

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD AT THE GRANGE HALL, THE GRANGE, COVENTRY ROAD, SOUTHAM ON THURSDAY, 10th MAY 2018 at 6:45pm**

**Present:** Councillors: M Brooks - In the Chair  
G Oubridge, S Exton, L Ellard, G Barratt, G Foster, M Connors. M Gaffney MBE TD, P Jenkins, K Toner

**Approximately 40 Members of the public were present including:  
Mr B Cadogan, Mr M Hill, Mrs J Grey, Mrs T Sadler, Mrs S Forgan, Mrs R Hill, Mr M Hill, Mrs L Doyle, Mr N Mr T Grey, Mrs M Kaur Evans, Mrs J Grey, Mr L Gale, Mrs M Gale, Mrs J Graham, Mrs K Geddes, Mr P Guy, Mrs P Brailsford, Mrs I Gwillam, Mr P Munday MBE, BEM, Mr P Munday Jnr**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Mrs S Benson, Ms E Longworth, Mr R Samra, Mrs A Cragg, Mrs A Jakeway, Mrs H Nealon, Mr S Adams, Mr B Parker, Ms A Vickers

**2. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 12th May 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record of the proceedings.**

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

None

**4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN MAYOR**

The Report of the Town Mayor for the year 2017/2018 was presented to the meeting and is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

**5. REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS Appendix B**

The meeting received written reports from the following:

Southam & Bishops Itchington Congregational Church  
Southam Town Council Voluntary Transport Service  
The Grange Hall Management Committee  
Rotary Club of Southam  
Southam in Bloom  
Rotary Club of Southam 2000  
Southam Melody Makers  
Southam WI

Verbal Reports

Mrs M Kaur Evans	Parenting Project
Mrs J Grey	Fosse Food Bank
Mr L Gale	Southam Civic Ideas Forum
Mr B Cadogan	Southam Heritage Collection
Mr M Hill	Southam Twinning Association
Mrs J Graham	Southam Derby & Joan Club
Mrs K Geddes	Southam First
Mrs T Saddler	Southam in Bloom
Mrs T Saddler	Southam Rotary 2000
Mr P Guy	Southam & District Lions Club
Cllr M Brooks	Neighbourhood Plan
Mrs J Graham	Melody Makers
Mr A Foster	Grange Players

The Town Mayor thanked all those attending and submitting reports to the meeting. Those reports submitted in writing, both before and after the meeting, are attached to these minutes as Appendix B

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS RAISED BY ELECTORS**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7:41pm

Appendix A

Mayors Report 2017 /2018

My Mayoral Year representing Southam has been an amazing year. I have learnt so many new things and met so many interesting people. For me, the role of Mayor was to act as an ambassador and to promote Southam whilst learning about other towns and parishes networking with other Mayors listening to what their councils are achieving and how they are still trying to bring communities together. All these ideas stimulate and prompt similar initiatives elsewhere.

My chosen Charities were Acorns Children’s Hospice and Alzheimer’s and I am proud to tell you that we managed to raise just over £2168 which will be divided between these well deserving causes

As a Council we have had some high points this year and we should be proud of these [achievements](#). And I would like to touch on just a few

Housing Applications We as your council always strive to protect Southam and its surrounding areas so object strongly on all unsuitable housing applications. But one in particular put an appeal in Cllr Brooks and the Town Clerk spent many hours on and decided with the support of the Council to hire a planning consultant who stood on behalf of the Council and had the appeal thrown out.

When VASA pulled out of Southam and left us with the real threat that our volunteer drivers service would be run from Stratford the council stepped in and with the help

of most of the original drivers and the volunteer phone line operators we started our own Southam Volunteer Drivers. We installed a new dedicated phone line at the Grange Hall approached other local parish councils for monetary assistance so that their communities could use it as well and it is now up and running and doing excellently.

With the Parenting Project being under threat and all outreach groups threatened with closure, the Council again stepped in and with help from the Grange Hall they now have a room and the offer of administrative help. We are hoping that this will be going ahead soon and that there will be an established Southam Children's Centre. We have had meetings with the Police Commissioner about the ever-growing drugs problem and the anti-social behavior that some parts of Southam are being plagued with. Meetings with Southam College about how the school will grow with all the new houses. Discussions with other civic bodies, that can sometimes become quite heated

Our Neighbourhood Planning Committee is doing a great job and working hard at bringing this long and drawn out process to a conclusion. Every Member on this council is attached to some working party or outside group

So hopefully you get the feel that a lot goes on behind the scenes and I personally would like to thank the Town Councillors for the offices they undertake and the jobs that they do and special thanks to our hard-working Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Grange Hall Administrator.

