

**WIDCOMBE ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**held on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2014 at Widcombe Junior School**

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed every one to the meeting, which was attended by 61 members of the Association. Paddy apologised that Peter Rignall, who was due to speak, was unable to attend.

**2. Chairman's Report**

**i) Beechen Cliff School:**

Following his meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors in February, Paddy recently received an email from the former explaining that the School is preparing a master plan to meet its needs and that all interested parties, including WA would be invited to comment. After this the School will consider how to keep in touch with the community in 'an open and equitable way'. WA will work to establish a better relationship with the school. Paddy thanked Ian Gilchrist for his efforts in building bridges between the School and the community. There are still concerns about whether or not the lighting on the School's artificial pitches conforms to planning conditions.

**ii) Halfpenny Bridge Lighting:**

After a delay of a year, Paddy and lighting designer Paul Ruffles are to meet the Highways Lighting Officer and the Phillips lighting rep to assess the suitability of various lighting systems for the bridge. The Highways Department has assured WA that the project will go ahead and that funds will be available. At present we are unsure what WA's financial commitment might be.

**iii) Beechen Cliff Farm Fields:**

The Steering Group plan for the NT to take over the cliff fell through. However, the Council has allocated £250k, which should cover essential maintenance of the cliff and management of the surrounding fields. It is intended that some tree planting will take place, hedgerows managed and pedestrian entry points laid with an environmentally friendly surface. WA will ensure tree planting does not compromise any of the views from the hill.

**iv) Energy Efficient Widcombe:**

EEW, under the direction of Dr Tim Williamson and administrator Claire Powell, is fully autonomous within WA. Areas the organisation is currently involved in are working with Widcombe Schools to increase energy awareness and help Schools reduce their energy consumption, thermal imaging assessments on homes (15 of which were carried out in March) and they are about to embark upon a sustainable student housing project in West Widcombe which could provide a dissertation subject for Bath Spa University students.

**v) Student involvement in Widcombe:**

Paddy welcomed Matt Humberstone, Chair of the student vteam, (volunteers). With around 30 student apartments being built in the renewed Social Club, it is important for students to feel part of the community. WA has already had talks with the Council's student outreach officer and student leaders, one of the results of which has been the very successful Ceilidh held recently. We are now exploring ways in which students could use their expertise to help WA, in particular with communications and branding, including a new website, and effective use of social media.

**vi) Garden Club:**

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of Alex Nash, the Garden Club has been a great success over the past years. Alex has decided to step down but has been unsuccessful in finding someone to take over. The final meeting of the current programme will be held on

April 28<sup>th</sup>. Paddy appealed for someone to volunteer to take over from Alex and expressed thanks to her for her fantastic contribution to Widcombe over the years.

**vii) Widcombe Rising 2015:**

If the Rossiter Road scheme goes through, this would be a celebration. WA has spoken to Ralph Oswick and Nick Steel who are willing to organise another Rising. The main issue is finance. We are continuing discussions but, should financial problems prove overwhelming, might have to consider holding a smaller scale street party.

**viii) Committee Changes:**

Following Paddy's appeal for committee members at the Autumn Meeting, Jan Shepley immediately volunteered to join us and has taken over responsibility for planning. Paddy thanked Jan for becoming involved so promptly. We look forward to formally voting her in as a committee member during this meeting.

Hilary Furlonger has had promotion to a senior post in the civil service and no longer has the time to devote to the committee. She will remain as a conduit for information on Traffic and Highways to be dealt with by others until her position on the committee can be filled.

Paddy thanked his committee for their on-going support and dedication.

**ix) Bath BID:**

Paddy will meet with City Centre Manager Andrew Cooper to explore the possibility of Widcombe Parade becoming part of the Bath BID.

**x) Photography Competition:**

Helen Peter explained that she is organising a photography competition to find the best 12 photos on the theme 'Widcombe Through the Seasons'. The Royal Photographic Society will act as judge and the photographs used in a 2015 calendar. Entrants will need to download photos to Flickr. Full details of the competition will be available on the website shortly.

**xi) Questions and comments from the floor:**

Margaret Burrows would like there to be more involvement between WA and the History Society.

Sylvia Green asked for signatures on a petition about the safety of the railings at the Temperance Hall.

**3. Rossiter Road Update.**

Jeroen Weimar gave an up-date on Rossiter Road.

He thanked Ian Gilchrist and Ben Stevens for their help in securing progress on the scheme over the past six months. The Steering Group had met on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The contract is due to be finalised on May 5<sup>th</sup> with work on site to start on about June 26<sup>th</sup> and aiming for completion at the end of November. The project team have made it clear that the scheme will need monitoring and fine tuning carried out if necessary. The Council will be producing a newsletter in May/June and this information will also be available on the council website.

Paddy pointed out that the easiest route to this would be through the WA website which will provide a link.

**4. Presentation by John Isserlis, Julian House.**

John gave an overview of the work being carried out with rough sleepers by Julian House and other agencies. Following this, he took questions from the floor.

