

Ditchling Village Association

AGM Minutes

Tue 29 October 2024 19:30

Ditchling Village Hall, Lewes Road



Agenda

Item	Notes
1	Adoption of AGM Minutes Meeting of 24 Oct 2023 - Agreed
2	Attended Catharine Robinson (DVA), Neil Iosson (DVA), Melissa Mathur (DVA), Lucie Broadbent-Smith (DVA), Pamela Roy-Jones (DVA, DHS), Victoria Ingham (Ditchling Village Hall), Chris Ames, Stephen Bevis (Monday Group), Margaret Bovill (RBL), Richard Stapleton (Ditchling Society), Briony Stapleton (Speedwatch), Rosemary Burns (WI), Jenny Barna (Parish Council, Speedwatch, Greener Hassocks & Ditchling), Mike Felton (Speedwatch), Kate O'Donnell, Nick Gallie, Hugh St John Apologies John Willis (DVA), Mary Holman (DVA), Keith Hine, Maralyn Hine, Malcolm Roberts, Inge Roberts, Liz Pope, David Tattersell, Wendy Standen, Anne Bridle, Wendy Barnaby, Brian Hudson, Eva Hudson, Karen Hollamby, Alex Kyriakidis, Tessa Horton,
3	Chair's Address Welcome and thank you all for attending this evening. Thank goodness, this year we were able to hold the new comers party and it went very well and I would like to thank the societies that attended, it really is a joint effort and I hope you have new members as that is what it is all about as well as welcoming new residents to the village. Thanks to Hannah Loram for arranging the coffee mornings, as you know they have been running for a number of years but like most things they are not as well attended as they used to be. I would like to thank all the societies for taking them on over the years but the committee is considering how we can rejuvenate them again to make them more interesting for the attendees. If you have any ideas then please let us know. Sadly the sports day had to be cancelled due to the weather and another date was arranged but this also was cancelled, but thanks to Hannah Tedman for always undertaking this wonderful village activity. How quickly the time goes, we had our wonderful fair again and what a fair it was. The rain and the wind in the morning was unbelievable! We were so close to cancelling it but luckily the weather changed and we were able to continue other than Harris's Fair which was such a shame. Thank you so much to the fair committee, they work so hard

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	and I believe that most of them have said they will continue for the next one! Thank goodness we are so very grateful to them. Next fair 20th June 2026. I just want to remind the societies of the website and would be grateful if they would keep their section up-to-date we are also considering revamping it so we will keep you in touch with that. The Christmas Sparkle competition is now open to all residents and shops. We really hope that it will make Ditchling Sparkle and the judging will be held on the 20th December. Not just windows but gardens and front of house! As always I would like to thank David in the Post Office for all his help that he gives to the village, but also other businesses for their contribution to the fair and for making it such a wonderful village to live in. Thanks again to the Committee – couldn't operate without you all but at this point I would like to say that Lucy has agreed to take over the Chair of the DVA if you are all in agreement! I am happy to co chair for a year, again if you are in agreement with this. I took this roll over in 2010 from Angela Craven and i was looking at the report I wrote in 2011 and it mentioned “What does the DVA do?” The Constitution clearly states what it does. It unites all who live in the Parish of Ditchling for the good of all. It promotes the welfare and wellbeing of all who live in the Parish of Ditchling It helps, supports and encourages each Council, society and club to fulfil its particular objects. What it does not do is to tell us HOW we fulfil these objectives. Well obviously I would like to think that the New Comers Part and the coffee mornings help towards uniting all who live in the parish of D. We support societies if they need a financial donation. But ‘promoting the welfare and wellbeing of all who live in the PoD? As everyone who lives in the parish are automatically members of the DVA I suppose it falls on all of us to do this. But do we? Well, the difference now is that that awful year of Covid really showed that this village does promote the welfare and wellbeing of all who live here. So I can retire knowing that this really is a remarkable village, as if i did not know this after living here for 48 years!

