

THE DEVER SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY 1st MARCH 2010
The Northbrook Hall, Micheldever, 7:30 pm

AGENDA

1. Douglas Paterson, Chairman – introduction and welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. To consider and approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 19 January 2009
4. To consider the Chairman's statement for the year ended 30 September 2009
5. To receive and adopt the audited accounts for the year ended 30 September 2009
6. To elect or re-elect the following officers of the Society:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chairman
 - Honorary Treasurer
 - Honorary Secretary
7. To elect or re-elect not more than ten other members to the Executive Committee
8. To re-elect the auditor – Mr Ian Cammack
9. Any other business
10. Address by the President of the Dever Society, Professor Khalid Aziz, LVO DL FRSA

After the formal business, the BBC's Deputy Political Editor James Landale will chair Planning and the countryside, a debate featuring the Parliamentary candidates from the three main political parties.

Refreshments will be served.

Charles Hobbs
Hon Secretary
February 2010

Officers

Chairman	Douglas Paterson
Vice-Chairman	Tessa Robertson
Honorary Treasurer	Phil Dowson
Honorary Secretary	Charles Hobbs

Executive Committee

James Drewer
Hugh Sandars
Brian Walker

THE DEVER SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 19 January 2009 at 7:30 pm at the Warren Hall, Micheldever Station

Present:	Khalid Aziz	President
	Richard Cowen	Chairman
	Douglas Paterson	Chairman designate
	Tessa Robertson	Vice Chairman
	Charles Hobbs	Hon Secretary
	Phil Dowson	Hon Treasurer
	Phil Bryant	Executive Committee member
	Hugh Sandars	Executive Committee member
	Brian Walker	Executive Committee member
	David Foster	Administrator

23 other Dever Society members attended, and the Society also welcomed:

Cllr George Beckett	(Leader of Winchester City Council)
Cllr Stephen Godfrey	(Winchester City Council)
Cllr Barry Lipscomb	(Winchester City Council)
Mr Steve Brine	(Parliamentary Candidate (Conservative))
Mr Martin Tod	(Parliamentary Candidate (Lib Dem))
Mr Richard Palmer	(Forest Holidays)
Mr David Williamson	(Forestry Commission)

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman

The Chairman, Richard Cowen, welcomed members and distinguished guests to the Dever Society's 18th Annual General Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

The Chairman announced that apologies had been received from Mr Nick Adams (RSPB Stone Curlew Project) Cllr Paula Baker (Basingstoke and Deane BC), Mr Ian Cammack, Cllr Patrick Davies, Miss Jennifer Ffennel, Mr Mark Oaten MP, Mr Steve Opacic and Cllr Jackie Porter.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Copies of the Minutes of the last AGM had been distributed before the meeting, and the Chairman asked if there were any matters arising. No matters were raised, and Brian Walker proposed that the Minutes should be adopted. Mrs June Lees-Spalding seconded the motion, which was approved by a show of hands.

4. Chairman's statement for the year ended 30 September 2007

Copies of the Chairman's statement had also been distributed before the meeting. The Chairman summarised the key points, in particular highlighting the Society's success in defeating Zurich/Eagle Star's eco-town proposals last year. In view of the Government's ambitious housebuilding targets, he considered that their rejection of this scheme amply vindicated the Society's campaign.

Referring to his own retirement, the Chairman introduced Douglas Paterson, who had been nominated to stand as his successor. Douglas' family, he explained, has been farming locally for more than 60 years, whilst Douglas himself divides his time between running the farm and a professional musical career.

Touching briefly on financial matters, the Chairman said that, whilst the Society remains strong, our reserves would not stretch to another major campaign.

5. To receive and adopt the audited accounts for the year ended 30 September 2007

The Hon Treasurer presented the Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2008, which had been distributed before the meeting.

He highlighted the net outgoings of £16,478. This was largely due to the costs of the eco-town campaign, which had accounted for some £13,748 in fees to planning consultants and Queen's Counsel. In addition, the Society's website had been completely reconstructed at a cost of some £2,300. The Treasurer also drew attention to the awkward timing of tax refunds, which had led to two years' credits being received in 2006-07, whilst none had been refunded in the year under review. Whilst the Society still retained a healthy balance of £27,040 the Committee would review the options for rebuilding the fighting fund during 2009.

