



Association of Friends of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent Court

Secretary: David C. Badger
22, Elmsleigh Drive, Leigh-on-Sea
Essex, SS9 3DN
01702 712316 07949 636114
david@davidbadger.co.uk

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of members of the Association of Friends of PEDoK Court

held on **Wednesday 9th December 2020**

via Zoom at 7.30pm

**On screen: Trustees Barry Stedman, David Badger, Andrew McLeod
Graham Elvidge, Dennis May and Graham Larke**

**Dr JW Reuther (RMBI), Home Manager Agnieszka McDonald, prospective Trustee Graham Turner
and members: MC Black, David Lucas and Maurice Court**

The President, Barry Stedman, welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Dr Reuther and the members of the association.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Trustees Nigel & Karine Oldacre and Lloyd Harris, Deputy ProvGMaster in Charge VWBro Paul Reeves, and members Graham Sanford Jones, Leslie Thurston, John Smoothy, Margaret Paul and George Lambeth.

There were further apologies from our Chairman, Clive Dunnico, who was prevented from attendance by technical issues, but who was attending the proceedings via telephone.

Minutes: The minutes of the AGM held on 27th November 2019 were approved and will be signed by the Chairman as soon as possible.

There were no matters arising, and it was agreed that any conflicts of interest be recorded as and when they were declared.

Message from VWBro Paul Reeves, DepPPGM in Charge

A few years ago I was invited, for the first time, to attend your Christmas AGM and, if I am honest, it was the first time I realised just how much time and effort the Friends invest into looking after the residents at Stisted on behalf of the brethren of Essex.

I know how much the late RW ProvGM appreciated what you do and since his passing in July I have tried to ensure that I have represented him whenever and wherever I can but I am attending a paid for (and quite expensive) 3-day online course today and reluctantly have to tender my apologies to you.

The year 2020 has been an extraordinary year, bringing new challenges for all of us and started with the very sad news that we had lost one of Essex Freemasonry's stalwarts, your President, W.Bro Alan Garner. I had known Alan since I was a ProvAGDC in 2003 and had the pleasure of escorting him to many meetings when he was an APMG and more recently I had enjoyed working with him on the Provincial Building Fund, where he always had sage advice to offer. He was passionate about the Stisted and often rang me to discuss issues affecting the Friends and I know he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Coronavirus has made this a very difficult year with working from home and isolation becoming the 'new normal'. I appreciate it has also impacted on The Friends and your ability to meet at Stisted but it is a testament to your team that it has not stopped your work at the home.

Following the sad loss of Alan I was pleased to be able to invite W.Bro Barry Stedman to assume the Presidency of the Association. He is someone who already does a lot for the Province behind the scenes and, as someone who has been involved with Stisted since it was first purchased, I know he will continue to serve the Friends well. I wish him well in that endeavour.

We also have a new Home Manager, Aggie, and a new Business Manager, Jade, who between themselves, have breathed new life into the home during this difficult time. I was pleased to hear of the Friends' latest venture with the provision of a new 6-seater golf buggy and safari trail life-size animals (one of your new President's ideas I believe), which will no doubt provide some residents with an opportunity to get out and about.

It is unfortunate that the virus has also forced the cancellation of the summer fete for the first time in 20 years but I was pleased to hear you will be represented at the Provincial Race Day in July, assuming it can go ahead. We will ensure the Friends receive some of the funds raised on the day to enable you to continue your vital work.

Brethren, thank you for what you continue to do at Stisted. I wish you and your new President every success working with Aggie for the benefit of the residents in 2021.

President's Report:

Firstly, I would like to welcome everyone and thank you for attending this virtual meeting.

The RMBI contacted me through Chris Caine with regards to surplus funds that had accrued in the Miles Legacy and needed to be allocated at some haste. Clive and I met with Aggie and Jade and compiled a Wishlist. I then spent some days sourcing the items and negotiating prices with the suppliers. There followed a hold up getting the funds paid to the various

suppliers by the RMBI so I asked Mark Lloyd, the MD of the RMBI, to transfer the funds to us. Unfortunately, we were again up against a brick wall because our bank account doesn't allow for BACS payments in the usual way. Within hours of the deals expiring Graham Elvidge found a way and we were able to continue. I'm most grateful to him for his help in solving the problem.

