

Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting
of the Hampshire Lakes Residents' Association (HLRA)
held on 9th September 2024

Present

There were 58 members present, and the meeting was therefore quorate

Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all those present, including Gaye Collins, our GM, and commented on the very good turnout.

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from the following:

Janet McCombie, Norma Heather, Dennis Garrod, Dee Garrod, Heather Parrish, Diana Duckworth & Judith Rogers.

2) Approval of Minutes of 2023 AGM

Minutes of the previous AGM held on the 11th September 2023 had been made available and the Chair called for them to be approved by a show of hands.

The minutes were approved Nem. Con and signed by the chair.

3) Matters Arising

None, other than those dealt with in our reports.

4) Chair's 2023/24 Summary

I would like to begin by paying a tribute to John Paine, who sadly died so unexpectedly just a few weeks ago. John was in fact our secretary at the last AGM. He served as secretary for two years, always patient and thorough, his meticulous approach kept us on track at a demanding time. We offer our condolences to Ann.

I would like to thank you, our residents for supporting us and for looking to us when there are serious issues and concerns. We cannot always resolve these issues in the way residents would like, but we will always make our voices heard and demand, as we are entitled to do, that we are consulted.

One of our targets last year was to try to make sense of the management structure of Anchor. The result is a 'Family Tree' which is to be displayed in the post room. Halfway through the year we welcomed a new General Manager to the village when Debbie Paggett left and was replaced by Gaye Collins. There was another Anchor management structural change when a new post was

created and now Gaye's line manager is Emma Tobin. This new post is now entitled 'Head of Villages and Independent Living'. Emma has already visited the village and met the committee. I think we can safely say that her management style is quite different from her predecessors', and we hope she gives Gaye her full support. Gaye has already demonstrated her ability to get things done and I would like to repeat my wholehearted welcome to Hampshire Lakes.

Most of all I would like to thank the committee for all the work they have done during the past year. If you follow the minutes and hear these reports, you will see that there has been much progress. This is alongside the work of two other groups, who are not strictly speaking part of the committee but report their work at committee meetings. Firstly, the Volunteer Drivers Scheme which was so professionally set up by Emrys Parry and helped by Wendy Wooldridge. Many thanks to them and those drivers who take residents to medical appointments. Secondly Hampshire Lakes Entertainment headed by Joan. The work done by this team makes living in our village such fun

In particular I would like to thank those retiring committee members, Diana Duckworth and Jo Taylor, for their work during the past year. I would now like to ask secretary, Roger, to introduce each working group's reports. Where the leader of the group is away, he will read the report. The secretary will then introduce and welcome new committee members

The Chair then handed over to our Secretary, Roger Pearce, to conduct the remainder of the business and to introduce the current committee.

5) Working Group Reports

a) **Finance – Service Charge Matters & Wellness Centre Income (Joan Russam)**

There remains confusion and lack of transparency in the accounts which is the focus of much of the ongoing attention of this working group.

In June we were able to meet with Emma Tobin, the new Head of Villages and Nicola Dillon, Anchor's Financial Officer who were reassuring about future responses to our queries. We were able to express our concerns about lack of transparency and contact with Head Office.

The last 2 years have seen a turbulent marketplace for utilities, making forecasting, monitoring and purchasing very challenging. Hopefully we are coming out on the right side in 23/24 and lower than budgeted costs should give a boost to the annual accounts.

The working group has prompted Anchor for a full review of Service Charge commitments and obligations which we are currently scrutinising and in particular the Wellness Income from non-residents and concessions. We consider that this income, 80% of which is retained by Anchor, should be set

against the Wellness costs which are entirely met by the Service Charge. Many thanks to Jo Taylor, Francis Walker and Emrys Parry for their valuable contributions to the work of this group.

The Chair thanked Joan and her team for all the work they had undertaken on these projects.

b) Transport (Diana Duckworth) - read by the secretary in her absence.

The Maintenance team has had a difficult year, as Paul, the regular driver, after an absence of over 6 months, was retired on medical grounds. This put enormous pressure on Trevor who, as the only member of the team qualified to drive the bus with a lift, took over the regular timetable which is open to all residents. For a very short time, Martin was recruited but left after only 2 weeks. Recently, we have been pleased to welcome a new driver, Norman, who has now taken over driving the regular timetable. He is also carrying out maintenance work. Trevor is reviewing the bus timetable and welcomes any suggestions for new destinations. Gaye and Trevor are looking into the possibility of replacing the second bus with a 5-seater car.