Paddy thanked him for his wonderfully practical talk.

**5. Appeal on behalf of Widcombe C. of E Junior School.**

Ian Gilchrist, Chair of Governors, and Governor Simone Wilding made an appeal for funding and fundraising ideas for the extension of the school hall necessitated by rising numbers. The school will also need to add a kitchen to allow the serving of hot meals when this becomes mandatory in 2015.

Ian also asked for volunteers to take on the roles of Dr Spinney and King Bladud for the Mummers performance at the Party in the City on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **6. Treasurer's Remarks.**

The accounts were published in the Newsletter. Finances remain in good health and, although outgoings exceeded takings this past year, this was covered by a previous surplus. Donations have continued to be made, the largest being for the renovation of Halfpenny Bridge, There have also been various donations to St Matthews. As is our usual practice, we retain one year's administration costs. Funding may be needed in future for the Rossiter Road project. Marilyn Phillips has agreed the accounts. There were no questions from the floor.

#### **7. Adoption of Accounts**

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Denise Coughlan and seconded by Alan Langton. The Accounts were adopted nem con.

#### **8. Election of Examiner for Accounts**

Marilyn Phillips, proposed by Jeroen Weimar and seconded by Sian Lewis, was unanimously re-elected as Examiner for Accounts.

#### **9. Subscriptions.**

The committee has agreed to raise subscriptions to £10 for households and £20 for business members. Jeremy pointed out that subs have remained the same for 5 or 6 years and that occasional rises are preferable to smaller, more frequent ones due to the administrative costs involved. Costs of printing, the Newsletter, (now largely in colour), bank charges and consumables have risen. Fees will continue to cover running costs. Even at a higher rate, the subscription will continue to be good value when you take into account the excellent discounts on offer. The new rate will take effect from January 2015. Jeremy will write to those who pay by direct debit. The possibility of taking payment by PayPal or credit card is being looked into. We are also introducing a student rate of £5. Paddy pointed out that there will also be costs involved in developing the new website.

#### **10. Elections.**

Paddy Doyle, proposed by Chris Rogers and seconded by Jeroen Weimar, was re-elected nem con as Chairman. Paddy gave immediate notice that he would only serve for one year of this second term.

Liz Littlewood, proposed by Helen Peter and seconded by Paddy Doyle, was re-elected nem con as Secretary.

Ann Ashworth, proposed by Liz Littlewood and seconded by Chris Rogers, was re-elected nem con as Membership Secretary.

Chris Rogers, proposed by Paddy Doyle and seconded by Jeroen Weimar, was re-elected nem con as committee member.

Jan Shepley, proposed by Jeroen Weimar and seconded by Liz Littlewood, was elected nem con as committee member.

#### **11. AOB**

i) Chris had distributed the Summer Events Flyer. Some tickets are available online. Members who do not have this facility can contact Chris Rogers or Denise Coughlan, who does the box office. The Opera, which is returning to Crowe Hall has not been publicised but two thirds of

the tickets are already sold. Chris took the opportunity to thank Paddy for agreeing to stay on as Chairman for an additional year as a replacement had not been found.

ii) Mr Bastin asked if there could be a vote on the rise in subscriptions. Paddy said it had not been the intention to do this but he was happy to put it to the floor. A majority agreed the rise. Margaret Burrows asked if there would be a single person's subscription rate. Jeremy said there was not at present as two cards are issued per household but that WA would look at this.

iii) Tom Leland felt that any new trees planted on Beechen Cliff should be beech trees to comply with the name but Margaret Burrows explained that the name originated from the beach that used to exist by the river. Paddy said that any new planting should have no effect on the skyline. Alan Langton pointed out that the existing beeches are at the end of their life but that the Council are planting more trees above the crest in Alexandra Park so that these will be of reasonable size when the old trees have to be removed.

iv) Roger Nunn asked for clarification about the work currently being done on Rossiter Road, as he believed this is unconnected with the scheme. Jeroen and Paddy confirmed that this is work laying a cable to the University.

iv) Sylvia Green asked about the continuing problem with smoke and smell from the restaurant across the river. Helen Peter said that she is working on this but that all three restaurants use low-level rear vents near the bike store. Environmental health had already pointed out that these would not work. Higher vents appear to be the solution. Helen asked people to send their comments to her so that she has useful evidence.

v) It was observed that Alexandra Park is being used as a long-term car park for the school and the question was raised as to whether time limits should be imposed on parking here. Paddy will pass this on to the Chair of Alexandra Park Forum.

vi) Stephen Hayward asked for an update on the Social Club and Tom Leland remarked that the newly built restaurant is apparently being turned into residential accommodation, possibly for students. Chris Rogers said that the Social Club Committee are optimistic that the supermarket and the student accommodation will be completed by the end of the year and that the shell for the Club to fit out will also have been built. It is hoped to reopen the Club by this time next year. The change of use of the restaurant building has planning permission. On the subject of parking, there is no extra parking allowed for and there is the issue of deliveries to the supermarket.

The evening concluded with wine, nibbles and conversation.