The items already delivered are the large screen TV for the lounge in the main building, The Magic Table projector for the Mauchline, life-size resin animals for the Safari Trail – the balance will arrive in January. The Yeti tablet will be delivered on 21st of December, the iPad is subject to a delay from Apple and the all-weather sides for the Safari Buggy are in hand but as it is a custom build, I don't have further information at this time.

As the Christmas Party cannot go ahead as in previous years, I have arranged to shoot a video with Nicky and Neil from Clearer Productions. They will tailor a performance specifically for us so it can be played in to the home via the new TV and the large screen in the library/pub prior to Christmas.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for their support in my new role. Alan was a tough act to follow

Chairman's Report:

As Chairman of the Association of Friends of Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court I witness first-hand the dedicated work carried out by my fellow Trustees, the staff and other volunteers who give of their time in so many ways to create a most happy atmosphere in this wonderful Home here at Stisted.

Because of Covid-19 regulations we are unable to meet together in person. The regulations are necessary in the interests of our health, but I am sure that we miss the pleasure of this once a year get-together in the wonderful Stisted Hall. Today's meeting is made possible by the use of Zoom. I thank our President, Barry Stedman for setting this up for the Association's members. The Trustees have successfully used this media for Meetings.

The new Home Manager, Agnieszka McDonald, (who wishes to be referred to as "Aggie"), took up her duties in January and has breathed new life in the Home due to the many new activities she has created for the Residents. These have been made possible by the support given by the staff and helpers at the Home. In the period between Michelle Bladen leaving and Aggie taking up her duties, Katrina Karolchyk (Deputy Home Manager) took over the helm and successfully ensured the continuing smooth running of the Home. She continued the support given to our residents and their families. The Trustees would like to record our thanks to Katrina for her dedication to the welfare of the residents.

It has been a most difficult time since the March Lockdown, but Aggie and her staff have worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and happiness of the residents. In the summer safe visiting facilities were constructed enabling residents and their families to see and speak to each other, albeit through a transparent screen. We are very fortunate that we receive much support from V.W. Paul Reeves, Deputy Provincial Grand Master in Charge and I record my thanks to the Province.

Our President has already included in his Report the acquisitions that have been made for the residents.

Because of the Covid-19 regulations, it was not possible to have the Annual Fete this year and the Trustees have, sadly, been unable to meet at the Home. You will be hearing the Reports from my fellow Trustees and I should like to thank them for their support and for the excellent contributions they make in the interests of the Home and its residents. For the future, the 2021 Fete has unfortunately been cancelled. However, if the regulations permit, another event may be considered such as a Garden Party for the residents. Time will tell.

Our President still expertly looks after our website, www.friendsofpedokc.org.uk in association with our Membership Secretary, Lloyd Harris.

The Association was founded as the result of much hard work and initial financial gifts by our late President Alan Garner and our late Vice-President, Brian Procter. They, with others sowed the seeds and we continue to nurture their growth. Barry Stedman was with them at the time using his skills taking photographs and videos of the newly acquired dilapidated building which, after reconstruction, eventually became the residents' home in 1998. Barry's support has continued since then.

The Trustees are happy to consider all requests for financial assistance for the benefit of the residents. The Treasurer will report on expenditure during the past year.

Our neighbour, the Braintree Golf Club takes great care of their grounds which provide a magnificent panoramic view for our residents. The entrance road to the Home passes through those grounds giving a most welcome scenic experience to our residents.

The Mauchline House Garden continues to be a place of contentment for those residents who enter the twilight of their lives with dementia and it is a place of beauty where other residents, too, are able to enjoy a visit.

The Home always has a most happy atmosphere and the Association maintains a close relationship with the members of staff that do such wonderful work for the benefit of the residents. Each resident is made to feel that Stisted Hall is their own Home and that they are an integral part of one happy family. This Christmas Aggie and her staff will ensure that it is a happy one for our residents. Let us hope that 2021 will see life returning to the normality that we all had pre-Covid-19.

There is no place like Stisted Hall. There is no place like Home.

Treasurer's Report:

The accounts had been circulated and published on the association's website. The Treasurer briefly summarised the accounts, and noted that income had improved by some £9,000 for the year, which included a one-off legacy. Membership and subscriptions were slightly down, but he believed there were sufficient reserves in hand, given the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The loss of the fete income may be replaced by other events.

