

Beccles Society Annual General Meeting
Minutes of the Meeting held 10th April 2019
at Hungate Methodist Church at 7.00 pm

1. The Chairman, Paul Fletcher, welcomed the President, Martin Bell OBE., current members and guests to the meeting. There were 35 attendees in all.

2. Apologies had been received from Andrea Downes, Jeff & Julia Harris, Michael Porter and Julie Urry.

3. The Minutes of the previous AGM held on 11th April 2018 were approved and signed.

4. In his Chairman's report, Paul Fletcher identified some of the main issues with which the Society had been involved over the past 12 months.

John Sayer is the Society representative on "Pride in Beccles".

Bob Aris has been monitoring the proposed transfer of records from Lowestoft to Ipswich Hold, and is also preparing a booklet on "Blue"/ "Green" plaques in Beccles.

Paul Fletcher and John Sayer are regular members of the Neighbourhood Planning team and have been actively involved in writing policy statements.

Information about Beccles Society achievements are posted on our new website and on Town Council Notice boards.

Paul Fletcher has been collating information about the numbers of HGV's still travelling through the centre of Beccles, and this has been passed to Peter Aldous MP, who contacts the companies concerned.

5. The Treasurers Report had been prepared by Jeff Harris (Treasurer) and it was noted that the previous year's deficit of £1200 had been turned around to an underspend of £106.

6. Nomination for election of officers.

Martin Bell OBE, having graciously accepted that he continue as President, was proposed by Alison Ayers and seconded by Sarah Jane Lavington.

John Frith proposed that Paul Fletcher should continue as Chairman, and this was seconded by Barry Darch.

Other posts on the Committee will remain as they stand. This was proposed by Sarah Jane Lavington and seconded by Brian Lewis.

There were no nominations for the positions of Honorary Secretary, Membership Secretary or Publicity Officer.

The list of officers now reads as follows:-

President	Martin Bell OBE
Chairman	Paul Fletcher
Vice-Chairman	John Sayer
Honorary Secretary	Vacant
Minutes Secretary (acting)	Jennifer Fletcher
Honorary Treasurer	Jeff Harris
Membership Secretary	Vacant
Committee Members	Richard Bellefontaine Julia Harris David Lindley Chris Scott Terry Goodwin Joan Pattison

Planning applications will be assessed by Bob Aris and controversial issues will be passed to Paul Fletcher for reporting to the Planning Authorities.

The business part of the meeting was closed and there was a break for refreshments.

Our speaker for the evening was James Mayhew, well-known local author and illustrator. James has written many children's books over the years, particularly popular is "Katie" who is the leading character in various adventures, and she was well-known to several members of the audience.

The talk began with some background to James' family and childhood, and we were treated to photographs of these showing the beaches and the countryside taken when he was growing up. More recently James has teamed up with Zeb Soames, a radio 4 newscaster, who has written a children's book about Gaspard the fox, based loosely on a fox he befriended in Islington. James has provided skilful illustrations throughout this book.

The talk ended with James telling the story of "the Firebird" which he illustrated for us as he spoke. This necessitated drawing and then painting the picture upside down and right to left for him, so that the audience experienced it all the right way round.

It was difficult to bring the evening to a close as the audience had so many questions. Bob Aris gave James a vote of thanks for a most entertaining and unusual presentation. Paul Fletcher thanked everyone for coming along, with a special thanks to the President, Martin Bell, who each year makes the trip from London to be with us. Next year's AGM will be on Wednesday April 8th 2020.

After the meeting James presented the painting of "the Firebird" to the Society and we subsequently sent it to Martin Bell as a memento of the evening.

Jennifer Fletcher.