



## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at Patching Lodge, Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Members present:** Chris Dutton (chair), Colin Bennett, Connie French, Iris Keppler, Jacqui Campbell, Paul Gillett, Ruby Woolven, Sue Vivian, Sam Woods, Louise Eaton.

**Volunteers present:** Andrea Nonce, Jonathan Dutton (minutes), Ray Woolven, Rosie Collins, Steve Evans, Sue Joseph, Pauline Moore, Carl Boardman.

**Also present:** Darren Luckhurst.

**Apologies for absence:** Valerie Mainstone, Keith Turner, Dorothy Whatman, Shirley West, Chris Dunne, Maria Fernandez, Martin French

- 1. Introduction:** Chris welcomed everyone. She gave the sad news that Dorothy DuBoisson had died during the week. Connie, who said she had known Dorothy through various different organisations for 30 years, paid tribute to a person who had made a massive contribution through her work at Bletchley Park. Despite suffering a leg injury which affected her mobility, and her failing eyesight she kept control of her life and remained an active member of all the groups she was part of. Connie expressed the view of everyone saying that she would be sadly missed.

**2. Minutes of last meeting** dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2012 were read and agreed.

**3. Matters Arising**

Paul reported that Christine Tester has retired from ESAB. Her replacement, Sue Fever, was enthusiastic about City Synergy.

In reply to a question from Colin, Sam said that Brighton VIPs were getting new members and met monthly to discuss issues affecting people with sight loss, and they were planning their first activity.

**4. Chair's Report**

Chris mentioned the new arrangement for committee meetings which she said made better use of members' and volunteers' time. She said that after 10 years on the committee she had decided to withdraw. She expressed gratitude to Paul, Christina and Valerie for their unfailing support, and to Iris and other committee members, as well as to the volunteers. Chris said she was proud to have been a part of the achievements of City Synergy in their first 10 years.

Sue Vivian proposed a vote of thanks to Chris.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

Iris presented a report showing that during 2012 City Synergy had secured a grant of £1,500 from Brighton Lions. We had also received donations of £190 from Rosie's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday party. Activities had cost £1,432 during the year to which members and volunteers had contributed £750. The group was carrying forward £2,500 to the budget for 2013.

The budget for 2013 was approved. We are awaiting the outcome of a further bid to the Sussex Community Fund.

In response to a question from Sue Joseph, Iris said that the information on activities showed the cost and contributions received for each activity and demonstrated that varying levels of subsidy had been applied to activities in order to make them accessible to all members. Overall the subsidy on activities was approximately 50% which is a guide that the committee has set itself when organising events.

## **6. Election of Officers**

Jonathan took the chair for this part of the meeting. The meeting was reminded that only members could nominate, second and vote. Jonathan confirmed with Paul a proposal that the AGM should elect the committee without assigning officer roles, and that the committee should agree these at their first meeting. Chris seconded this proposal and it was agreed by the members.

The following people were elected to the committee:

Name	Proposed	Seconded
Iris Keppler	Connie French	Chris Dutton
Paul Gillett	Connie French	Chris Dutton
Ruby Woolvern	Connie French	Chris Dutton
Sam Woods	Jacqui Campbell	Ruby Woolvern
Louise Eaton	Paul Gillett	Iris Keppler

The meeting was handed to Paul to chair on behalf of the new committee.

## **7. Activities**

**7.1 Looking Back:** Paul listed the 32 activities that City Synergy had organised in 2012 and invited comments. Particularly noted were the Suffragette Play, Lilac Lark, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust visit, Birdman at Worthing and visit to Shoreham Lifeboats.

It was noted that many of the activities in the past year had been suggested at the previous AGM.

Connie said that it had been a wonderful programme of events, and that it had been a real pleasure to be involved. She particularly enjoyed train journeys which she can no longer manage on her own.

Colin said that he had many photos of activities on Flickr and he could provide the link for anyone interested.

Paul concluded by thanking the volunteers.

**7.2 Activities: Looking ahead:** Jonathan presented a list of possible future activities and invited members and volunteers to vote on those they were interested in. The results are included below as an appendix to the minutes.

It was noted:

- ✧ The Spanish tapas restaurant Bellota and the Thai restaurant in Middle Street were particularly recommended.
- ✧ Paul said that when recommending a restaurant people should be mindful of accessibility including toilets, steps, lighting etc. .
- ✧ Sue Vivian offered to help split restaurant bills.

- ✧ Jonathan reminded members and volunteers of the need to let the event organiser know in good time if they are attending.
- ✧ Most volunteers and members attending the AGM were not restricted to evening or weekend activities only, and for some afternoon activities made access easier.
- ✧ Colin advised that [www.yourlocalcinema.com](http://www.yourlocalcinema.com) lists film showings with audio description.
- ✧ Carl said that Duke of Yorks now has a screen at the Komedia (action: to check disabled access).
- ✧ Iris said that members can apply for Cinema Exhibitors Association (CEA) cards to get free access for carers.
- ✧ For a visit to Pulborough Wildfowl Trust, members need to be advised that significant walking distances on muddy paths could be involved, and that the emphasis is on long distance observation and hearing wildfowl rather than having close-up views.
- ✧ Coultshaw Beam Pump could be linked with another activity, perhaps a return to Singleton.
- ✧ Woods Mills is best in April/May and could be linked with afternoon tea.
- ✧ Pauline has spoken to Roy Hutchins who has funding for workshops with groups such as City Synergy to develop poetry projects. She has passed details to Jonathan.
- ✧ Paul mentioned an adapted bowling offered for people with sight loss.

Other ideas mentioned:

- ✧ Swimming
- ✧ Creative Writing

- ✧ Music Concert (specifically hoping to organise a concert by Chris Dunne's group Boondock Band).

## 8. Any other business:

**8.1 Dear Roger:** Colin proposed that City Synergy should write a letter of appreciation to Roger French of Brighton and Hove Buses the consideration and commitment of the company and their staff to passengers with sight loss. It was noted that Roger French is retiring, and it was agreed to write to Roger and to his successor expressing thanks.

**8.2 Audio History of City Synergy:** A letter was read from Valerie expressing her regret at missing the AGM, her sadness at the death of Dorothy, and asking the group to commit to capturing oral memories of the members. It was agreed to use the booking 23rd February at Patching Lodge to discuss starting an oral history of City Synergy and an archive of photos and memorabilia.

**9 Proposed date of next meeting** – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

## APPENDIX

### Voting for activities

	Members	Volunteers
Meals out	7	6
Great Dixter Garden visit	7	8
Bungee Jumping	1	1
Pantomime	2	4
Theatre	8	8
Sky Diving	1	1
Chichester Festival Theatre	8	8

(Summer Season)		
Crafts: sewing, knitting etc	1	5
Amex Stadium tour	5	6
Social evenings: quiz/games etc	7	6
Christmas Meal at St Dunstans	8	7
Films	4	8
Pulborough Wildfowl Trust	7	7
Chocolate Tasting	5	5
Arundel Castle	8	8
Amberley Chalk Pits	5	6
Coulteshaw Beam Pump	5	6
Wood Mills Wildlife Sanctuary	7	9
Strictly City Synergy	6	4
Poetry/Creative Writing	3	5
Sea Trip from the Marina	7	8
Bowling	3	5