



Annual Review 2014-15

THE MOSELEY SOCIETY

Caring for an historic area of Birmingham

Charity no. 512211

Co-Chairs' Report (Helen Minovi and Geoff Rees)

In last year's review, we made a pledge to continue to participate in and support the many worthwhile activities in Moseley, which enrich the life of our community (see Secretary's Report). To consolidate this aim and to improve the governance of the Moseley Society, we propose to streamline the Committee, which would consist of the following positions:

Chair; Vice Chair or Co-chair; Secretary; Treasurer together with the Chairperson for each of the following sub-committees:

1. Planning & Licensing;
 2. Communications, Marketing, & Membership;
 3. Programme;
 4. Dovecote & Icehouse;
 5. Moseley History
- plus two other members without portfolio.

The Committee of eleven members would be Trustees of the Charity. Each sub-committee would consist of about five people. Where appropriate some Committee members would be part of the sub-groups, but mainly we hope to recruit interested volunteers from the general membership. The groups would meet as and when required and each would submit a report to the main Committee. Please let us know if you'd like to be part of one of the sub-committees.

Through the work of the Communications, Marketing & Membership Group we have continued our effort to raise the profile and encourage more people to join us.

Fiona Adams, our most diligent secretary, has increased her activities and produces regular emailed updates about matters concerning or of interest to Moseley residents.

This year three of our Committee stalwarts are leaving to pursue activities in other areas. They will be greatly missed, but thankfully are remaining members of the Society, and will continue to give Moseley excellent support. Our sincere thanks go to Anna Williams, who is stepping down as treasurer; to John Rouse who has been part of several key initiatives;

and to Rosemary Turner, who has devoted much time and expertise to the dovecote garden. Jean Gilkison leaves the Planning and Licensing Group, having become Co-Chair of Moseley in Bloom but will remain as a Committee member. Jean has been leading the Society's response to the never ending job of monitoring planning applications and we are extremely grateful to her for the efficient way she has done this.

Secretary's Report (Fiona Adams)



At the Moseley Festival street fair in July we started collecting signatures on two petitions about buses – one to try to improve the No 1 service and another seeking a new bus service direct to the University and QE hospital site. Neither petition has received a positive response but we continue to seek improvements working with the local bus users group, co-ordinated by Cllr. Claire Spencer.

Last year the report on the car park featured one of the monstrous heaps of cardboard dumped beside the huge paper bank. The removal of all recycling banks from the car park has made a noticeable improvement, as has the decision by Moseley in Bloom to intersperse monthly clean-ups with ours, so the area is now cared for twice a month.

The car park is once again becoming a haunt for street drinkers. Funding for the Moseley Community Alcohol Partnership finished just as police resources are being reduced. We have to

wait to see if the services due to be offered by Crime Reduction Initiatives, a national organisation which supplies alcohol and drug treatment services, will fill the gaps left by the local organisations that worked with the Partnership.

Joy's Wood, planted in the 1980s on land between Moseley Bog and Yardley Wood Road is so named to honour the inspirational work of the late Joy Fifer to 'Save the Bog'. The deterioration of signage due to natural ageing and vandalism led the indefatigable Michael Sheehan to design and make new posts to withstand the worst people or weather could do. The Society was glad to help raise funds for the post near Joy's Wood which was unveiled by Joy's husband Alan Fifer in November.



The Moseley Society takes an active part in the Greener, Cleaner, Safer Environment Group, which continues to take an interest in promoting a litter strategy for the Ward. The introduction of wheelie bins has reduced litter and we hope and expect to hear that the tonnage offered for recycling has increased.

By this time next year we hope that the management of Highbury Trust will have changed, including an open recruitment process to appoint an independent chair. There have been two meetings this year to consider the wonderful assets of the Highbury / Holders Lane / Cannon Hill Park areas. How to use them to create an income sufficient for their upkeep will be challenging.

Reductions in local authority budgets are having wide-ranging effects in our area and leading to attempts to find other ways to solve problems, including the use of social media. So I have learned to Tweet, on my own account. But it's as hard to convey much in 140 characters, as it is to rely on social enterprise and volunteers to fill the gaps left when public services are reduced. However Tweeting has

produced at least one tangible result as it helped identify and return a set of keys that had been lost by one of our members during a car park clean-up.