Lee Ellard – Retiring Mayor 2018

Appendix B

### Southam In Bloom report May 2018

I have to report another good year in 2017 with the town looking resplendent throughout the summer months with floral displays in a mixture of yellow, orange, red and cream.

The baskets and troughs were planted and installed by Peter Healey and his team at Greenleaf Nursery. The various planters about the town were planted by Committee Members and Southam In Bloom Helpers. Watering was ably carried out by Tony Bromwich.

The plants and their watering cost a great deal of money. We could not exist without the grants we receive from STC, the sponsorship of individual baskets, troughs and planters by local businesses, and donations given very generously by members of the public. We are very grateful for all of these.

Throughout the year we held a number of fund-raising events. We had a plant stall at the Lions May Day Fayre. On Carnival Day some of us joined the parade, dressed as characters from My Fair Lady, and then helped to run the plant stall and raffle. In July we held a street collection. We also had fund-raising stalls at the Retro event in

October and the Christmas Lights switch-on event in November. Our most successful fund-raiser of the year was our Open Gardens Weekend in July when 21 gardens were open to the public. We are very grateful to those who so kindly opened their gardens. After much wrangling and red tape we were delighted to be given permission to reinstate the rose garden at Tithe Place. Planting has just begun. The new garden, as well as roses, will have a variety of other plants to give all year colour. We now look forward, in 2018, to another summer of Southam in glorious bloom.  
Tessa Sadler, Chair, Southam In Bloom

## Rotary Club of Southam

Chairman – Bob Stevens

## Report for Southam Town Council Annual Meeting May 2018

Although small in number our members are very active in the community, both here in Southam and in the surrounding villages.

Our “Tree of Light” took place at the same time as the Southam Christmas Lights event and raised much needed funds for Acorns Children Hospices; we have also made several donations to other charities during the year.

Once again we held a Whist Drive for the enthusiastic and very competitive card players from nearby villages.

Every Tuesday lunch time, except following a Bank Holiday, we meet at the Fox and Hen Bascote Heath. We have many interesting speakers, often have visitors from other UK Rotary Clubs and occasionally from International ones.

New members would be very welcome.

## Southam Melody Makers

We are a ladies choir of about 25 enthusiastic members who rehearse weekly during term time at Southam Primary school. During the last council year, we have, through giving concerts,

raised money for the Motor Neuron Disease Association, Music and the Deaf and Southam Christmas lights.

The Autumn term was as usual the busiest, singing at a cabaret night at the Grange Hall, the Advent service at St. James', carols at Heathcote Hospital and we linked together with Southam Primary School in their Christmas Production.

In February we sang for the residents at Galanos House and are planning a Summer Concert together with a Silver Band in St James' Church in June. Next week we have a concert in Warwick with the Spa Strummers, helping Warwick Lions to raise money for their charities.

### **SOUTHAM TOWN COUNCIL - VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SERVICE**

**Lead Councillor - Councillor Mike Gaffney**

### **BACKGROUND**

- 1. Following VASA decision to close their Southam office and remove the service back to S-on-Avon at the same time combining their service with VASA Warwick District it was resolved in April 2017 to continue a service to Southam residents based at the Grange Hall and supported by the Town Council.**
- 2. The office commenced working in June 2017 in the Grange Hall staffed by the same volunteers and providing the same excellent service funded from the present budget to refund drivers mileage expenses but under the complete management of the Town Council.**

### **PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 3. Since the smooth changeover the service has grown.**
  - a. We now have 16 drivers and recruiting continues.**
  - b. The Town Clerk has encouraged other surrounding parish councils to join the scheme and currently five have joined us. Bishops Itchington, Harbury and Deppers Bridge, Napton, Priors Marston and Priors Hardwicke.**

**These parish councils contribute a sum of money to the running costs based on their populations.**

**c. Since June 2017 drivers have carried out 791 journeys with a total mileage of 16484 and 2258 volunteer hours. The volunteers in the booking office have worked 779 hours.**

**d. The service is well advertised in local media including Facebook and local websites and it is clear that this is working by the number of clients we have on a regular and repeat basis.**

**This excellent and well used service can only improve and expand with more volunteer drivers and recruiting continues.**

**We are very grateful to our present volunteers both office staff and drivers for their time and work on behalf of the local community and these results prove the need for such a service in Southam.**

**1 May 2018**

**Councillor Mike Gaffney**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

**REPORT OF THE GRANGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Mike Brooks – Chairman**

The past 12 months has been a very busy one for the committee. We have continued with a programme of capital investment in the hall with internal redecoration, new floor coverings, curtains and blinds and the purchasing of new bar room furniture. I think you will agree the results give the hall a fresher and more welcoming appearance!

