

THE INVERLEITH SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE FORTY THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE INVERLEITH SOCIETY

HELD IN THE LECTURE THEATRE OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH

ON MONDAY 24TH APRIL 2017 AT 7.00PM

The meeting was attended by 36 members of the Society and was chaired by Ian Hooper. Apologies were received from 5 members of the Society and also from Deirdre Brock MP and Ben Macpherson MSP.

1 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed members and guests including Councillor Gavin Barrie.

2 MINUTES OF THE 2016 AGM

The minutes had been circulated and published on the website. Additional copies were available at the meeting. The minutes were adopted having been duly proposed and seconded.

3 TREASURER'S REPORT

Copies of the audited accounts were available to members at the meeting. Graeme Cook presented his report. Subscriptions represented the main source of income; the Society had also received a number of donations for which he expressed the Committee's gratitude. The Society's overall financial position was good with a healthy reserve available. Balance at the end of the year was £5303 compared with £4606 at the same time last year. Items worth noting this year included spending to enhance the profile of the Society's social media presence.

He thanked the auditor for her work and commended the accounts to the meeting.

The accounts were adopted having been duly proposed and seconded.

4 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Isla Duncan reported that membership numbers remained more or less stable. An increasing proportion of members paid their subscription by standing order and the great majority of members had email addresses. The Committee had agreed to introduce a life membership option as an alternative to annual subscription payment.

5 REPORT ON THE YEAR

The Chair noted a number of issues which had occupied the Society in the course of the year. The Society had remained active in promoting the protection and enhancement of the amenity of Inverleith. The Society had established a presence on Facebook which might help to attract a wider range of supporters. He noted the recent introduction of a 20mph speed limit on the roads in the area which the Society had supported at the consultation stage. He asked members to give the Committee their views on the types of social event they would wish to see in future.

In closing the Chair thanked other members of the Committee for helping to keep the Society in good shape and recorded particular thanks to those who were standing down from the Committee this year - Graeme Cook for his long service on the Committee and for keeping the finances in good order; Isla Duncan

for her efficient handling of membership matters; and Alex McNeil who had been instrumental in setting up the Society's website.

6 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The Chair invited the meeting to support the election of Marion Blythman and Adrian Cullen to serve on the Executive Committee.

The meeting agreed these elections.

7 WEBSITE AND COMUNICATION

Ian Jackson provided an overview of the activity on the Society website over the past year. In addition the Society now had a Facebook page which included local news and information items from other organisations as well the Society's own material. All members with internet access could visit the Facebook page; those with Facebook accounts could help to get the site a higher profile by "liking" "sharing" or "commenting" on its content.

8 PLANNING AND CONSERVATION ISSUES

Ian Hooper referred to the summary in Inverleith News which listed the significant planning cases on which the Society had commented. He noted that the Committee had also posted regular updates on significant planning matters on the website to keep members informed on issues of interest.

Options for challenging the validity of the existing planning permission now seemed to be very limited. However, the developer's intentions remained unclear. The Canonmills campaign group was still hopeful that it might prove possible to secure a better outcome for the site.

The elevation of the reconstructed Botanic Cottage facing onto Inverleith Place had caused some concern. Various elements of the building as constructed did not conform to the original planning permission. The RBG had now submitted a retrospective application which was the subject of consultation with neighbours. Although the RBG had undertaken some planting, the yew hedge on the boundary would take many years to reach a suitable height. There was a lively discussion of the issues in the meeting. Ian Hooper said that the Committee proposed to submit an objection to the application with a view to a requirement being imposed on the RBG to provide more effective screen planting between the rear of the building and the boundary railings.

9 CONCLUDING

Graeme Cook thanked the Chair for his work on the Committee over the past few years. The Chair closed the formal proceedings.

After the interval Professor Cliff Hague, Chair of the Cockburn Association, gave a talk on the subject of Conservation in Edinburgh - Past and Present Challenges which was greatly appreciated by all present. (Copies of the Cockburn Association's current newsletter and subsequent editions will be posted on the Society website.)

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