Treasurer's Report (Anna Williams)

Unrestricted reserves at 31 December 2014 have grown to £6,262 (2013 - £4,667). The restricted fund relating to the Local History Archive Project and other projects is now £1,668 (31 December 2013 - £2,005) giving total reserves of £7,930 (2013 - £6,672).

The Society's total income in 2014 was £5,525. Grants were made to the Moseley Christmas Lights and towards the costs of the new post for Joy's Wood. The Local History funds are all managed by The Society. We remain grateful to Moseley Community Development Trust for having operated the Heritage Lottery Fund grant in order to employ local historians.

Membership

(Fiona Adams and Geoff Williams)

During 2014 memberships continued to be recorded by us both but from January 2015 only the database devised and maintained by Geoff Williams is being kept up to date by him. Nearly half of our members have set up standing orders to pay their subscriptions, which greatly reduces the time it takes to update the records. In 2014 we logged 300 memberships including 30 new members.

Programme

(Helen Minovi, Robert Orme, John Underwood)

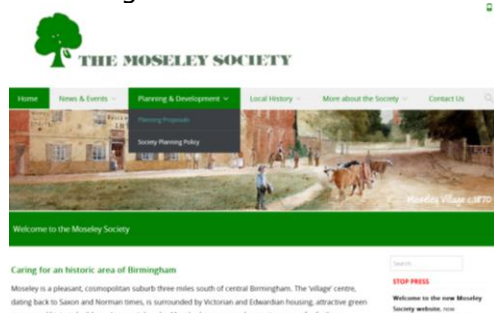
The Moseley Society and the History Group joined forces for the current programme, organising three talks each. In addition the History Group held their monthly Tuesday evening meetings and we also had our traditional annual tough quiz. Most of the talks had a local connection, although Graham Stroud took us to Europe with his illuminating talk on the EU, and we went into Space with Emeritus Professor of Space Research Peter Willmore presiding over our second "Tea and conversation" afternoon.

We are very grateful to all our speakers for entertaining and educating us with their talks of such high quality, and to our members who provide such a good audience. We would encourage more people to come along and enjoy our meetings, which also provide an opportunity to meet other members.

Communications, Marketing & Membership

(Fiona Adams, Mike Marlow, Helen Minovi, John Rouse and Sally Wright)

The group has continued to bring the Society up to date with a re-launch of the website. Throughout the year, Mike Marlow has been maintaining the old site and working with the History Group to incorporate their website. With hard work from Ray Tier of the History Group and John Elkington, the site's original designer, the new Moseley Society website is up and running. There is still work to be done.



<http://moseley-society.org.uk/>

The Newsletter continues to appear every four months and members are regularly up-dated with local news via emails from Fiona Adams.

John Rouse is resigning as a Trustee of the Society, but hopefully the sub-group can continue to call upon his expertise. He has been a dynamic member, initiating discussions about the governance of the Society.

The sub-group would be very happy to co-opt any member of the Society who would like to help with communication, marketing and membership and would especially welcome people with an interest in IT and social media.

Dovecote & Icehouse

(Roy Cockel, Paul Lindley, Helen Minovi and Rosemary Turner)

We have had another successful year at the Dovecote. In addition to our monthly openings from April to September, we also supported Moseley in Bloom by hosting the plant sales at the Open Gardens weekend, and along with Moseley Park we took part in Heritage Open Day, welcoming 200 visitors, many from out of the area.

All the events were well supported and we basked in the visitors' praise for the lovely garden and historic buildings. When we're not basking, we are hard at work maintaining and improving the site.

During last summer we were delighted to have an exhibition at the dovecote by Sarah Moss, of etchings based on stories from the Moseley History archives.



The garden is also visited regularly by staff and patients from Moseley Hall Hospital who enjoy the peace and tranquillity and the wide variety of wild life. In early autumn we were joined by young people from the "Challenge" scheme who planted dozens of daffodils around the bases of the fruit trees and the buildings. In November Chris Cockel taught us to scythe the meadow.

We continue to harvest rainwater, but are exploring the possibility of mains water. We are grateful to everyone who helps and supports us, and would welcome anyone else who would like to steward or garden.