Almoner's Report:

Currently there are 30 residents, including 3 in respite. There have been 40 birthdays since our last AGM, 25 of whom were residents aged 90 years or over and include Rose Robertson who was 100 years old in May, while Kay Smith and Ethel McMillan both reached 101. Each person was given a birthday

card and present from the Friends. We always try to give something a bit special on a resident's 100th birthday.

Sadly there have been 18 deaths. Messages of sympathy and cards were sent to the next of kin and donations, in their memory, were given to their chosen charity. The charities include The Alzheimers Society, The Association of Friends of PEDoKC, The RNIB, Dementia UK, Great Ormond Street Hospital, The British Heart Foundation and a plant/shrub for the Mauchline garden.

On 14th February a box of chocolates was given to each resident from the Friends along with a special lunch to which Nigel and I were kindly invited. It was an enjoyable occasion with the dining room and tables all attractively decorated. Lunch was followed by entertainment in the Essex lounge with a young lady singing some well-known wartime and other songs that the residents knew well. They were encouraged to join in the singing, which they did, and thoroughly enjoyed it all.

Under the circumstances of the pandemic, we have been unable to visit the Home but have kept in touch by email or telephone. Fortunately, at Easter, we had previously purchased attractive packs of Lindt mini Easter eggs. Carl, the Maintenance Manager, kindly collected these from our house together with some birthday gifts and cards to be given to the residents on the appropriate days.

For a short time during lockdown I was unable to shop for presents so contacted the Home who kindly helped out by ordering some gifts on line. These were delivered direct to the Home and given to the residents on behalf of the Association. I am happy to say that I am now able to go shopping again and choose the presents myself.

Christmas will soon be with us. Last Christmas Nicky and Neil of Clearer Productions came again to entertain the residents (and Trustees) at their Christmas party; Nicky singing carols and Christmassy songs and Neil, in his brightly coloured suit, amusing everyone with seasonal poems and quotations. Each resident was then given a Christmas card enclosing a letter advising them that £50 had been paid into their resident's account to spend on something that they would like. This was followed by a lunch of their choice with a glass or two of wine, all courtesy of the Friends which I think they really enjoyed.

Nigel and I called in at the Home on Christmas morning to wish everyone a happy Christmas and help hand out presents from the Home, both in the main house and Mauchline. It was a happy occasion.

This year, unfortunately, due to circumstances there cannot be a Christmas party. It has been suggested, by the Home, that, rather than the gift of money from the Association, they would choose a suitable present for each person on our behalf (of course paid for by the Friends). Some of the residents did not realise that they had been given the money and also they do enjoy opening a present on Christmas day. I am sure that the Home and staff will be arranging some celebrations and fun to make it a happy Christmas for them all at Stisted Hall.

Residents' Activities Organiser's Report:

Towards the end of November the two Christmas trees were delivered, erected and decorated with lights in time for the annual Christmas Bazaar. We continue to pay the same price as in the previous 2 years. As usual Karine and I ran a raffle which was strategically placed in the Stone Hall to capture all

who came to visit and resulted in taking plenty of money.

Due to the pandemic, only 1 coffee morning was held (in January) when Alan Reynolds came in to sing to the residents. They thoroughly enjoy his entertainment and join in singing along with him.

On 10th January Karine and I, along with a number of the Trustees, met with the new manager, Aggie MacDonald, at an informal gathering at the Home.

A scheduled working garden party in March had to be cancelled and there has been no opportunity to have another one this year.

Likewise the annual Stisted Hall Golf Classic had to be cancelled due to the restrictions. It is hoped that normal service will be resumed in 2021.

My contact with the Home has been largely limited to emails and phone calls, especially as I was incarcerated for 14 weeks in my home from early March.

Karine and I have missed visiting the Home, talking to the residents and getting to know the new ones. At the end of September Karine and I were invited to meet the manager and her senior team in the 'Pod'. It was good to see them and talk face to face to each other, albeit with a clear sheet of glass between us. The Pod itself is very comfortable and furnished in very good taste; an ideal compromise for a family member to see their loved one residing in the Home.

This year will be different for us as we cannot call in the Home on Christmas morning as we always have done and we will definitely miss the occasion.

Home Manager's Report:

Environment, equipment and projects:

Pond – lights around the pond are now completed and fish in the pond are well established (residents are enjoying daily walks to the pond to feed the fish). Carl still to construct waterfall, it will be winter project.