Volunteer Drivers Scheme: Another great result this year was the introduction of the Hampshire Lakes Volunteer Drivers Scheme, which is run by Emrys Parry and Wendy Wooldridge (who takes over the telephone bookings when Emrys is away), together with 16 volunteer drivers. This was brought about by the hard work of the HLRA committee along with huge help from Emrys to help residents travel to medical appointments. A WhatsApp group was set up to up tell drivers which resident needed a lift. This has helped so many residents and grateful thanks are given to all involved for giving up their time. All users of this service pay a small fee to the driver, which reduces the taxi charges enormously! Personally, I would like to thank all the drivers who have helped me and Michael - we couldn't manage without you!

Footnote: To date the scheme has saved residents over £2,500 in taxi fares and everyone involved in the scheme are to be congratulated on making the scheme such a success and major help for all those who are no longer driving.

Emrys is still looking for additional drivers to assist our Residents to get to medical appointment. If you can help, please ring Emrys.

On a personal note: I am stepping down from the committee mainly due to my poor eyesight. I have really enjoyed being part of a team, who all work very hard to help all the residents in as many ways possible. Previously as Membership

Secretary, and recently Transport, I have got to know many residents which has made me feel very happy to live here at Hampshire Lakes.

c) Wellness (Keith Hall)

Over the last 12 months we have had a very exciting time in the Hampshire Lakes fitness space. In the Wellness Centre we have new classes, new activities and some new instructors, and last, but definitely not least, we have a new Wellness Centre Manager. Annemarie Prescott joined us in that role in January and immediately we saw a willingness to make improvements in several areas and accept constructive comments from both Residents and Non-Residents.

During this period, we have seen an extra Pilates and a new Kettle Bell class. We have a new pool activity on Wednesday afternoons: Water Volleyball, which has proved to be very popular and great fun. On Thursday afternoons a new instructor-led Village Walk has been introduced.

There is a planning requirement to have a specified number of local non-resident members, which is capped at 60. Currently, there are **60 non-resident members** and 21 people on the Wellness Centre waiting list (*as of 15 August*).

The Centre is now open on a Sunday, with gym and pool sessions available. It's a great time for a quiet swim or gym session, so make sure you book yourself a Sunday wellness session, either with an instructor or by yourself. The class and free sessions booking sheet system continues to work well. Residents can book their sessions 3 weeks ahead on the booking sheet located in the Activities Room. Book early, as you can always cancel if you can't make a session.

Two fitness sessions not run by the Wellness Centre staff are Boules on Monday afternoon and Croquet on a Friday afternoon. Both events are being well supported.

Annemarie has organised a 'Member of the Month', so get yourself along to the Wellness Centre and see if you can earn the accolade of 'Member of the Month'.

d) Maintenance (Roger Pearce)

At the commencement of our committee year (September 2023) there were a number of complaints from residents concerning the length of time it was taking for their maintenance problems to be tackled. In fairness to Trevor and his team, much of this was due to the lack of manpower, with Trevor having to spend so much time driving the minibus in the absence of a regular driver, together with

the difficulties with Anchor in approving his requests for action. However, with the arrival of Gaye and the employment of Norman to drive the minibus, actions have moved on a pace:

Signage: With Gaye's support, we have completed the work started last year, with additional signs and clearly marked visitor bays to reduce confusion and hopefully remind visitors of our 10-mph speed limit. To counter the loss of the badly damaged purple "Hampshire Lakes" sign at our street entrance, a repeat "Hammond Way" street sign was placed opposite the original and fluorescent strips were attached to the fence to guide vehicles into the village at night. Although our signage will never achieve a 100% satisfaction rate with everyone, I believe that it is the best that we are likely to achieve.

Blocked Gutters: The main offenders have now been tackled by Trevor, while we await a more permanent solution in either an annual contract with an appropriate company or the purchase of an aqua-vac machine.

Cleaning Paths and Seats: Thanks to the arrival of Norman, the team have commenced a programme of repair and maintenance of these, which has already made a significant difference to the village.

Defective Balconies (on both phases): At last, these have been assessed by our surveyor and a programme of repair set in motion. For those who have been awaiting action, this may appear long overdue, but at least now the end may be in sight!

Intolerable Noise in some Phase Two Apartments: After a long period of testing, this problem has now abated to the general satisfaction of those concerned.

Additional Lighting around Village: Following requests from residents, we now have lighting in all the recycling sheds and in most of the "alleyways". The sheds, themselves, are now being cleaned on a more regular basis, although an annual health and safety audit may be required for the future.

Peeling Paint on our Bridge: This has now been tackled. with a plentiful supply of paint should this re-occur.

Press Button Access to Library and the Ker Walk entrance to Bistro Corridor: This project emerged from a joint suggestion from Gaye and the HLRA. They have been generally well received and will be of great assistance to all.

e) **Social/Bistro** (Joan Russam)

Bistro: This year has seen ongoing difficulties with staffing, especially in the kitchen and restaurant, and attendance is still variable. However, the greater provision of more buffet meals and value lunches has extended the range of menus and attracted more residents.

