

RINGSTEAD PROTECTION SOCIETY (RPS)
www.ringsteadprotectionsociety.org.uk

**Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting held at Shambles
Ringstead Bay on Sunday 30 August 2020 at 10.30am**

The Chairman, Nigel Williams (NW), welcomed members to the fourth meeting of the Society as a CIO and his first as Chairman. He reminded members of the objectives of the RPS: 'To protect, preserve and improve for the benefit of residents and general public the area and surrounds of Ringstead and its Bay. To provide for the enjoyment of the area, encourage appreciation of its tranquility and to care for its undeveloped character.' He thanked John Young again for his 12 years at the helm and members for putting their trust in him as John's successor. He said Ringstead was part of his DNA as his family had been connected with it since the 1920s and there was not much he would not do to try to preserve and protect it with the help of members. He reported the sad news of the deaths of Robert Armstrong from Wilde Acre and Dr Tony Keeble-Elliott who had been coming to Muscliff since the '30s. He offered their families our condolences.

An attendance register of those present was circulated for signatures.

1. Apologies: Julian Arkell; Sue Blane; Ros Hepple; Tom and Emma Shelford; Paul & Frances Cuss; Tim Williams; Toby Walker; Celia Hensman; Tom Arkell; Barbara and Nigel Hensman; Sally and Mike Howard-Tripp; Jonny and Julie Gibbs; Jenny and Eric Serjeant; Will Scott; Katie Scott; Ann Thomas; the young Youngs; Simon Walker; Tim Pratelli.

2. Minutes of the AGM 2019: These had been published online. NW asked that they be signed as a true record of what took place. This was proposed by Mike Carter, seconded by Sue Kirkpatrick and voted in favour of unanimously.

3. Matters Arising From the Minutes

NW said he proposed to deal with these by way of his Chairman's report.

He had met with the Estate's owner Johnnie Russell (JR):

- JR had no news of whether the vandalised parking metre in the National Trust (NT) Car Park was likely to be replaced.
- JR had no plans to instal electric car charging points in the Ringstead Car Park.
- Broadband main trenching work is nearly complete with the connection of some individual houses still to be done. There are already reports of really good speeds.
- Illegal parking had been an issue during lockdown, especially when Lulworth and Durdle Door were closed and Ringstead was discovered by many more people. The NT locked the gate beyond the caravan site which stopped cars parking in the field. The car park attendants had been closing the gate by the post box. Alfie Kirkpatrick said the shop had been doing a good job challenging people
- JR has let a contract for the repair of the road's potholes in September on his land including the deep dip at the top of the hill.
- A suggestion for a sign saying 'to the beach' by the slipway to save some of the foot traffic up and down in front of Over The Hills (OTH) was put to JR who said he would probably fence off the grass area there to encourage natural growth and save the cliff from further damage. He asked if RPS had any news on the sale of the property other than the sold sign outside it. NW did not.
- The rubbish situation was bad during lockdown but has improved. JR was asked about bins. He said the shop had one and he had no plans for more because

however many you provide; you always need more. He wanted to encourage people to take away their own rubbish.

- NW explained the emerging RPS policy for dealing with Planning Applications to JR who thanked those who had given individual support for his conversion of a WW2 bunker by Pitt Cottage to a two-bed holiday let.
- JR said he hoped he would be judged on his track record over the last 40 years and NW told members he felt RPS should be grateful for having had a benevolent landowner of the Ringstead Estate. Members agreed. NW was asked whether the same might be true of JR's children and he said it would be a good idea to involve them in RPS matters to demonstrate we had similar aims.

Other matters:

- NW attended the Osmington Mills Protection Group AGM, chaired by Jill Dunning and gave a brief update of the issues facing RPS. The Osmington Group was concerned about a planning application for Osmington Holidays application which has yet to be decided.
- The Ringstead Caravan Company at the Creek had had a planning application granted this year and NW asked Alastair Fisher (AF) to bring members up to date. AF said the situation was complicated as an 87% majority of shareholders was needed for anything to happen there but it needed development. The recent application had concerned the number of caravans permitted (reduced from 40 to 30) and the months of use (increased). AF said this decision was being judicially reviewed. Sue Kirkpatrick said people were anxious and needed to know what was happening. NW said the RPS future approach to planning applications would be discussed later in the meeting
- The website was up to date with minutes and reports. Members were encouraged to have a look and propose any new features. www.ringsteadprotectionsociety.org.uk

4. Report of the Society's Trustees

The Report was available on the website.

5. Statement of Accounts and Treasurer's Report

NW recorded the Trustees' gratitude to Rupert Edwards for auditing the accounts and to AF for compiling them. AF unveiled one of RPS's assets – a white board for displaying the accounts. He said there were no expenses last year but the white board would be a claim for 2021 as would be the fee for the domain name of the website. He talked members through the accounts that are available on the website and said that broadly they followed the pattern of the previous year.

