

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Hythe Green Preservation Society

28 July 2023, 7pm



1) Welcome and Introductions

Chair Richard Bateman thanked all who had come to the Annual General Meeting

2) Apologies: Christine Smith, Di Hancock, Peter Knight, Joan Knight, Celia German, Juliette Metcalfe, Betty Garfield.

3) Chairs Report

Richard Bateman reported on the HGPS activities in the last year.

- The trees in the Wood on Hythe Green are doing well. Thanks to Wooding's they have been watered which enabled the trees to survive the hot summer of 2022; Geoff and Richard continue to water them.
- HGPS is taking active steps to secure its own water supply for the Green.
- In addition to the first planting, Kent Men of the Trees supplied a further 50 mirabelle trees which we planted. 49 continue to flourish.
- Another project is an obelisk/sundial to be located at the centre of the labyrinth; we are awaiting planning permission from Folkestone and Hythe District Council.
- HGPS has continued to carry out maintenance of the boundaries and has purchased bluebells seeds for the woodland walk.
- We now have two benches thanks to generous sponsors; we welcome any enquiries about sponsoring more benches in the future.
- Hythe Town Council have given active practical support.
- We have good communications with the District Council grasscutters and talk to them about leaving certain areas uncut.
- Aspirations for the future include a drinking fountain near the play area.

4) Treasurer's Report

Geoff German gave a report on finances of HGPS.

- Geoff circulated a financial report for 2022/23 showing the income and expenditure. Current balance £2,446.43. Geoff will be glad to give any further details on enquiry.
- HGPS will be managing the Boot Fair on 20th August to raise funds.
- We have 37 subscribed members (usual membership 30-40).
- Thanks to Cllr Stephen Bailey who has given hours of practical and technical support.
- Hythe Town Council has formed Hythe Green Working Group which shows the Town Council's active engagement in the Green.

5) Election of new officers

It was unanimously agreed to keep the current committee: Chair Richard Bateman; Vice-Chair/Treasurer Geoff German; Membership Secretary Celia German; Secretary Theresa Bateman.

6) Questions from the floor.

1) Do events that take place on the Green pay towards damage done to the Green?

Response: HGPS has worked with Hythe Town Council to create a new scale of deposits for events. A recent meeting of the Hythe Green Working Group proposed having a limit on the size of axles in vehicles used for events. HGPS is keen for checks after events and robust charges when damage is caused. We welcome activities on the Green but want to protect it as the shingle surface is fragile.

2) Is there any action to prevent damage to the Green by the incursion of trespassers?

Response: Costs of damage by trespassers are not recoverable if they are of no fixed address. There was a recent traffic accident which damaged fencing posts near Portland Road; HGPS worked with Hythe Town Council to make a temporary repair until a contractor can repair the fence – costs should be recoverable for this. HGPS has increased security by installing sentinel posts and upgrading security of Boundary Road area. HGPS aims to improve deterrents to incursions eg there is a need to identify vulnerable stretches and ensure there is a double row of barriers.

3) Is there any progress on the website management?

Response: The website is not a priority for spending of the Green's funds. However HGPS would welcome anyone who wants to take the development on.

4) Does the Fields in Trust organisation have any oversight of the management of the Green?

Response: Fields in Trust do not require permission and do not need to be informed. However if there is a need they will provide a legal support to protect the Green.

5) Is there any possibility of having a wild meadow section?

Response: HGPS speaks with the grass cutters and Hythe Town Council are open to discussion about keeping areas free. Formally defined areas could be proposed to the Plans and Works Committee. A possible plan would be to let grass grow in vulnerable areas. We could do a consultation on creating wild areas in the sections not used as a community amenity space. Another plan could be to identify and designate certain areas in a repair plan (eg importing tons of topsoil and grass seed).

7) At 7.30pm the meeting closed.