



## The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.00 pm on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025 in the Unicorn Theatre

The sixth Annual General Meeting of the Society took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2025 in the Unicorn Theatre.

Chairman Hester welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked the Abbey Buildings Trust for allowing the Abbey premises to be used for the meeting. Secretary Keith confirmed that the number of members in attendance meant that the meeting was quorate.

Greg Bensberg, Chair of Trustees of the Abbey Buildings Trust, then gave a brief update on the Abbey Buildings enhancement project and in particular the items found during excavations. Despite winning a considerable amount of National Lottery funding, more funds were required and those present were requested to consider a contribution.

Hester noted the apologies which she and Keith had received.

Minutes of the AGM held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 were read. They were confirmed as being accurate. There were no matters arising.

#### **Resolution No 1**

Appointment of Trustees – in accordance with the Society's constitution, Roberta Nichols was retiring by rotation and seeking reappointment. This was approved unanimously.

#### **Resolution No 2**

Receipt of Trustees Report for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

Hester gave a brief verbal overview of the work which had been undertaken:

- The highlights were another successful Heritage Weekend and the continued operation of Unit 24 in the precinct as a community facility. Both of these were appreciated by the community and were important ways to raise the Society's profile and work in collaboration with other groups and strengthen relationships with them. Hester thanked Andrew Coker for leading the work in both of these areas.
- There had also been considerable progress in the digitisation of photo archives and the Society has participated in preparing the Albert Park Conservation Area Appraisal. The Society's walks leaflets continued to be very popular

Hester thanked all the Trustees and Committee members – and their partners - for their work and support throughout the year.

The report was received with unanimous approval and there were no questions.

### **Resolution No 3**

Receipt of the Accounts for the period ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. These were received with unanimous approval and there were no questions.

There being no other business, the formal AGM concluded at 7.12pm.

Hester then gave an update on the continuing work of the Society. The landlord of Unit 24 has unexpectedly given notice to terminate the lease as refurbishments were required for new tenants, but had offered Unit 25 as an alternative. This was now occupied under a formal two year lease.

The Society continued to press for an agreement between the leaseholder and the Council on the future of the former Upper Reaches site.

Five more leaders had been recruited to assist with the guided walks organised by the Society.

Two new committee members had been recruited in 2025, both with experience and expertise in particular aspects of the Society's work. One would take on the Society's Planning activity and the other had embarked on a study of availability of banking facilities in the town with the closure of two "top four" banks and the imminent closure of another.

There was a need for additional committee members so that work could be undertaken in areas such as liaison with young people and schools.

There was then a talk by guest speaker Philip Venning on "From Abingdon to Venice: Saving buildings since 1877" on the work of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), which was very well received.

The meeting was followed by wine and cheese in the Lower Hall.