

## **MINUTES OF THE UPPER THAMES PROTECTION SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ANNEXE ON 28th NOVEMBER 2012**

**In attendance:** Chris Graham (Chairman), Margaret Hunt (Secretary), Carol Rouse (Treasurer), Helen Goody (STRIPLING Editor).

Seymour Aitken and Arthur Webb (Committee members), 8 UTPS members, 3 non-members and Charlotte Hitchmough (Director of Action for the River Kennett).

**Welcome and Apologies:** Chris Graham welcomed members and others to the AGM. He commented upon summer and autumn rainfall that had led to unprecedented flooding in the area.

**An apology for absence** had been received from Peter Colmer (Wiltshire Councillor).

**Minutes of the AGM of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011:** Proposed and seconded from the floor, these were signed by Chris Graham after he had briefly indicated their contents.

### **Matters Arising from the above Minutes:**

**Community Action:** Steps had been taken to improve UTPS engagement with the local community in connection with matters appertaining to the River Thames. This activity would continue. Committee member Steve Greig had updated the website.

**STRIPLING:** Helen Goody was praised for her editorship of the excellent 2012 publication, which had included a Cricklade Town Plan supplement. Copies were available for non-members attending the meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Information from the accounts for 2011/2012 were given by Carol Rouse, who reported that it had been a good year for subscriptions and donations and that STRIPLING costs had been reduced. Funds currently amounted to:

Deposit Account	£2321.52
Current Account	298.00
Cash in hand	144.00

In a comment from the floor, the suggestion was made that, in future, income and outgoing columns should be separated. This would be reviewed with the Auditor and considered further by the Committee.

**Election of Auditor:** It was proposed and seconded from the floor that Phillip Pope, who had agreed to continue in the role, should be re-elected.

**Election of Committee:** The following members were re-elected *en bloc* on a seconded proposal from the floor: Seymour Aitken, Helen Goody, Chris Graham, Steve Greig, Margaret Hunt, Carol Rouse, and Arthur Webb. There were no other nominations. Committee officer posts would be ratified at the next UTPS meeting.

**Membership:** A review of the membership list had resulted in contact with those members who were in subscription arrears, and the names of those who had failed to respond had been deleted. STRIPLING was seen to have been instrumental in increasing membership.

**Any Other Business:**

**Contact with the Cotswold Canals Trust:** Lack of response from the Trust meant that the proposed meeting had not taken place.

**Thames Path** Margaret Hunt had recently been notified that the funding was available to the Trail organisation for the re-surfacing of the muddiest section of the Path through Cricklade. This was due to be carried out early in 2013. Two other problem surfaces would be further investigated.

**Physical State of the River Thames:** From the floor, Richard Rumming drew attention to the need for clearance of trees from the river. An Upper Thames Integrated Catchment Programme, linking with the Water Framework Directive, had recently been set up to tackle this and other issues. Grant aid to enhance the river's environment as well as to address water quality might be available.

The AGM closed at 7.50 pm.

**Presentation by Charlotte Hitchmough:**

Accompanying her talk with slides, Charlotte took her audience through the various problems and initiatives connected with the River Kennett. Abstraction threats had led to the formation of Action for the River Kennett (ARK) in 1990, which had also tackled pollution, dredging and crayfish infestation. Part-time project officers had been legacy funded, and ARK had been promoted by lobbying the Westminster parliament and via TV publicity. Schools and a poetry group had been involved, and walks (with improved access for less mobile people) had been introduced. Relevant agencies, local councils and Wiltshire Council were very supportive. Fairly recently, the organisation had purchased grazing land at Stonebridge Lane that was being managed to improve biodiversity.

Questions and comments led to a lively debate, at the conclusion of which Chris Graham thanked Charlotte for a most interesting presentation. Attendees were invited to take copies of the informative and attractively-produced ARK 2012 Annual Report.

**Refreshments:** The meeting was rounded off by the service of tea/coffee and high quality biscuits by Stefan Goody.