A grant has also recently been submitted to HS2 Groundworks for additional redecoration, internal and external repairs and to replace some of the electrical and mechanical systems that are getting close to the end of their expected life span. There is, of course, no guarantee we will be successful but if all goes to plan, the result will be a complete overhaul of the building.

Our thanks go to the Town Council who have continued to support us and have had to make, at times, difficult but necessary decisions.

We have seen a marked increase in bookings throughout the year with new groups wishing to use the facility – Watercolour painting, Yoga, Zumba Gold. Last year we reported we would provide monthly Tea Dances, themed for 40s-50s music, hoping also to attract the retro and re-enactment groups. This proved far from popular; it seems the target audience is elusive and maybe not as strong as we thought. On a change of tack, we are now holding monthly table top sales which are proving more successful. The committee continues to work hard to investigate and identify new event opportunities.

In addition, we are progressing with an application for a wedding license, looking to tap into this lucrative market. As always, it is the big-ticket events when the bar is booked that provide much needed revenue and our casual dedicated bar staff make it possible to offer this service. We strive to keep prices as competitive as possible. Overall, our fortunes have turned around and, despite the expected holiday period troughs, we are set to make a profit this year.

Finally, the committee and Town Council actively supported the Southam Children's Centre during Warwickshire County Council's restructuring and cost saving proposals. The centre was in danger of closure but now, reclassified as an outreach centre and renamed Southam Children's and Family Centre, has an 18-month stay of execution but was, however, forced to relocate from its former home at Arundel House. The committee submitted a bid to host the service and we are pleased to announce we were successful; the Grange Hall is now the centre's new home. We will be working closely with the Parenting Project and the County Council with the aim of securing a long-term commitment to retain this much valued and needed service in the town.

I should like to thank Mrs Louise Neal (our Caretaker), Mrs Carole Gwillam (our Administrator), the Management Committee members and, in particular, the Town Council for their continuing support.



## Southam WI Annual Report 2018

Southam Women's Institute, which is part of the Warwickshire Federation, currently has 36 members. We are a friendly group of ladies and we are always pleased to welcome new members. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month in St. Mary's School Hall at 7.30pm.

Over the last twelve months we have enjoyed a wide variety of speakers on a range of different subjects including the history of the teddy bear, acupuncture, life on the canals and the fascinating world of garden birds. We had an inspirational talk from Eugene Schellenberg telling us about the Ifakara Bakery Project which he and his wife set up in Tanzania. We also enjoyed a light-hearted history of musical instruments with demonstrations and audience participation.

On April 7<sup>th</sup> this year we celebrated our 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. We organised an outing for our members on that date. We hired a coach and travelled to Market Harborough where we spent an enjoyable morning before going on to Coombe Abbey for a delicious afternoon tea. The members were all presented with a commemorative leather book mark.

Outside of our meetings we have enjoyed outings and theatre trips, and taken part in local quiz evenings. We have held fundraising Coffee Mornings and in the summer, we organised a lunch for our members. This was held at Southam Cricket Club. In January our members enjoyed a post-Christmas meal at The Bowling Green.

In our local community we have supported the Southam Christmas Lights Association and Southam In Bloom. Some of our members have helped with the Produce Show and this year we will be providing refreshments at that event. We also have a homemade cake stall at the Lions May Day Fete.

The committee has once again worked hard to provide a supportive, informative and enjoyable environment for the members and we look forward to another successful year.

Southam WI

9<sup>th</sup> May 2018



## **Southam and Bishop's Itchington Congregational Church**

### **Report for the Annual Town Meeting**

Our minister, Neil Chappell is now in his fifth year with us, the years seem to flash past so quickly, and I think we can say he has nearly settled in here! We continue to be encouraged by the growth in the number of people coming to worship with us on Sunday mornings and feel particularly blessed in having a good number of young people with us, and the enthusiasm they bring! We have also seen a number of people making the commitment of becoming church members. Of course we would always welcome more people, and as the population of our town grows with the spate of new houses we are making efforts to reach them with our Good News message of forgiveness and hope.

We continue to work closely with, and support, the work of the Southam Church and Community Project at the Graham Adams Centre. Several of our church members put in an immense amount of time and work to further the outreach to all sections of our community, from Parent and Toddlers to the youth club(s) and luncheon club for the elderly, and the many other activities which take place there.