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	Thank you.
4	Treasurer's Report The accounts have been circulated to committee members for 2023. They are straightforward and require very little explanation. In 2024 we held the coffee mornings in the Ditchling Village Hall which we fund the hall costs (£528) and any donations go to the hosting society, our own event was not well attended so only raised £15 but others do fair better . We ran a second Christmas window competition judged by the DVA with prizes purchased from village businesses. No other hosted events were held as we had to cancel the newcomers party due to low numbers. Our website continues to be a focal point for Ditchling contacts and calendars please do use it to co-ordinate and publicise your events. In addition to hosting the above events we purchased a remembrance wreath and we gave mugs to the children of the village to mark the coronation of King Charles. We handed these out in person at the annual sports day. We also continue to offer grants to clubs and societies we provided £200 towards the administration of a cycle event requested by the Sussex Nomads. We provided £200 towards the school hedge replacement and a contribution to the new Morley Cup in memoriam of Dick Morley for the village sports . Further to the Accounts: We held the village Newcomers' Party in March 2024. We held the 2024 summer Ditchling Fair which made a profit of more than £5000 which provides us with reserves for future fair expenses and to support our diary of events. As of the 29th October 2024 we have reserves of £13,153.78 and £1,323.64 in our current account. Melissa Mathur

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	Ditchling Village Association (DVA)			
	Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023			
	Income		Expenditure	
	Prior Year	Year Ended 31 Dec 2023	Prior year	Year Ended 31 Dec 2023
	Events		Events	
	40 Coffee Mornings	15.20	291.50 Coffee Mornings	528.00
	14369.36 Summer Fair	0.00	9093.51 Summer Fair	0.00
	65.00 Fair stock income	0.00	314.50 New Comers Party	0.00
			60.50 AGM Venue Hire and expenses	74.98
			284.00 Xmas windows competition	190.00
	Other Income		Village Donations	
	0 Interest from Deposit account	53.74	208.00 Village Sports Day (Inc new Morely Cup)	429.00
			210.00 Sussex Nomads Donation	200.00
			0.00 Coronation mugs	1428.00
			Village School Hedge replacment	200.00
			17.00 Remembrance Parade	17.00
			Administration	
			152.00 Misc expenses	52.50
			145.00 Website Fee	145.00
	Deficit	3195.54	3698.35 Surplus	
	14474.36	68.94	68.94 10776.01	3264.48
	Reconciliation			
			Bank Balance as at 1st Jan 2023	3223.36
			Santander Deposit Bank Balance 1st Jan 2023	10005.17
			Deficit	-3195.54
				10032.99
	Represented by			
			Santander Current Account Bank Balance 1st Jan 2024	974.08
			Santander Deposit Bank Balance 1st Jan 2024	9058.91
			Cash	0.00
				10032.99
5	Election of Officers • Co-Chair • Vice Chair • Treasurer • Auditor • Secretary • Village Representatives • Executive Committee (i.e. officers, Fair Committee and chair, good neighbours)			
	Nomination: Victoria Ingham Seconded: Richard			

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	Votes: Unanimous
6	Reports from Societies (and Future Activities) 1. Beacon Parish (Written report) 2. Ditchling Society (Richard Stapleton). A summary of the current activities and focus of the society, especially about the work they are doing to support planning applications and enforcement. They are seeing new members as the average age of current members is quite advanced. 3. Ditchling Speedwatch Group (Richard Stapleton) a. The group have about 12 volunteers and monitor speed across the access roads to Ditchling. They have been effective at informing motorists of the risks and those reported to the police receive a written warning. b. Judy Moody-Stewart noted that the speed watch work has been effective at reducing speed 4. Ditchling Quakers (JMS) – a friendly new letter is placed in the post office that is free to collect. 5. Monday Group (Stephen Brearson) – summarised recent activity – expanding geographically – including working on Tuesdays! They are completing the board walks from Ditchling to Oldham Mill, each unit costs about £130 and 50 have been placed so far. They have raised money from local donations and sale of a calendar. They are looking at the local footpaths – especially the path between Ditchling and Keymer. They are having issues with funding support from West Sussex County Council. They are putting in more kissing gates – 3 were placed at the base of the Ditchling Beacon – this provides access. They are working with local trusts including Turner-Dumbrell Foundation. The group are grateful to both support and donations from Ditchling residents. 6. Horticultural Society (Pamela Roy-Jones) – “Our aim at the DHS is to encourage as many as possible to become part of our society, become involved in the healthy pastime of gardening and taking part in our shows. We continue to have a stable committee with three new members with talents to allow us to move forward and continue to be a progressive society. Be assured that we have also committed to retain and respect the many traditions attached to the Society. 2024 - well it's been a busy one. In June we had the Open Gardens. This was in support of St Peter and St James' Hospice There were 10 gardens open, all different types and all looking really special. This was extended to South View thanks to the roving bus leant by the Hospice, this area had lots of visitors We had over 460 visitors, an increase of about 15% on last year and who were delighted with the variation and quality, not to mention the delicious teas and cakes at some. Also in June was the National Garden Scheme: The NGS Ditchling Village Trail was a first for us and was very successful again bringing in lots of visitors, in excess of 400 which was excellent.