The Society's Executive Committee had approved the accounts, which had been audited by the Society's auditor, Ian Cammack.

Brett Gill proposed that the accounts should be adopted; the motion was seconded by David Asdell and approved by a show of hands.

7. Amendments to the Society's Constitution

The Hon Secretary explained the motion to make two minor amendments to the Society's Constitution. These were purely housekeeping measures, to reflect practical difficulties in holding the AGM in the run-up to Christmas, and of attracting sufficient volunteers to serve on the Executive Committee.

David Asdell proposed that:

- a. Clause 5 should be amended to read "An Annual General Meeting shall be held in *the first quarter* of each year ...", and that;
- b. Clause 7 should be amended to read "The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and not less than *two* and not more than ten other members."

The motion was seconded by Sue Bell, and approved by a show of hands.

8. Re-election of the Society's Officers

Following the Chairman's resignation, Phil Dowson had proposed Douglas Paterson to succeed him, seconded by Richard Cowen. Following a show of hands, Douglas Paterson was duly elected as Chairman.

Addressing the meeting, Douglas Paterson said that he was honoured and excited to take over the Chair of such a successful Society following its triumphant campaign against Zurich/Eagle Star's eco-town proposals. This had been our 'Battle of Britain', he said, adding that the war was still not over. Things might go quiet during the recession – but Eagle Star will be back when the economy picks up, and the Society must always remain vigilant.

On a personal note, his grandfather had begun farming in the area in 1940. Quoting William Cobbett, he said that farmers had a duty to leave the land in better heart than they had found it. That responsibility did not extend to covering it in houses, he said – and, referring to the name of a local field that his family has farmed since the Second World War, Douglas declared; "we'll fight Eagle Star on The Beeches if we have to!"

By agreement, the retiring Chairman Richard Cowen retained the Chair for the remainder of the meeting. Returning to business he explained that the Vice chairman (Tessa Robertson) Hon Secretary (Charles Hobbs) and Hon Treasurer (Phil Dowson) had all indicated their willingness to stand for re-election.

Hugh Sandars proposed that they should be re-elected en-bloc; Brian Walker seconded the proposal, and the Officers were re-elected on a show of hands.

In the absence of any nominations, the post of Membership Secretary remained vacant.

9. Executive Committee

No additional nominations had been received. The Chairman explained that that although Phil Bryant would be retiring from the Executive Committee, Hugh Sandars and Brian Walker had both indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. Charles Hobbs proposed their re-election en-bloc, seconded by Phil Bryant. This proposal was passed on a show of hands.

The Chairman regretted the lack of members willing to serve on the committee, and asked for any volunteers to have a word after the meeting.

9. Election of the auditor

The Chairman thanked Ian Cammack in his absence for his work as the Society's auditor, and said that he had agreed to stand for re-election.

Hugh Sandars proposed Ian Cammack's re-election, seconded by Tessa Robertson, and this was approved by a show of hands.

10. Any Other Business

The Chairman introduced Richard Palmer, from Forest Holidays, who would be available after the meeting to answer questions about the company's proposed chalet development in Black Wood.

He went on to make a presentation to Phil Bryant on his retirement as the Society's longest-serving committee member, and thanked him publicly for his work. Phil had joined the Society soon after moving to Micheldever Station, and had since served on the committee for 18 years. During that time he had edited the newsletter and produced press releases, and his advice and support had been invaluable.

The Vice chairman then turned the tables to make a presentation to Richard Cowen, marking the end of his five years as the Society's Chairman. He had served on the committee on three occasions before taking over the Chair, initially for just two years, before being persuaded to stay for a further period. He was, she said, leaving the Society 'in excellent shape'.

Following these tributes, the Chairman thanked everyone who had supported the Society during its recent eco-town campaign. These had included our local MP Mark Oaten; Parliamentary candidates from all the main parties; County, City and Parish Councillors; the Campaign to Protect Rural England; and the RSPB. This had been our most successful battle to date, he said – and the fight would go on.

