare a paper for two meetings’ time on how things could change / variable options on how to get back to breaking even. RG and LF will speak to the Camberwell Society about their DD system, which they say was a very positive move for them.

Next meeting: Tuesday 6 May 2025