

**THE MOSELEY SOCIETY**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON**  
**THURSDAY 17th MAY, 2018, 7.30 p.m.**  
**at The Moseley Exchange, The Post Office Building, Alcester Road,**  
**Moseley.**

Helen Minovi, in the chair, welcomed all to the meeting, the 39<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of The Society. There were 23 members present. The AGM began at 7.30 pm

1. APOLOGIES had been received from Geoff & Edwina Rees, Sally Wright, Paul Lindley, Joyce Elliott, Eric Adams, Anne Gilbert, Ann Burness, David Whittingham, Jack Wilson, Shakil Ahmed, Anthony Collins, Sue & Phil Johnson, Alison Millward, Gill McGillivray, Roy Cockel, John Rouse, Janis Goodall, Angela Orme, Bob Edmonds and Michael Sheehan.
2. MINUTES of the last AGM held on 18th May 2017 were taken as read and agreed, on a motion put by Jean Gilkison and seconded by Mike Marlow.
3. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORTS.  
The Annual Review containing reports of the different aspects of the Society's work had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Helen Minovi introduced members of the committee, thanking them and all the other people associated with the sub-groups. She said that the reports represented a great deal of very varied work for the benefit of the community.  
There were no questions about the reports.
4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS.  
Copies of the full report and accounts to 31 December 2017 had been circulated in advance by email and were made available in paper format at the meeting. Phil Williams presented the accounts and said that they show that overall the Society is in a sound financial position. Despite some differences in some of the figures – for example the increase in subscriptions was mainly due to a special effort to collect subscriptions that had not been collected in 2016 and the decrease in grants was because in the previous year the History Group had been given a grant to research the history of Moor Green Allotments. Expenditure had included some new or one-off items such as the St Agnes Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) and a new lap-top for use at meetings. He concluded that the balance sheet remained in a healthy state and invited questions.  
Agreeing that the funds in hand were considerable, Mike Marlow asked if there were any plans for increased expenditure in the current year. Fiona Adams said that further expenditure on the CAAMP was likely even though, as Robert Orme noted, this was being shared with St Agnes Residents' Association. Fiona Adams said that work on a New Member leaflet was progressing slowly and there would be a printing cost for that.  
Helen Minovi pointed out that the Society's responsibility for three Listed Buildings required some reserves to be held. Fiona Adams added that the idea of surrounding the icehouse with railings of the type used by English Heritage had been suggested by Moseley Park and Pool and, should this be agreed to by all, the funds would have to be raised.  
The report and accounts were adopted on a motion put by John Underwood seconded by Helen Rouse and supported unanimously.

5. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES.

Phil Williams took over the Chair to confirm that all the current Trustees were willing to continue to serve. They serve for terms of three years, can stand for re-election and retire by rotation according to the year that they became a Trustee. This year John Underwood, Helen Minovi and Geoff Rees were offering themselves for re-election. He invited a proposal to re-elect all three and this was made by Izzy Knowles, seconded by Jane Barry and approved unanimously.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

6.1 Colin Nimmo informed the meeting that the Moseley Oxfam Book and Record shop is planning a book and music festival in February 2019. It would be over the weekend of 9/10 February and would be based at Moseley Exchange and also, if enough events were organised, at the MAC and the Library of Birmingham. He said the aim was to make it a festival of literacy, and they would be seeking published authors and playwrights willing to encourage aspiring writers by passing on skills. Congratulating Colin, Helen Minovi said this sounded a very exciting idea.

6.2 Peter Streets asked if thought was being given to where commuters would park when Moseley Station reopened. This led to a general discussion in which it was said that:

Moseley Forum is leading a study of the road layout in the immediate vicinity of the station entrance. Traffic surveys have been conducted and Phil Jones Associates will be producing a report at a public meeting in the autumn. The Forum had been awarded a Local Innovation Fund (LIF) grant to carry out this work and the chair of the Forum, David Isgrove, also leads the Public Realm Group that is considering how appropriate changes can be made to the centre of Moseley.

Martin Mullaney said that in his role as Manager at Kings Heath Business Improvement District (BID) he had contacted the officers at the West Midlands Combined Authority. They have told him that the idea of an early opening in 2020, by diverting the hourly Hereford service to the Camp Hill line and taking trains into New Street Station via St Andrews Junction, is not feasible. They are still considering how to build the Camp Hill chords to take the line into Moor Street, and aim to have the line open by 2026, when HS2 opens.

Martin agreed that pressure on parking near the new stations would increase and had to be planned for. If necessary increased use of double yellow lines would be needed, as had happened around Yardley Wood station.

Colin Nimmo suggested that the land above the railway tunnel off St Mary's Row could be developed quickly as a community asset, in advance of the re-opening of the railway. It is currently leased to Marshalls, the firm that has developed the former Meteor Garage site.

John Newson hoped that the large populations within walking distance of the new stations would mean that most people would walk rather than use their cars.

It was agreed that Peter Streets had raised an important question but that Moseley Forum was leading the local efforts to investigate answers.

