

Minutes of the Milford Area Preservation Group AGM

Thursday 25th April 2024 at the Bourne Community Farm

1. Welcome: The Chair, David Lovibond (DL) welcomed all attendees as well as Councillors Nick Baker and Charles McGrath, MP John Glen and David Burton of the Devenish Bradshaw Trust.
2. Apologies: apologise received from Vanessa Coryndon, Ian Ingrey-Counter and Jan Lockett.
3. 2023 AGM Minutes: Approval of the minutes for Milford Area Preservation Group's last AGM in 2023 was proposed by Laura Jones and seconded by Peter Hicks.
4. Chair's Opening Remarks

Committee members were thanked for their hard work in making MAPG's events and activities of the past year such a success. Flooding, parking and potholes continue to be issues of concern locally and DL receives a lot of contact about these problems. MAPG does what it can but we are not councillors. Apart from Charles McGrath and Laura Jones, the local councillors are not visible in the area and residents continue to be unaware of who they are. MAPG's application to become a charity was turned down mostly because we are a residents' association rather than a group offering charitable opportunities. Salisbury City Council (SCC) has recently informed us that it is Godolphin School, not SCC who owns the land we work on in Milford Hollow. As yet our rights are not clear, but we remain optimistic that our work there can continue. DL went on to explain that the overarching aim of MAPG is to preserve and restore the traditions, culture and heritage of our area and England.

5. Treasurer's Report: Louise Gay

Louise distributed copies of the accounts for the previous year up to 31st December 2023. These accounts only cover 11 months as we have changed our financial year from the end of January to the end of the calendar year. The account has now been moved to a Lloyds Business account. Our overall balance is just over £15,000, £10,000 of which is now in a deposit account which will generate interest in July. A member questioned the amount under 'miscellaneous' and LG explained that this represents funds spent on equipment used for activities such as litter picking and clearance of the river. It was agreed that in future this sort of expenditure could be listed under a separate heading such as 'Equipment'.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed Andy Howard and seconded by John Perry..

6. Membership: Barbara Lovibond

Membership of MAPG now stands at 322 households, 16 more than last year. This number takes into consideration members who have moved, decided they no longer wish to pay or have passed away. We have gained several new members in Manor Road and Millbrook, areas where we have extended our litter picks and leaflet drops to. Those present were thanked for their continuing support. We have a growing database of contacts who we email with news of events and volunteer days. Members can contact Barbara to add their details. We comply with GDPR.

7. Flood Warden: Andy Howard

The beginning of this year has seen a high level of rain causing extensive flooding on the roads and in fields. However, the water meadows are doing their job and the Salisbury- wide Area Wardens, led by Sven Hocking, are in contact and share information effectively. Road closure due to flooding has proved a controversial area as it is difficult to completely close a flooded road due to necessary access for residents. It can only be implemented by the police. Fallen trees disrupting the flow of the rivers have impacted the effects of heavy rainfall. The River Park Scheme is an excellent way of mitigating this. SCC takes the issue of flooding seriously but there remains a gap between volunteer flood wardens and emergency services; the former have very few powers and the latter are only able to provide assistance if there is a threat to life. The Environment Agency Website and The Community Emergency Volunteer Network were highlighted by both John Glen and Nick Baker as examples of self-help. Commenting about the Environment Agency, John Glen cited the cost and the lack of hierarchy of need as problems.

8. Speed Watch: Peter Hicks

The two small teams of four members who have spent a total of 50 hours monitoring Milford Mill Road were thanked. The weather and flooding have recently curtailed activities. 20 mph signs have now been installed, covering both directions along the road. Although the teams could monitor traffic in both directions, vehicles approaching Salisbury from the bridge do not tend to have time to build up speed. The focus therefore will remain on traffic moving along Milford Mill Road heading from Salisbury. 9,700 vehicles were monitored this year. Of those, 587 were speeding. 449 received letters from the police. 372 were first time offenders, 39 second time, and 10 third. Some vehicles cannot be traced. Speed watch will continue but physical barriers to speeding remain the only truly effective way of controlling the speed of traffic in this area.

9. Litter Pick: Julia Eastaugh

Volunteers were thanked. The increase in volunteers is gratifying – 30 at one litter picks. The amount of litter is depressing – unfortunately habits are not changing. MacDonald's promises of help have come to nothing. Concerns were raised about litter resulting from the proposed drive through café planned for the new Asda. Our next litter pick will be on Sunday 21 July at 11.00 am. DL thanked Julia for all her hard work in organising this highly successful activity.

10. Fundraising: Laura Jones.

Our events of last year were well attended with over 50 people at both the Quiz Evening and the Cheese and Wine Evening. Both events were very enjoyable as was the July Garden Party, despite the terrible weather – 37 people enjoyed canapes and scones in Nick and Susie's home in Riverbourne Road. The Walk-Through Time in the Cathedral Close was equally successful with a turnout of 27. The forthcoming events of this year: Wisley Gardens (6th July), Walk Through Time: 4 (13th July), Stourhead (12th October) and the Quiz Evening (23rd November) were all described by Laura. DL thanked Laura for the success of all events and commended her on her excellent singing at the Cheese and Wine event.

11. Milford Hollow: Barbara Lovibond

Money from fundraising events has been put to good use in the purchase of a composter, as well as various other saplings and plants. We are now into the third year of work in the Hollow and many plants are becoming well-established. Cow Parsley is regularly removed from the edges of the paths as well as other areas where new plantings have been introduced. A meeting has taken place with Godolphin's bursar who was complimentary about the work carried out and encouraging about our future work in the Hollow. Japanese Knotweed has recently been discovered in the Hollow. Godolphin's groundsman will treat it with chemicals to control its spread. None of it can be removed from the site but is not poisonous and does not present any danger to passers-by. Volunteers were thanked for their hard work and donations of plants, bulbs and seeds. DL thanked Tony Goddard in particular for his valuable help.

12. Election of Committee Members

DL stated that being a committee member meant full commitment from each member. Jim Boyers has recently joined the committee. All 11 members are willing to stand again. An acceptance of the committee was proposed by Andy Howard and seconded by John Perry. DL thanked John Perry for his sterling work as auditor of our accounts and Louise Gay commented how helpful John had been in assisting her as Treasurer. John is happy to continue as auditor. Proposed by DL and seconded by Louise Gay

13. Addresses from Councillors

Nick Baker (Chair of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council): Those present were invited to attend the Laverstock and Ford Parish Council Annual Meeting on 20th May. There is a vacancy for a parish councillor in Laverstock.

Charles McGrath (Milford and SCC Councillor): Council Highways say that potholes will be filled and part of Rampart Road will be resurfaced. MAPG has pressed Wiltshire Council to get something done about flooding on Milford Mill Road. The culvert which was dug out to ameliorate the flooding situation was a temporary measure. Further work will be carried out in June/early July. These measures will mitigate the flooding rather than solving it completely – this cannot be done. National Highways are to invest £20m to improve obstruction on the A36. Councillors will have sight of these plans in June. Plans for construction of Asda on London Road have been approved. Should be complete by the end of 2025. This might draw some traffic away from Milford Mill Road.

Talk by David Burton from the Devenish Bradshaw Trust.