Bedroom refurbishment – in total, refurbishment of 25 bedrooms now completed, awaiting funding for further refurbishment,.

Communal toilets refurbishment – five communal toilets are now completed, one still to be refurbished.

Corridors in main house – refurbishment of main corridors started prior to pandemic, service corridor outside main kitchen has been completed and new flooring installed. Flooring and carpets in Main House corridors now completed, still awaiting decorator to complete painting, this project will be completed in January.

New outbuilding behind Mauchline House – this project has been suspended due to COVID-19 until next year.

Garden Furniture in Sensory garden – refurbishment of garden furniture in progress, we are planning to complete project by the spring.

Mauchline café – we are in progress of creating a "dementia café" outside Mauchline dining room. We hope to complete this project by the end of this year.

MAGIC TABLE – Big thank you for the purchase of "magic table" for our residents, they really enjoy various interactive activities.

New TV for the Main House – residents enjoy watching TV on the large screen.

Fibreglass animals for Stisted Safari – thank you for purchase of animals, once we have all animals they will be securely installed on our safari track.

Christmas at Prince Edward – number of activities planned for the Christmas festive such as: Christmas Bazar (11th December), Christmas show for residents prepared by our staff, virtual Christmas carols on 23rd December – we will be connecting with families via zoom.

We created Christmas wonderland in the gardens and mini Christmas wonderland for our residents in Mauchline.

Facebook – we have created a Facebook page for the home.

Staffing:

In the past few months, we have been very successful with our recruitment drive. We now have in post enough care staff to reduce agency to zero in some weeks. We are continuing recruitment to ensure that our home has a fully staffed dedicated team.

Occupancy:

Current occupancy at Prince Edward is 30. It has been a very challenging few months with very few enquiries coming into the home, but also several of our long-term residents passed away (deaths were not related to COVID-19). We have had a few good news stories published in local newspapers, including the opening of our “safe visiting rooms” and “Stisted Safari Shuttle”. The RMBI website has been revamped and we now have promotional video for Prince Edward, our rating on carehomes.co.uk stands at 9.8 – in February it was 9.5, with several new very positive reviews. We constantly encourage all visitors and relatives to complete and post a review to increase our rating.

Elections:

Proposed Trustees:

- Chairman: Clive Dunnico (re-election)
- Secretary: David Badger (re-election)
- Treasurer: Graham Elvidge (re-election)
- Membership Secretary: Lloyd Harris (re-election)
- Almoner: Karine Oldacre (re-election)
- Residents Activities: Nigel Oldacre (re-election)
- Fete Organiser: Graham Turner (New appointment)
- Trustees: Graham Larke, Andrew McLeod, Dennis May (re-election)

It was suggested the vote be taken en bloc. MC Black proposed and David Lucas seconded that the trustees as listed be elected. This was agreed. The declarations would be signed at a later date.

Appointment of Auditors:

Clive Dunnico proposed that Azets Audit Services (formerly Wilkins Kennedy LLP) of 1 Nelson Street, Southend-on-Sea to act as the Auditors of the accounts for the next financial year. This was seconded by Dennis May and agreed.

AOB:

The President thanked Dennis May for his sterling work as fete organiser, a role only given up due to ill health. BS on behalf of

the Trustees and members, wished Dennis well and noted with thanks that he would be staying with the Friends as a Trustee.

Dr John Reuther gave an update on the RMBI and Covid-19. He said the RMBI had been well prepared for the pandemic having spent more than £1m on PPE.

In the first wave, there had been 33 deaths in the homes, 22 of whom had been returned from hospital with the virus. In the second wave, there have been 44 deaths so far.

Overall, he reported, there have been 197 Covid resident cases and 200 staff had fallen victim, although none has died. There are just one or two cases of the virus currently.

He said the virus was the beginning of the end, but not the end.

He reported that Home staff would be invited to be vaccinated first, but Aggie added that she had been informed that no vaccines were available for Stisted staff or residents until January, the home falling under the jurisdiction of Basildon Hospital. Additionally, she reported that each member of staff would have to book vaccine appointments individually.

There being no other business, the President thanked those who had attended online and, via the telephone, the Chairman wished all a merry Christmas

The meeting closed at 4.40pm. The next AGM will be held at Stisted Hall on Wednesday 24th November 2021.

SIGNED DATE