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	Working with our terrific team of DHS helpers and excellent support from both the Hospice and the NGS both days were both very worthwhile and successful Between both Open Gardens days this year we raised just under ~£11,500 going to both the Hospice and NGS health charities. <i>Ditchling Fair -June</i> Well that was a wet one but we persevered in the wind and pouring rain and raised over ~£500 <i>Beacon Parish Flower Festival at St Margaret's Church</i> The Horticultural Society contributed to this, helping to make the church look and smell beautiful. We also created a Potager arch on the outside of the West door <i>2024 Shows</i> We held our three shows -Spring, Summer and Autumn Between the three there were 141 Classes with 119 entrants totalling 685 entries and keeps on growing year on year. In addition to our regular entrants, we had new members showing and winning too. In July we had a group visit to Wisley which was decidedly a grand day out with a full bus which was very heartening. Everyone agreed that it was a lovely day out, So yes, it's been busy but a great year for the DHS. <i>New Appointments</i> We are delighted to have a new Membership Secretary Charlotte Graham who has done a great job already. As you know our lovely Martha who was our Queen of the Kettle passed away. Martha was a delight to have on the committee and we will miss her tremendously. We do have someone to step into Martha's shoes. We are now looking for a new Press and Communications person. This role is key in ensuring that we keep what we do in the public mind in Press, Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media platforms. The person will need also need to have creative skills to make the communications interesting and eye catching. <i>Allotments</i> It has been a difficult year at the allotments thanks to all the rain. Understandably this discouraged the owners from doing as much as usual. So maintenance required in some areas. There will be a change of Secretary with Caroline Senior stepping down. This will be taken over by Georgie Kent who has lots of energy and excellent communication skills. She is of course an allotment holder. We thank Caroline Senior for all the work she has done for us which is very much appreciate <i>Next Year-</i> The Show Schedules for 2025 are well under way the first Show being the Spring Show. These will be delivered up to the beginning of the year. Due to the new Tates card system you won't receive a Tates Card with your schedule. Our shows will

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	again be in March, June and September and if you haven't entered, please become a member and join in, it's great fun. <i>Other events</i> On the 8th June, Open Gardens once again in aid of St Peter and St James Hospice NGS at the end of August We will once again be part of National Garden scheme with a Ditchling Village Trail. There will be 6 gardens taking part which will be featured in the Yellow Book. In July, we are planning another visit to Wisley when up to 55 members can come along and enjoy free entry to Wisley Gardens. If you are a DHS member all you pay for is the bus and anything you buy whilst you are there. There will be more information coming on all of these events so please watch out for this. So fingers crossed for lots of sunny days. Website and Facebook page will keep you updated on what is happening so please keep an eye on these. We are also working on an Instagram account. Thank you to everyone who has supported us throughout the year" 7. Poppy Appeal – Margaret Bovill-Smith. This is the Report from the Ditchling & District Branch of The Royal British Legion. The Branch Committee has met regularly and held seven committee meetings during this year. We are grateful to the White Horse for allowing us to hold our meetings there. We organised the 80th D-Day Commemoration on 6th June at the Ditchling War Memorial as well as at Streat War Memorial. Our Vice President, Mrs Juliet Olsworth-Peter, JP DL laid the wreath at Streat, We were honoured that The Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Mr Andrew Blackman, attended our Commemoration in Ditchling and laid the wreath on behalf of HM King Charles. In addition we had a Branch Member whose father, who served with the Middlesex Regiment and was part of the landings, and his daughter laid a wreath in memory of him, Some of the children from St Margaret's Primary School also attended as well as many residents from the village. A D-Day Commemorative Church Service was held in St Margaret's on the 8th June. The Branch had a stall at Ditchling Fair with a game of find The Poppy. There was a cash prize, won by a local resident and a bottle of gin won by a visitor. We also helped with the flower festival in St Margaret's Church also held over the Fair weekend and we borrowed the Poppy Net from Hassocks WI. Remembrance Tide is with us once again. Poppy Boxes have been distributed to the shops and businesses in Ditchling as well as to our house to house collectors. As Keymer and Hassocks no longer have a Branch we have also distributed Poppy Boxes in the shops and businesses there too. This year we have a new initiative creating a Field of Remembrance in the northern triangle of the War Memorial ground. Leaflets about this have been distributed to household in Ditchling Village, Streat and Westmeston. Michael and Pam have been out on Saturdays promoting this. So far we have more than 50 crosses with names on. (If you haven't got yours yet there is still time – they are available in the Post Office).