David Hanson asked about future plans for the Society's newsletter, which, he said, puts a considerable burden on local volunteer distributors like him and his wife. The Chairman promised to see if we could find someone else to help or take over his large round.

11. Address by the Society's President, Professor Khalid Aziz

The President began by echoing the Chairman's tribute to Phil Bryant who, he said, had articulated the Society's case well and worked tirelessly for us over many years. He also thanked Richard Cowen for his excellent leadership during the last five years. Behind the relaxed exterior, Richard had been an effective advocate for the Society; he had done 'extremely well', and we could do with more people like him.

More generally, the President alluded to the considerable cost of the eco-town campaign. 'You may have seen this evening's news that the proposed eco-town at Ford in West Sussex may be going ahead,' he said. 'Ours was an expensive fight, but make no mistake. It was a very necessary one.'

Prof Aziz went on to repeat the Chairman's thanks to everyone who had worked tirelessly with the Society to defeat Eagle Star's proposals, and exhorted the Society not to relax its guard. In a topical allusion on the evening before the inauguration of the new American President he asked; 'Can we do it? Yes, we can!'

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the Annual General Meeting closed at 8:05pm.

Following the formal business, members and guests enjoyed a drinks reception, with the opportunity to talk to the Committee and to Richard Palmer of Forest Holidays.

Charles Hobbs
Honorary Secretary
January 2009

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT AND REVIEW

This Statement accompanies the Agenda and Notice of the AGM to be held at Northbrook Hall, Micheldever on Monday 1st March 2010.

As Chairman since the Society's AGM in January 2009, I am pleased to report on the activities of the Society and your Executive Committee during the year ended 30th September 2009.

Planning matters

Although this has been a quiet year by recent standards, our watching brief has continued undiminished. Camping in trees and confronting bulldozers will catch the media's gaze; but the dull and detailed scrutiny of planning strategies and applications is far more likely to stop inappropriate development in its tracks.

At the strategic level, the Society commented on the drafts of both the Winchester Local Development Framework and the South East Plan, which was finally published last May.

More locally, we continued to monitor the proposed holiday development in Black Wood, and supported Micheldever Parish Council's objection to this damaging development. We also alerted many of our local members via e-mail, several of whom wrote individually to object. The Society was very grateful for their support, as well as for the Council's generous contribution to the expenses of this successful campaign.

Membership

Like many charities the Society has experienced an element of natural wastage during the recession, and recruitment is naturally slower when there is no overwhelming threat to our way of life. Members did, however, respond generously to our colourful new publicity leaflet, which was mailed with the summer newsletter. We also took our stand to three successful – if rather damp – local summer fetes, recruiting a total of 55 new members. At the time of writing, our membership stands at 6,296.

Printing and distributing the Society's newsletter remains one of our most significant expenses, and here I must pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Twice a year, Angela Dixon and her team regularly stuff, address and stamp almost 2,000 envelopes ready for posting, and our team of Area Coordinators physically deliver a further thousand newsletters across a vast swathe of central Hampshire.

It is no reflection on their efforts that I appeal to each of you to consider joining the growing band of members who, collectively, save the Society over £300 a year by reading their newsletters on-line. All it takes is an e-mail confirming your name and postal address to admin@deversociety.org – and, as a bonus, you'll get your newsletter in colour.

I'm very pleased to report that the Dever Valley Local History Society is now affiliated to the Society. The two societies fulfil the complementary roles of protecting and promoting interest in our local area.

Executive Committee

As many of you will remember, my predecessor Richard Cowen and Phil Bryant both stood down from the Committee at the last AGM. We said our goodbyes then, but this review would be incomplete if I did not mention the outstanding contribution that they both made to the Society's work.

Your new Committee met on three occasions during the year, and I should like to thank them all for supporting me as their new Chairman, as well as for their hard work and continued dedication. I am equally grateful to report that they are prepared to stand for re-election.

