

Minutes of the Milford Area Preservation Group AGM

Wednesday 16th April 2025 at the Laverstock and Ford Village Hall

1. Welcome: The Chair, David Lovibond (DL) welcomed all attendees.

2. Apologies: apologies were received from John Glen MP, Jacqui Exley, Melodie and Nigel Brookes, Jan and Reg Lockett.

3. 2024 AGM Minutes: Approval of the minutes for Milford Area Preservation Group's last AGM in 2024 was proposed by Peter Hicks and seconded by Andy Howard. Those present voted in favour of the minutes being a true and accurate account of the meeting.

4. Chair's Opening Remarks

The annual Milfordian has been replaced by three newsletters. A book, 'The Best of Milford' has also been produced. This is a collection of local archaeological and historical walks, ghostly stories, pictures of Old Milford and articles of local interest.

MAPG has been concerned for some time about the amount of local traffic and the condition of the roads, particularly along Manor Farm Road and Milford Mill Road. A survey with several suggestions for mitigating the effects of this increase in traffic was sent out to 500 homes by the MAPG. The results were presented to a joint meeting of the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Area Boards in December. Our suggestions were mostly turned down and it was decided that another traffic survey should take place. Cllr. Charles McGrath reported that this survey took place in February, but results would not be available until after the election on 1st May.

The Chair went on to say that the invisibility of most Milford Councillors meant that many residents of Milford approach MAPG with council-related issues. The Chair commented that if the right members are elected to Salisbury City Council and to Wiltshire Unitary, this might change.

Local Action Days have included work on the River Bourne expertly led by Andy Howard, work in Milford Hollow led by Barbara Lovibond, and a number of very successful litter picks organised by Julie Eastaugh.

5. Retiring Councillors. The Chair praised and thanked local councillors Charles McGrath and Ian McLellan who are both retiring. Members present showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

6. The Constitution: Peter Hicks explained that a new constitution had been drawn up in anticipation of MAPG becoming a charity. Because this did not happen, the constitution needed to be revised. Copies of a new draft had been placed on the website and were also available in hard copy at the meeting. All references to trustees and to a charity have been removed and the area covered by MAPG has been made clearer with streets being named. A 'member' is now defined as all adult members of a household in the area. As MAPG is an unincorporated association, an accountant as an auditor is not a requirement. It has been made clear that subs are voluntary and if a household does not pay, they are still able to be members.

If MAPG closes, there would be a vote at its last meeting to decide where the funds would be allocated. An MAPG member, Paul Horsefield, then made a few suggestions which will be incorporated into the final draft of the constitution. Charles McGrath suggested that those living outside the area and wanting to join MAPG could be honorary members.

Acceptance of the constitution as amended was proposed by Laura Jones, seconded by Charles McGrath and voted in by a show of hands.

7. Treasurer's Report: Louise Gay

The end of year balance sheet had been made available on the website with hard copies distributed during the meeting. The treasurer reminded members that our financial year now runs from January to December. The balance sheet includes a donation of £500 to the Laverstock Village Hall. The auditor, John Perry, was thanked by the treasurer for his invaluable assistance. Mel Green asked if we could do more with our funds and the Chair explained that MAPG had been set up originally to protect local land from development. In order to do this, a 'fighting fund' must be maintained.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Carol Taylor, seconded by Jo Boyers and approved by the members present by a show of hands.

The Chair thanked Louise Gay for all her hard work. John Perry was also thanked for his sterling work as our auditor. John agreed to stand again as honorary auditor. Acceptance was proposed by David Lovibond and seconded by Peter Hicks.

8. Fundraising Report: Laura Jones.

Laura told the AGM that she had now been the group's fundraiser for three years, and during that time has greatly appreciated the help of other committee members. Our trips this year have been to Exbury gardens in March, RHS Wisley in July and Stourhead in October. The trips have been very successful with the minibus filled each time. In November we had 82 people at our annual quiz night which was a fantastic event and will be repeated in November. There is to be a scaling back of events this year as each one involves a tremendous amount of work. However, we are running a trip to Hampton Court Garden Festival in July. This outing is now fully booked. The Quiz Night will be on 22nd November – again, we will donate £500 to the Village Hall funds. A member asked whether there were any plans for another local garden party and Laura explained that a venue for this is problematic but if any members would like to offer the use of their own garden, we could certainly organise this.

9. Speedwatch Report: Peter Hicks

Speedwatch has been running for several years with varying degrees of success. In the last year there has been a reduction in the speed of traffic due to parked cars on Milford Mill Road. The number of vehicles reported to the police has decreased slightly. Peter explained that offenders receive a letter from the police, and those travelling at 30 mph and over have a police visit. Penny Perry and Jenny May were thanked for their hard work and dedication in conducting speedwatch on a weekly basis. MAPG will review whether it is worth continuing speedwatch as it is a lot of work and is not necessarily efficacious. It was suggested by Paul Horsfield that it could be reduced to just once a month.

10. The Website and Milford Hollow: Barbara Lovibond

Members were encouraged to visit the website www.milfordpreservationgroup.com as there is a lot of information about Milford on there. The 'What's New' page is particularly useful for information about upcoming events and action days.

As mentioned last year, Godolphin/United Learning own Milford Hollow and have continued to be supportive of our work there. MAPG took part in their 'Volunteer Day' in July 2024 supervising a group of girls gardening in the Hollow, and then litter picking in the afternoon. In January, Godolphin's groundsman was quick to act when a tree was discovered to be leaning dangerously over the path. Within less than 24-hours it was felled

and the area cleared. MAPG has planted a crab apple tree in its place. There have been some problems in the Hollow with two holly trees being vandalised and a supermarket trolley being dumped. Members were asked to be vigilant and report any problems to MAPG. There was an action day of weeding and planting in March and volunteers were thanked for their hard work. Cecilia Marshall was thanked for her donations of plants and gardening expertise.

11. Election of Officers

The Chair emphasised the point that all members of the committee had working roles. He thanked all members individually for their hard work and dedication. Two members of the committee have left this year, and Charles McGrath no longer wishes to stand. There are therefore vacancies and members present were encouraged to let the committee know if they are interested in joining. All current members of the committee are willing to stand again. Re-election was proposed by Peter Hicks, seconded by Laura Jones and voted in favour by a show of hands.

12. AOB

The Chair encouraged members to buy a copy of 'The Best of Milford' if they hadn't already done so.

Louise Gay warned members about the rapid growth of hemlock in the area and the dangers that this poisonous plant presents. Barbara Lovibond to place an article on the website.

The guest speaker, Dr Phil Harding of Time Watch and of Wessex Archaeology was introduced and presented a fascinating talk about the archaeology of Milford Hill.