The lighting at the icehouse proved problematic and for much of the season we welcomed visitors by candlelight – including the many hundreds who visit during the two big music festivals in Moseley Park.

Planning & Licensing

(Fiona Adams, Ray Cocks, John Dring, Jean Gilkison, Michael Potter)

We considered 163 applications this year, compared with 211 last year, and submitted formal comments on 47 (29%). Of the applications we considered, nearly half (70 = 43%) were in one of Moseley's designated Conservation Areas and over half (91 = 56%) were submitted by householders in order to make improvements to private dwellings.

During the year the 'Moseley Supplementary Planning Document 2014' was approved and must now be taken into consideration when planning applications are determined. Positive improvements include the new shop front for Flakes fish and chip shop at 17 St Mary's Row and the recent decision by Heritage Lottery Fund to grant-aid work to conserve and improve St Mary's Churchyard. In March 2015 The Sunday Times judged Moseley overall winner of '50 top UK urban locations'. The trend to convert property back into residential use and to try to squeeze additional houses into unlikely spots is testament to the desirability of Moseley as a place to live.

However the list of matters causing concern is still long – it includes front gardens replaced with block paving, often without permission; the fact that St Agnes Conservation Area still has no published Appraisal and Management Plan and the Planning Department staff are so reduced in numbers that we have no idea when the work might be done. Notable properties such as the former Sorrento Hospital buildings in Anderton Park Road and a listed building in Wake Green Road remain empty and endangered. We still await news on the Meteor site and on Pitmaston. Chamberlain House is being renovated to provide more space for Uffculme School. The enlargement of Parkview Clinic, which will provide much needed facilities for young people with various psychiatric conditions, is leading to real traffic and parking problems in Queensbridge Road.

The city's Statement of Licensing Policy is in the process of revision and the police have asked for Moseley's 'cumulative impact area' to be retained. Having the policy in place does not prevent applications for new or extended licences – but it allows Councillors to consider the application in relation to the number of existing licensed premises.

**Moseley History Group Report
(Janet Berry, Roy Cockel, Frank Gresham,
Verity Montague-Smith, Edwina Rees,
Rachel Tier, Ray Tier, Josie Wall)**

The History Group has been very active again this year, undertaking a major project on World War I, focussing on war memorials, the stories of those who fought in the war and conscientious objectors. The project has been extended beyond its original 2014 end date.



Convalescing in Highbury Hall

Successful evening talks have been organised most months. Two fascinating trips were arranged to the Birmingham Gun Barrel Proof House and to an exhibition of work by the war artist Richard Nevinson at the Barber Institute. Moseley Society member Dr Richenda Roberts

was the curator. A new booklet *Personalities 3* has been published featuring more histories of well-known Moseley people. The redesigned website using a different technology base gives better access to historical records and publications.

As part of its mission to raise awareness of local history within the community the Group has participated in local history fairs and led a Moseley Pubs Heritage walk at the Moseley Festival. Research continues into all aspects of Moseley history, including responding to enquiries from the community. New volunteers are always welcome and if you would like to help please email us at moseleyhistory@moseleyexchange.com

Committee in 2014-15

Helen Minovi & Geoff Rees, Co-chairs
Anna Williams, Treasurer
Fiona Adams, Secretary
Roy Cockel
John Dring
Jean Gilkison
Paul Lindley
Mike Marlow
Robert Orme
John Rouse
Rosemary Turner
John Underwood
Sally Wright

**AGENDA FOR THE AGM
To be held on Thursday 21 May
7.30pm at Moseley Exchange**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM held 15.5.2014
3. Presentation of the reports
4. Adoption of the report & accounts to 31.12.14
5. Election of officers & committee members
6. Any other business

Following the meeting there will be a talk by Chief Superintendent Richard Moore of Birmingham East Local Policing Unit.

The Moseley Society
Registered charity 512211

The Society can be contacted via the Secretary at 36 Grove Avenue, Moseley, B13 9RY. Subscriptions and letters may be handed in at Moseley Travel, 172 Alcester Road, near the public car park entrance in Moseley, while information about the Society is available next door at Domestica, or across the road at Moseley Exchange.

www.moseley-society.org.uk