

**Minutes of the Annual Members Meeting of the
Anstruther Improvements Association on
Thursday 17th October 2019 at 7pm in Anstruther Parish
Church**

Present

Ordinary Members:, Kate Anstruther, John Barker, Gordon Baxter, Barbara Fotheringham, Jennifer Gordon, Lynne Harvie, Linda James, Graham James, Christine Keay, Mary Money, Trevor Money, Christine Palmer, Jan Pearson, Elizabeth Riches, Alan Stewart.

Other: Billy Briggs.

1. Christine Palmer (CP) opened the AMM, welcomed the members and read out apologies from Janet Bulloch, Arran Aird, Toby Anstruther, Chloe Milne, Elizabeth and Alan Gordon.
2. The minutes of the 2018 AMM were proposed by Elizabeth Riches (ER) and seconded by John Barker (JB). There were no matters arising.
3. CP presented the President's Report (attached).
4. CP explained the Committee's proposal to move the membership year back to September-August and asked the ordinary members to approve that the annual subscription for January 2020 to August 2021 should be set at £10.00. There would be exceptions for a small number of members who joined in Autumn 2019, who would be asked to renew in September 2020 at a rate of £7.50. Kate Anstruther (KA) proposed this formally, JB seconded it and the proposals were approved by the ordinary members.
5. The constitution requires that one-third of the Trustees retire each year and two of the existing Trustees had resigned in writing and were putting themselves forward for re-election. They had completed and submitted nomination forms within the deadline laid out in the constitution. Both nominees were unanimously voted in as Trustees by the ordinary members present at the AMM. They are: CP and ER.
6. CP presented the independent financial examiner's report to the members.
7. As Joint Treasurer, CP presented the annual accounts to the members, who received them. CP explained the difference between restricted and unrestricted funds. She confirmed receipts in 2018 of £19,524 from events and donations compared with £19,703 in 2017 and £9,447 in restricted grants and donations compared with £26,225 in 2017. She also confirmed unrestricted payments of £14,413 on charitable activities compared with £14,741 in 2017 and £27,738 from the restricted fund compared with £1,202 in 2017. In 2018 there was an overall deficit of £13,180 but with a surplus in unrestricted funds £5,111. The association is building levels of reserves to ensure funds are available to cover the ongoing running, maintenance and repair costs as well as to contribute towards the redevelopment plans. In 2017 the association adopted a new business plan which sets a sustainable level for reserves going forward. The statement of

balances shows £93,555 of bank and cash balances at the year end (2017 £106,993), £48,084 in unrestricted funds (2017 £42,973) and £45,729 in restricted funds (2017 £64,020). CP invited questions from the members but there were none.

8. ER proposed that Mark Robertson of Henderson Black be appointed as independent financial examiner for the SCIO's accounts and Barbara Fotheringham seconded the proposal, which was approved by the ordinary members.
9. ER thanked CP and KA for their work overseeing the Dreel Halls capital project.
10. CP thanked the Trustees, the Honorary Patrons, the members and the volunteers.

Above minutes accepted as a true record

Signed: _____(Chair) Date: _____

President's Report

For the AIA committee, 2018 has been a year of anticipation and patience. Plans for the capital project to upgrade the interior of Dreel Halls inched forward, and in 2018 we learned that funding applications to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and to Fife LEADER were both successful, resulting in a fully funded capital project. Dreel Halls closed at the end of April 2019 for works to commence, and will remain closed certainly until the end of this year. Copies of the plans can be found on the AIA's website, but the committee is hugely excited to see the project start and we await the improved facilities with eager anticipation.

Meanwhile it has been business as usual for our members, with our usual programme of events and activities to entertain and educate the community. This included Anster Nichts, Anster Cinema and the All Ages Café as well as the Buffet Supper and the return of the Christmas Social. The AIA took part in the Doors Open Day in September, taking around 100 visitors up the St Nicholas Tower to enjoy the view and learn the history of the building, and in November Christine Keay rallied the troops to run another successful and enjoyable Vintage Day.