Financial matters

The Society continues to receive a steady income from donations and standing orders, for which it is most grateful. Costs are kept very low, and relate to maintenance administration along with the production and distribution of regular newsletters. Once again the Society has not made any fund raising demands on Friends and Members.

The Society's reserves have fallen by £2,216 in the last year to £24,824 at the year end. The reduction in interest rates has had a significant impact during the year, but the Society has continued to keep in touch with members through production and distribution of newsletters. The Executive Committee remains focused on ensuring that the Society's reserves are sufficient to meet its aims into the foreseeable future.

Conclusion

The Society can look back with pride on twenty years of achievement – twenty years in which we have played a part in protecting a cherished way of life for both the present and future generations. Nevertheless, the threat of major development will hang over this corner of Hampshire for as long as Eagle Star continue to hold the land. We must not drop our guard.

Douglas Paterson
Chairman
February 2010

THE DEVER SOCIETY
(Registered Charity No: 1003093)

THE OFFICERS' ANNUAL REPORT

The Officers present their annual report and accounts for the year ended 30 September 2009 which should be read in conjunction with the Chairman's Statement (attached).

The Dever Society is a registered charity constituted as a charitable trust in accordance with its Constitution.

The principal objective of the Society is the conservation of the rural area and Hampshire Downland in and around the Dever Valley.

The Officers since 1st October 2008 have been:

Douglas Paterson:	Chairman (appointed 19th January 2009)
Richard Cowen:	Chairman (resigned 19th January 2009)
Tessa Robertson:	Vice Chairman
Charles Hobbs:	Hon Secretary
Philip Dowson:	Hon Treasurer

The affairs of The Dever Society are conducted and managed by the Officers together with an Executive Committee who bring a complement of knowledge, skills and dedication to furthering the aims of the Society. The Executive Committee meets regularly (monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly) as the business of the Society demands. Certain responsibilities and projects are delegated to individual committee members or sub-committees. The Dever Society has benefited from the activity of a part-time administrator, David Foster, to whom the trustees and committee wish to place on record their thanks for his great support during the year.

The principal and registered office of The Dever Society is:

PO Box 508
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 3DQ

Bankers: Lloyds TSB
 High Street
 Winchester

Auditor: Ian Cammack
 Northington

Signed on behalf of the Officers
Philip Dowson
Hon Treasurer

THE DEVER SOCIETY
 (Registered Charity No: 1003093)
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30 September 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Income and Expenditure		
Incoming Resources		
Donations	517	1,842
Covenants/standing orders	2,738	3,036
Events	-	-
Interest – gross	267	1,135
Tax refunds	1,172	-
Total Incoming Resources	4,694	6,013
Resources Expended		
Direct Charitable Expenditure:		
Secretarial and on-costs	3,425	3,384
Newsletter print, postage	2,869	1,847
Postage	-	120
Tel/Fax/email/Web	(247)	2,372
Stationery	-	-
Events costs/advertising/hire	-	-
General – subs, insurance etc	863	1,020
Planning consultants	-	13,748
Total Resources Expended	6,910	22,491
Net Movement in Funds for the Year	2,216	16,478
Fund balances brought forward 1 October 2008	27,040	43,518
Fund balances carried forward 30 September 2009	24,824	27,040

THE DEVER SOCIETY
 (Registered Charity No: 1003093)
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2009
 (Unrestricted funds)

	2009	2008
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	-	133
Investment Account – 1 month notice - Lloyds TSB	23,820	23,552
Treasurers Account – Lloyds TSB	1,459	4,782
	£25,279	£28,467

CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Sundry Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	455	1,427
Net Assets	£24,824	£27,040

GENERAL FUND		
Unrestricted	£24,824	£27,040

NOTE:
 Income tax refunds are accounted for on a received basis.

Approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2010 and signed on its behalf by

Douglas Paterson. Trustee

REPORT OF THE HONORARY AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS

I have examined the above Balance Sheet and the Income and Expenditure account (set out on Pages 2 and 3) for the year ended 30 September 2009 and confirm that they are in accordance with the accounting records and vouchers presented to me.

Ian Cammack
 Northington
 March 2010