We thank Mike and his team for some excellent special event dining, but regret that the regular Saturday evening provision is still disappointing in terms of only opening two Saturdays a month and sometimes with limited menus due to procurement rules. It makes little sense to many residents that we have an excellent local butcher and a fishmonger round the corner that cannot be used! Of course, pricing is a factor, but residents will willingly pay for high quality food. Consistency is still sometimes a problem, and we continue to strive for higher standards with the regular provision of tablecloths and improved décor and ambience.

After lengthy negotiations with Anchor, the provision of sound absorbent wall cladding and hanging acoustic panels has reduced sound propagation and a harsh sonic environment making the bistro more comfortable for residents. The cost was £8.5 thousand pounds which was paid from the Sinking Fund.

Entertainment: A subsidised Christmas tea party was part funded by the HLRA account as well as a cocktail party to welcome new residents.

The HLRA enjoys strong links with Hampshire Lakes' Entertainment and regular news is shared at our meetings. The group continue to arrange special events, coach and theatre trips.

f) Grounds and Gardens (Janet McCombie) - read by the secretary in her absence.

The wet and mostly mild weather through last winter and spring has created very different conditions on our site compared to last year. Growth of trees, grass, plants and weeds has been luxuriant and abundant. In particular the numerous hedges, which usually need trimming once or twice a year have needed attention at least three, and sometimes four times to keep them neat and controlled.

Many of our small trees which had been struggling have put on a lot of healthy growth, including those lining the entrance to reception, which some residents feared had not made it through the winter. They were just late to lose their leaves and late to open them in the spring.

Mike has worked alone for most of the year after Hudson's resignation. He has had a few days of help from one of the Real Gardens team, but apart from that has worked hard to do his best to keep on top of all the work in our gardens. The job for Mike's assistant is now advertised as full time, which will hopefully soon be filled.

The Real Gardens team worked through the year to keep the grass cut and the edges trimmed. The new edge cutter creates an excellent neat cut, but I have concerns that the beds are slowly getting bigger as the edges get nibbled away. We really do **not** need bigger flower and shrub beds! Some grassed areas are flourishing but many are due for weed killer when the budget and weather allow.

The pond is still awaiting clearance. The contractor chosen to clear it this October is no longer available, but Mike managed to get other quotes and will

hopefully soon have a date for this to be done. Once it is cleared it is planned to have a contract to keep the reeds under control.

Some further tree safety work has been undertaken, both planned and clearing up after storm damage. Our large Poplar is looking much healthier after the removal of unhealthy branches, and the dead tree near the large gate into the woods has been felled and the timber left for a natural wildlife space.

I am not aware of anyone arranging to facilitate any extra outside taps, but so far this year there has been less need for much watering. There is also a great need for more top soil for many of the beds which are dry and arid and unable to hold water.

The Himalayan Balsam is still fighting back, but with continued pulling up it will decrease. There no longer seems to be any growing in our woods. There are problem areas where it is flourishing on the other side of our fences and Mike has also been pulling it out of the stream. He also sprayed some of the inaccessible plants in Wheeler Lane, which was instantly successful, but spraying can obviously only take place on windless days.

The efforts to widen the pathways through our woods is having good effect at the western entrance, where grassy borders to the path have been created, despite the incredible overgrowth of the brambles. This has been a problem nationwide this year but the entrance through the kissing gate and the ditches are really heavily overgrown, and the brambles have been growing faster than ever. That end of our woods has also suffered from our neighbour's careless over-clearance of his land and we are now exposed to walkers cutting through our narrowed woods because of the lack of clear paths on the open land. It has been a very noisy year and the local wildlife have also lost so much of their habitat, but it is out of our control.

Mike has created some beautifully replanted beds on Hammond Way and Ker Walk and has planted Lavender along the new pathway beside the Village Green. The grassy mounded area near the bin shed on the southern border is also unrecognisable from the messy weedy patch it used to be. All great improvements. The "compost area", however, remains a problem.

We are still awaiting the metal storage shed. It is essential that the garden chemicals and fuel are stored safely. The area for the base has been cleared, slabs are on the way for the base, and the shed itself has been ordered. I thought this was all put in place in the spring but hopefully it will not be long before it actually appears.