Christine, along with fellow members Graham and Linda James, also staged a fantastic exhibition at Dreel Halls, which in 2019 moved on to the Scottish Fisheries Museum. The exhibition, It Ends Up On Our Beach, aimed to highlight the increasing amount of waste that washes up on beaches around Anstruther. The exhibition was generously funded by the Community Kist, which also stepped into the breach left by Fife Council and funded the AIA's floral display activity as well as providing revenue funding. We are grateful to the Kist's manager and founder, and AIA Honorary Patron, Elizabeth Gordon, who can also be found washing the dishes after most of our events.

In response to this and other environmental problems the AIA is working to reduce and eliminate the organisation's consumption of single use plastics and is partnering with Plastic Free Anstruther.

2018 saw another sell-out duck race. This event continues to draw the community together and this year the AIA put out a call to all East Neuk knitters to create a paddling of Creme Egg ducks which could be sold to raise funds for the organisation. We hope to do the same this year as it is a great way to engage with different parts of the community as well as raising funds for the AIA.

Dreel Halls capital project was selected in 2018 as one of three beneficiaries of the Co-operative's Local Community Fund programme. The scheme raised nearly £9,000 for the project, and we are very grateful to the Co-op and its customers for this support.

The AIA was proud once more to play an important role in Anstruther's community-led provision of floral displays in the town. Our volunteer gardeners work hard around the town to ensure that our green spaces, however small, look beautiful. For the third year in a row, Anstruther & Cellardyke won gold in the 2018 Beautiful Fife awards. The judges were pleasantly surprised to be served tea and lemon drizzle cake from vintage bone china in the AIA's garden on their whistle-stop tour!

In April the AIA was the Bowhouse charity of the month and we were able to promote the AIA and our many activities to the market's visitors. We sold duck race ducks, the creme egg cosies and entertained the younger visitors with a fairground-style hook-a-duck game. We also spoke to many people about the cinema, the all-ages café and AIA membership. The AIA also provided teas at the Scotland's Gardens Scheme opening of Kellie Castle and Balcaskie and we are grateful to our many bakers.

In 2018 Anster Cinema trialled some evening screenings and we were also able to partner with Fife Council's Community Learning and Development team to screen Resilience, a documentary that explores the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences. In October we were shocked and saddened when we learned of the death of AIA Trustee, Roger Sedgley. Roger helped to found Anster Cinema in 2015 and programmed the Cinema until his death. We miss him hugely and are forever in his debt.

Dreel Halls continued to put itself on the map as a music venue, with a well-attended ceilidh concert by the talented young people from Fèis Rois in July. There was also music during the year from Saskia Griffiths-Moore and friends, Jono McCleery and The Raeburn Heights. We also provided a location for the shooting of Mr Jones, a dramatic thriller that came out in February 2019.

The Anstruther Writing Awards had another successful year, and we are grateful to judges Andrew Greig, Jennie Erdal and Chae Strathie. We have to thank Matt Barnard and Eleanor Anstruther, who saved the day when we lost our fourth judge at the eleventh hour. Matt and Eleanor judged the Waid Academy entries at very short notice. For the fourth year running Dreel Halls partnered with Waid to organise an art competition and exhibition by S3 pupils. We are grateful to the Waid art team and to our panel of judges, Keny Drew, Hilke McIntyre and Kirsty Thomas. Kirsty also supports the AIA by designing our beautiful promotional material for Anster Cinema pro bono.

We cannot end this review without thanking the many volunteers who support the AIA in so many ways. The AIA is almost entirely run on volunteer power. Our grateful thanks go to everyone who helps us – homebakers, kitchen and cinema helpers, knitters, duck race helpers, guest speakers, volunteer judges, tour guides, photographers, exhibition curators, gardeners, bar staff and more. Thanks also to our Honorary Patrons, Elizabeth Gordon, Christine Keay and John Barker, our members and our dedicated and hard-working committee.