6.3 Kate Fox asked if anything could be done to repair damage to the original cast-iron road name signs. Robert Orme said that St Agnes Residents' Association had asked this question and been told that although cast-iron could not be repaired,

replica signs in the original design can still be made using aluminium or other materials. However this was only likely to be done in a conservation area, and that if damage occurred to a sign Amey is likely to erect a modern replacement. Izzy Knowles said that the mapping system being used by Richard Arden to record traffic issues could also be used to record 'Heritage assets' such as original road name signs and old post boxes. Mike Marlow suggested that some of the Society's funds could be used for an electronic web-based map - 'Putting Moseley on the Map'. Fiona Adams said that during discussions about the St Agnes CAAMP the possibility of seeking a new conservation area in the land between School Road, Springfield Road, Billesley Lane and Greenhill Road had been raised by the City's Head of Design. However this would only happen if sufficient skilled volunteers were to come forward to help survey all the properties involved. However if it was done it would lead to 'Heritage assets' in that area being better protected.

6.4 Mike Marlow asked if it was thought that the new Moseley Ward, which had come into being on 3rd May, would lead to a new way of organising activity and meetings in the area. Fiona Adams said that it was too early to say but Moseley Community Development Trust had taken the initiative of asking the two new Ward Councillors and local police officers to a meeting to consider how this could be done.

There were no further questions and Helen Minovi closed the meeting at 8.20 p.m.

**Following the meeting there was a discussion about the proportion of retail uses in the shopping centre and how to encourage more day time trade.**

John Dring introduced the topic, explaining that the aim, throughout every level of the planning process, is to 'enhance the vitality and viability of shopping centres'. The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages Local Planning Authorities to do all they can in this respect and sets out a hierarchy of shopping centres.

The 2017 Birmingham Plan, (policy TP24) ranks all of Birmingham's 78 shopping centres, with Moseley classed as a 'Neighbourhood centre'. In such centres the expectation is for 50% of ground floor properties to be retail. In larger shopping centres, such as Kings Heath, the requirement is 55%.

The Moseley Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has also adopted the 50% level for retail (Use Class A1) with a maximum of 10% for take-always (Use Class A5).

John said that the percentage of retail uses in Moseley now stands at 48% and so the planners have great difficulty in allowing any further changes of use away from A1.

In discussion Izzy Knowles said that Lewis had hoped to move his business to the larger Pottery and Pieces premises at 30 St Mary's Row, but the pre-application advice from the planners was that he would not get permission for change of use to A3 (restaurant or café).

Richard Ardern said that All Greek Eats had had their application for change of use to A3 at the long-empty premises at 46 St Mary's Row refused, but they had re-applied for a mixed A1/A3 use and it is hoped that the application will now be successful.

Fiona Adams said that property owners would all like A3 permission for their premises so they can charge higher rents. In order to gain planning permission for a change of use that would exceed the 50% threshold, a landlord needs to produce evidence that they have advertised the property as a retail use and at a realistic retail rent and have had the advertisement public for at least a year. So although it is possible to apply to be made an exception to the 50% rule, detailed evidence is needed in order to make the case. She said she wondered if it should be easier to get permission for an A3 use that would trade throughout the day than for a use that would only add to the nighttime economy.

Colin Nimmo suggested that strategies to attract retail units would need to consider high rents and high levels of council tax in the shopping centre.

The possibility of using a Community Share Offer to raise funds to support the purchase of empty properties was discussed and Fiona Adams said this was a topic that Moseley Community Development Trust had highlighted, was considering and would like to encourage people in Moseley to consider and become involved with.

John Newson said there were many examples of places where communities had banded together to save shops, pubs and post offices.

In reply to a question from Jane Barry, John Dring said that retail units were counted by number and not by floor space, so that the Co-op and Nima's Deli each counted as one unit when the 50% level is calculated. Mike Marlow said that the policy was absurd and that if floor space was calculated retail uses would predominate.

Martin Mullaney said that there had been a great many discussions about this since the 1970s and that there were no easy answers. He said that the Institute of Place Management had produced a report on the 'High Street in 2020', listing 201 factors that affect the health of a High Street – only 25 of which is it possible for individual areas to influence. He said that Moseley needed a Business Improvement District (BID) and that only shopping centres with BIDs were likely to survive in the long-term.

Martin reminded the meeting that when David Isgrove proposed starting a Farmers' Market one of the reasons was to regenerate the shopping centre. He said that despite some doubts by some businesses, the Market had brought real benefits to Moseley.

Jean Gilkison said that in a time of so much change, trying to save retail shops felt like a losing battle. She said that Moseley still had some 'destination shops' such as A Painted Room, Guthrie & Ghani, Encore, Indigo, Nima's Deli and Domestica but there used to be many more. Attracting other such shops was the key to maintaining a retail shopping centre here.

Fiona Adams reiterated that in the Moseley Community Development Trust we had an organisation able to take a leading role and start a community share scheme. What was needed was people with relevant skills and time to become involved in helping to initiate the venture.

At 8.55 pm Helen Minovi closed the meeting, expressing thanks to John Dring and all who had contributed to the discussion.

Refreshments were served.