We are also pleased and encouraged by the continued use of our church premises by community groups such as Guides, Rangers, the Southam Baking Circle and various choirs who use it for concerts. Our drop-in Coffee Pot on Tuesday mornings continues to be a popular place for people to meet up, despite the move of the market away from the car park.

One thing which, unfortunately, does not change is the problem with our building! In early 2014 it looked immaculate after the repair work was finished, just in time for Neil's induction service. Since then there have been a number of issues and we have had scaffolding in place since last October in order to protect people from falling pieces of render. We are still trying to find a way forward with the remedial work to replace the render to the upper section of the front wall.

When Neil came to us the initial commitment on both sides was for a period of three years. It seems fair to say that, after a longer period than that, Neil's ministry amongst us is proving to be fruitful, and he seems to be reasonably happy with us. Whether he will stay as long as a certain well-known football manager stayed at his club, will have to be left in the hands of a Higher Authority!

## **Town Meeting Report – 2017/18**

### **Southam Heritage Collection**

It is at least 7 years since I started giving these annual reports to the Town Meeting and each time I have been able to refer to substantial progress in the Collection's overall objective of bringing to life the history of Southam and its people. It is roughly 75 years since Jack Cardall began to pull the Collection together during the dark days of WW2, and since the founding of the Friends of the Cardall Collection and then the Southam Heritage Collection we have moved rapidly to a situation where the Collection can be of material benefit to the town. Progress this past year has again been significant starting with our two exhibitions, firstly our third "WW1 Centenary

Exhibition” run by Val Brody, Chris Holding and Chrissie Jerome, and then the “All Our Yesterdays” exhibition prepared by Chris Holding which has focussed on some of the items donated by local people and exhibited by Rene Cardall at her house over 12 year’s ago. Visitors have come from many parts of the country, and indeed overseas, to enjoy these exhibitions and have left comments to say so in our visitor’s book. In addition, we now have over 200 pages on our web site honouring the men and women of Southam who selflessly gave their service and in some cases their lives for their country during WW1.

In achieving the above, I would like to pay thanks for the ongoing support not only from our volunteers but also from Southam Town Council including both the Councillors and the staff under Debbie. We have also had great support from our District Councillor Andy Crump and fantastic financial and material help from many local people and businesses for which we are again extremely grateful – without this we could not survive.

Unfortunately, there is one major black cloud on the horizon and this poses an existential threat to the Collection. This is the question of where to house the Collection and mount future displays. Our current home, Vivian House, has been sold. In anticipation of moving into Tithe Place, 18 months ago we entered into a 5-year lease at Vivian House with a break clause at 18 months – viz June 30<sup>th</sup> 2018. The new owner of Vivian House has invoked this break clause. However, despite Tithe Place having been completed 2.5 years ago and negotiations starting in January 2018 with Stratford District Council, following discussions over the previous 2 years, we have no date for moving to the new premises. In fact, the situation is even worse than that – Stratford cannot handle industry standard email encryption from our Solicitors and therefore cannot communicate with them, they have let one Community room to a commercial client but refuse to let the other two to us because of ventilation problems in that room, even though they admit the problems do not affect the other rooms. They are asking for asbestos reports on the new building even though it has been illegal to use asbestos in new buildings for over 19 years now. In short, we are finding it almost impossible to hold any sensible discussions with Stratford despite involvement of our District Councillor and Southam Town Council. Alsters and Kelley, who are doing our lease negotiations on a pro-bono basis are tearing their hair out over the attitude of SDC. The situation right now is that we are beginning to

wonder if Stratford have some undisclosed objective with regard to these rooms – we are 7 weeks away from being evicted from our current location and we are still finding it impossible to have a sensible conversation with Stratford District Council officers to discuss and resolve the matter.

I am sorry to have to end what I had hoped would have been a very positive report on what has in all other respects been another very successful year due to the active support and involvement of so many people and businesses in the town, for which I thank everyone from the bottom of my heart, but to do so would have left you with a misleading impression of where the Heritage Collection stands today. We will hold a small version of what was planned to be our final WW1 Centenary Exhibition in Vivian House in the first three weeks of June before we are evicted – I hope we will be able to continue this Exhibition through the summer months in Tithe Place but at present it is impossible for me to make any commitment. It would be a crying shame if we have to lose all the momentum we have gathered over the past 12 years due to Stratford's management of the Tithe Place rooms but that is where we stand today.

Thank you.

Bernard Cadogan  
Chairman  
Southam Heritage Collection  
May 2018