6. Election of Trustees and Officers

NW said the current Trustees were Vicky Banham, Alastair Fisher, Lucy Kirkpatrick, Ian Scott, Nigel Williams and John Young. In accordance with the Society's Constitution, AF and NW retire from office by rotation but, being eligible, had offered themselves for re-election. He asked for a proposer for the motion that they be elected en-bloc and this was proposed by Alfie Kirkpatrick, seconded by Nick Willis, and approved unanimously. The election of AF & NW was proposed by Mike Carter, seconded by Al Thorpe and approved unanimously. The current RPS Officers Nigel Williams (Chairman), Vicky Banham (Secretary) and Alastair Fisher (Treasurer) all retire from office in accordance with the constitution but have offered themselves for reappointment. NW asked that the matter be dealt with by an en-bloc vote and this was proposed by Louise Young, seconded by Nick Willis and approved unanimously. Lydia Lebus proposed and Mike Carter seconded that they be elected and this was approved unanimously.

NW said the Trustees had discussed the reformation of a General Committee (GC) for the CIO with the aim of having a broader view to call on when required. At the 2018 AGM there had been a call for volunteers for this but none was forthcoming. As permitted, under the Constitution, the Trustees have invited a number of individuals to serve on the committee and they have agreed. They are Liz Carter, Mitch Charles, Will Edwards, Tim Pratelli, Louise Scott, Paul Thomas and Simon Walker. They will form the General Committee alongside the six Trustees. At the same time, the role of Watchdog to keep RPS informed of local issues, has been revived and will be filled by Ginny Rolls.

Sue Kirkpatrick asked about the role of the GC members, how it differed from ordinary membership and whether they had any decision-making powers. NW said they would be a sounding board for the Trustees on issues of importance. Ian Scott underlined the fact that Trustees had decision-making powers and the ability to call on a GC for a wider perspective was more democratic.

7. Planning

A number of planning applications for properties in Ringstead had been submitted recently and the Trustees felt it would be helpful to have a protocol for responding to them. IS was asked to explain the proposals for this. He reminded members of the RPS objectives and said recent exposure of Ringstead to a much wider audience would lead to greater demands for more visitor accommodation. Trustees felt members would want to be aware of any plans and to have the opportunity to comment. They were developing a policy and would discuss it at a meeting of the new General Committee straight after the AGM.

Alfie Kirkpatrick asked about the RPS role in reacting to developments that had gone ahead without permission being sought when it should have been. NW said individuals could report such breaches in confidence to the local authority planners and the GC would discuss what its policy should be on this when it met.

8. Dorset Council Beach Management Plan- report

AF and NW met Jurassic Coast Trust (JCT) official Sam Scrivens to seek support for the delay of further erosion of the cliff face but he said the Trust was keen to allow natural erosion to occur so new fossils come to light. JY, IS and NW met Dorset Council engineers in August to discuss the latest iteration of the Beach Management Plan and walk the beach with them.

JY reminded members of the history of the RPS involvement with the Beach Management schemes and how money had been promised for maintenance but had not been forthcoming. A recent report from the old West Dorset District Council stated there was no need to do anything more as the cliff was holding but some action was taken after the 2014 storms. Local knowledge disputes the findings on erosion e.g. the fact that IS has had to move and adapt his boat winch operations several times demonstrates how much of the cliff there is disappearing. An independent consultant advised the only way to protect the cliff would be to install rock armour. The council has said it would not have the £3M funding to do that but could be persuaded not to stand in the way of the RPS if it wanted to do it. JY has costed a possible proposal at £1.5m. NW asked members if they knew of any possible sources of funding for such a scheme – specifically from government departments and if anyone had a potential contact, however tenuous, to let him know so that the RPS could follow it up.. He was asked how successful it would be and how far it would extend. JY repeated that the rate of erosion was clearly greater than acknowledged by the authorities. Louise Scott asked whether the RPS could raise money for the scheme and was told it could. Alfie Kirkpatrick said fossil hunters were exacerbating the situation by removing material and this was illegal. It was suggested a sign to that effect be put up at the shop. Louise Young suggested writing to the president of the JCT for support to see that the existing management scheme was honoured. NW said the RPS would investigate funding and talk to JR and the relevant bodies.

9. Any other business.

Derek Thomas reported that the Highways Authority had been asked to look at a priority system for the narrow stretch of road through Upton. Freda Fisher asked whether traffic lights could be installed at the pinch point but NW said it was highly unlikely that this would be considered by DC Highways as there had been no fatal accidents.

Neville Grant said he thought the requirement to notify the secretary of an item of AOB could put people off and Sue Kirkpatrick said there was misunderstanding over that requirement. NW said he was very happy to take any questions but might not be able to answer some adequately without prior notice for research which has been the purpose of asking for advance warning of AOB matters.

Neville asked whether the NT could be persuaded to install toilets in its car park as people were using the hedge. There were incidents of overnight camping there. Neville was asked to draft a letter which the RPS could consider for sending to the NT.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11.55.