Most residents and visitors to our village have comment very favourably about the improvements they have seen in our grounds and gardens over the last couple of years. I hope we will continue to support and appreciate the work that has been done.

g) Communications within the Village (Keith Hall)

Over this year there have been several ways in which we, as a committee, have tried to improve the internal communications within the village, *in addition to the General Manager's Resident Communications to all residents*:

HLRA Website: The HLRA website continues to be well used, with a regular flow of visitors to the site. There are currently over 50 pages of information about our village on the site, as well as all the current events and menu fliers. Plus, it now displays all the committee documents and minutes of meetings, as well as online copies of Lakes News and Jo's weekly emails.

Reception TV: The Reception TV was installed recently and displays a continuous video showing village news items, the current Bistro menus and Hampshire Lakes Entertainment fliers. There are also a few examples of website pages, as well as an occasional bonus video.

There is a link to the Reception TV video on the village website, so you don't even have to go to the reception to watch it!

Paper Copies of Minutes of Committee Meetings and Discussions with

Management: For those without access to the internet, we also display these minutes in the folder in the library. Any queries about these may be directed to Roger Pearce, our Secretary.

6) Treasurer's Statement and Adoption of the Accounts (Sam Dauncey)

Copies of the Annual accounts had been made available, together with the examiner's report.

It may interest members that "Other Income" consists almost entirely of contributions by non-resident bridge players for use of residents' facilities.

Social expenditure includes £1486 for the pool table. There were also smaller contributions towards the Xmas party and other smaller events. Nearly £700 of the 'Other expenditure' was the cost of upgrading and using the website software and of having the site hosted.

I would like to thank Paul Sudell for examining my accounts and confirm that he is willing to continue as examiner for the coming year.

Members were then asked to adopt the Accounts, proposed by Keith Hall and seconded by Jo Taylor, which was carried by a show of hands in favour nem con.

Members were then asked to re-appoint Paul Sidell as examiner for the current year, proposed by Jo Taylor and seconded by Keith Hall, which was carried by a show of hands in favour nem con.

7) **Membership Secretary's Comments** (Carolyn Hill)

As of August 2024, there are: 100 Full Members, 15 Associate Members (i.e. spouses, partners, etc, of the other leaseholder) and 11 Non-Members.

Note that currently, of the 119 apartments, approximately 10 are vacant.

She informed the meeting that she had a team waiting in the Library to take their subscriptions immediately after the end of the meeting. She would also be in Reception for the same purpose from 10.30.am this coming Saturday (14th).

8) **Motions proposed by the Committee**

There were 3 motions proposed by the Committee:

- (a) **We propose that we change Item 7(a) of The Constitution so that the requirement for future years regarding the date of the AGM will allow more flexibility in achieving the maximum committee attendance. This will delete “within two weeks of the anniversary of the previous Annual General Meeting” and replace it with “within one month of the anniversary of the previous Annual General Meeting”.**

Following an explanation of the reasons for this motion by Roger, it was formally proposed by Roger Pearce and seconded by Jenny Hydes. It was then approved by a show of hands, with one dissension from Adrian Hobbs, who queried that it might lead to slippage of the date towards October, etc. The Secretary explained that this had been well considered by the Committee, with the reassurance that the aim was to hold future meetings in September, but with more flexibility to ensure the maximum attendance of all committee members in the future.

- (b) **We propose that “the size of the Committee remains at 9 for the forthcoming association’s year”.**

Members were then asked to adopt the motion, proposed by Roger Pearce and seconded by Jenny Hydes, which was carried by a show of hands in favour nem con.

- (c) **We propose that “Membership Fees remain at £15 per full member”.**

Members were then asked to adopt the motion, proposed by Sam Dauncey and seconded by Carolyn Hill, which was carried by a show of hands in favour nem con.

9) **Motions proposed by Members**

None

10) **Election of Officers and Committee**

The Secretary drew attention to the list on the back of the Agenda and introduced the nine members, who had all been correctly proposed and seconded for the nine vacancies on the committee.

The new Committee was then approved en-bloc by a show of hands nem con.

11) **Any Other Business**

Jane Hemmingway queried the position concerning the installation of EV charging points, to which Gaye (who is on the Anchor Working Party) responded by saying that a company has been approved to take the matter forward. HL is top of the list and installation is projected for next Spring.

Rogert Pullen queried the current position concerning the provision of a generator to cover the “village” during power cuts, particularly as this affects the supply of water to our apartments. Gaye assured him that she would investigate this matter but stressed that we are top of the list for re-connection once the supply is restored. Keith Hall mentioned that he was pressing for an emergency power supply for our switchboard, as this would be the only means by which we could connect with the “outside world” during a power cut.

The Secretary then passed back control of the meeting to the newly elected Chair, Jenny Hydes.

As she was no longer a member of the committee, Jo Taylor asked the meeting to thank the HLRA Committee for the great work they do on behalf of the “village” and to show their appreciation by a round of applause.

There being no other business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.55.pm.