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	We are grateful to the Ditchling Parish Council for adopting our Parade (as RBL regard all parades as Civic Events). This will start from St Margaret's School along the Lewes Road, up West Street to the War Memorial for the ceremonials and wreath laying and we will be accompanied by Burgess Hill Marching Youth band. We are delighted that the Mr Giles York, QPM and Deputy Lieutenant will be with us. We will also have two serving soldiers (who grew up in Ditchling and Westmeston) marching with us. Following on from the ceremonials at the War Memorial we move into St Margaret's Church for the Remembrance Service. Armistice Day – Monday 11th November there will be a brief service of Remembrance at the War Memorial beginning at 10.50 am Future plans: Next year is the 80th Anniversary VE Day and VJ Day. We are planning a VE Day celebratory tea – spam sandwiches etc in Westmeston Parish Hall on Sunday May 11th. Lots of flag waving and singing. To commemorate VJ Day in August, a more sombre occasion, together with Revd David Wallis we are planning an exhibition of photographs and memorabilia in St Margaret's Church. This concludes the Ditchling & District Branch Report Lest we Forget. 8. Strategic Gap Field (North) – Hugh St John – The field came up for sale in 2024. There was concern that the field would be developed. The land is 250m long, 50 m wide and was purchased for £130k – it is boggy and has been stripped of topsoil. It is important both for its own size and also for preventing access to adjacent fields. It was purchased by the Mayer family on the basis of putting the money up for repayment by the community if they wish to raise funds. There is a group that has formed of 12 volunteers – they have been seeking suggestions and advice on ways to use the land. Many of these are conservation based. There are currently pledges of £50-75k from local residents. The group is having an open drop-in meeting on Sat 9th November – there will be presentations and they are seeking pledges to raise the funds. The deadline for this will be the end of December. There has been support from the Friends of Ditchling which is a registered charity and has aligned interests and would make any donations charitable and attract tax benefits. 9. Ditchling Village Hall (Victoria Ingham) – there has been a programme of refurbishment 10. Ditchling Film Society (Neil Iosson) – the team are expanding the bar and re-introducing free tea, coffee and biscuits.
7	Dates of Future Events and Next Meetings • Christmas Sparkle – Judging will be on 22 December • Newcomer's Party: 2025 – Saturday 12 April 1830-2030
8	Any Other Business • There are plans for a memorial for Herbie Flowers to have a celebratory concert. • Rosemary Burns (WI) – coffee mornings – the majority of people attending are WI members and there are very few village residents attending. They have concerns about whether it is worthwhile and what the attendance. A need for rejuvenation was suggested – perhaps having an additional draw of a speaker or presentations. There was a discussion for ideas about addressing these

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	issues. There is a clash with the Monday Club having their monthly meetings on a Monday on the same. Lucy Broadbent-Smith is keen to look at these and explore more ideas. • Discussion about the Ditchling.com website and a refresh of its design to stimulate more engagement and support from the local societies. • Richard Stapleton proposed thanks to Catherine for her 14 years as chair.

END