

# THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1105688

## MINUTES

of the Twelfth Annual General Meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2013  
at Trinity Church Hall, Mount Street, Stafford ST16 2BZ

### 1. Chair's welcome

Jan Scrine welcomed 56 members and visitors to the twelfth AGM/Annual Conference.

2. **Apologies** from 22 members had been notified to the Hon. Sec.

3. **The Minutes of the AGM held 6 Oct 2012** in Snibston were accepted and signed as a correct record (proposed – David Viner; seconded – Mike Hallett).

### 4. Hon Sec's report 2012 -13

John Atkinson reported that mailings appeared to have been made without problems, requests had been responded to and queries answered, though none from Lords or Ladies this year - one from a mere Sir. Some recent difficulty had arisen in the matter of email addresses. Those on the internet would have received a reminder about this meeting and prior notice of the meeting at Brewood. However, some addresses were found to be out of date. Members were asked to inform the Membership Secretary when email addresses were changed. There was no intention to send out anything more than occasional notices and reminders by email at the moment. Normal postal mailings would continue. However, as a matter of interest, at the last count, there were 324 email addresses on the list of members - around three-quarters or more of the membership could be contacted by email.

The Hon. Secretary's report was accepted (prop. – Mervyn Benford; sec. – Neville Billington).

### 5. Membership Secretary's Report 2012 -13

Brian Barrow reported that the Society ended the 2012-13 subscription year on 31st May with membership being only one fewer than the previous year. A total of 529 members was made up of 331 individual members, 91 joint members (i.e.182 members) and 16 Corporate members. For the current subscription year of 2013-14 up to the end of September there had been 53 members who had not renewed their subscription and so far the Society had recruited just 26 new members. Reminders had been sent out to non-renewers and a number of renewals received. The Membership Secretary was very pleased that an increasing number of members renew and new members join by using the website facility and by using their credit card to pay through Pay Pal. This made administration easier and removed the need to pay in cheques at the Bank. The Membership Secretary reminded members that membership cards are no longer issued and that renewal is acknowledged by showing the year membership expires on any envelope sent by him. Finally, on behalf of the Society, the Membership Secretary thanked those who agreed to Gift Aid their subscriptions and those who included a donation with their subscription. In response to a question, the Membership Secretary reported that there were two overseas members, one of whom had not yet renewed.

The Membership Secretary's report was accepted (prop. – Nigel Ford; sec. – Ian Thompson).

### 6. Hon Treasurer's Report 2012-13

The Treasurer's Report had been circulated with the Agenda. Alan Rosevear commented that:

- the apparent dramatic improvement in assets arose from two exceptional additions and one non-outgoing so that affairs are slightly better than equilibrium;
- reductions in expenditure had been effected by ensuring that events were self-sustaining, by reducing meeting costs and by making more use of the website;
- the current account had been boosted by a Gift Aid refund, money flowing through the account from local groups and donations made in memory of Terry Keegan.

In response to questions, the Treasurer said:

- the £4,000 Gift Aid refund covered a period of four years. Further claims were likely to be made every two years.
- variations in expenditure on the Journal arose from the merger of *Milestones & Waymarkers* and *On the Ground*. Publication dates have not fallen at regular intervals, so costs are apportioned into different years. Similarly, but less noticeably, the costs of national meetings, particularly printing and postage costs, occur near financial year-ends so costs do not always fall on the same side of the year.

The Treasurer's report was accepted (prop. – Helen Crabtree; sec. – Rodney Hills).

### 7. Chair's Report 2011 -12

The Chair's Report had been circulated with the Agenda. Jan Scrine observed that:

- the Society's work with highways engineers had been a highlight of the year and thanked Alan Reade (unfortunately unable to be present at the AGM, but to be present at Brewwood on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov.). The Society was now receiving enquiries via the section for highways engineers on its website.
- £35000 matched funding had been raised for the Beyond Graffiti initiative with young people in West Yorkshire.
- there was an urgent need for members to become more involved in the activities of the Society. The A34 project to explore all aspects of that road offered exciting opportunities. Volunteers would also be welcome, for instance, to join the Editorial Panel or to assist in proof-reading or to raise the Society's profile on Twitter.

The Chair's report was accepted (prop. David Viner; sec. Helen Crabtree).

#### **8. Election of Officers and Committee Members for 2013-2014**

- Nigel Ford (prop. – Helen Crabtree; sec. – Derek Turner) was elected to join the Committee to fill the vacancy listed in item 8.6 of the full agenda.
- Jan Scrine welcomed Nigel to the Committee and commented on the need for succession planning and, therefore, volunteers to become committee members, officers and chair. At its June meeting, the Committee had heard from a new member who wished to be Chair. Following his presentation, he had been offered a place on the Committee in order first to become acquainted with the workings of the Society. He had declined. Jan was willing to continue as Chair for one more year, if no other candidate came forward, and was re-elected (prop. – John Higgins; sec. – Peter Leigh).
- all other existing Officers as listed in item 8.6 of the full agenda were re-elected (prop. – David Viner; sec. – Peter Leigh).
- Committee Members as listed in item 8.6 of the full agenda were re-elected (prop. – Helen Crabtree; sec. – Peter Leigh).

#### **9. Publications**

Thanks to the Editorial Panel – Mike Hallett (Newsletter) and John Nicholls and David Viner (Milestones & Waymarkers/On the Ground) and Carol Haines – the high quality of the Society's publications had been maintained. Members were invited to submit any comments to members of the Editorial Panel or to the Hon. Sec.

#### **10. Appointment of Hon Auditor**

Dr John Armstrong, who had been unable to attend the meeting, was thanked for auditing the accounts and re-elected unanimously (prop. – David Viner; sec. – Paul Gibbons).

#### **11. AOB**

- An observation by Paul Gibbons that highways budgets would be much reduced by cuts in the funding of county councils prompted a discussion in which the following points were made. Money is available if the effort is made to apply. Charities, however, will not give money for areas identified as the responsibility of another body. Community concerns often meet with a sympathetic response. Thought must be given to the application process. Highways authorities vary, some counties are supportive as long as not being asked to do something themselves.
- Mike Buxton should be consulted on insurance requirements.
- The Society wishes to negotiate with the Ordnance Survey concerning milestones on maps. Mervyn Benford is pursuing this for the Society.
- Mike Lea has found that parish councils are often willing to support restoration. In Cumbria, 150 fingerposts are to be restored at a cost of £20,000 on the grounds that restoration is cheaper than replacement.
- Neville Billington asked whether volunteers involved in work connected to the tercentenary of turnpikes in Worcestershire would be covered by the Society's insurance. Jan Scrine replied that members of the Society would be covered for themselves and if they caused an accident, but that non-members/members of the public act at their own risk. Members of the Society should issue disclaimers to this effect. Neville Billington would discuss insurance with Mike Buxton.
- Peter Leigh's proposed vote of thanks to the Officers and Committee received a round of applause.

Meeting closed: 11.25 a.m.

Future meetings: Spring Conference 2014 – Sat. 10 May – Rothwell. AGM & Conference 2014 – Sat. 4 October - Droitwich