**Minutes of the Nether Edge Neighbourhood Group Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday 30th March 2022**

Present: approximately 28 people joined the online meeting.

Apologies: John Austin, Mike Pye.

The chairman, Ken Lambert, outlined the rules of conduct for the online meeting.

 Ken Lambert issued a very warm welcome to everyone.

1. **Minutes of the online AGM of 24th February 2021.**

These were accepted as an accurate record.

Proposer: Howard Fry. Seconder: Kevin Hickey.

Matters Arising: none.

2. **Chairman’s Report**:

Ken stated that the past year had again been difficult because of covid but that things were beginning to get back on track.

Sadly, Mazhar Hussain, vice-chair of NENG has resigned as a committee member and trustee. Everyone wishes him well and great thanks were offered for all his hard work over the years.

Several new members have joined the committee recently. These are Kevin Bonnet, Vicky Phillips, Festival Chair and Stephen Houfe, designer, on the Edge editorial board. Thanks were offered to Stephen for his innovations to Edge.

Other NENG initiatives include putting pressure on Sainsbury’s who have recently painted the exterior of the Nether Edge News shop, which they own. Much work was initiated by John Austin, David Pierce and Howard Fry.

Howard was also involved in obtaining funding from SCC for the Nether Edge crossroads in a project led by Steve Ojari which aims to attract more business to what is to be known as the Nether Edge Village. Money is to be spent on new railings outside “Bombshell” and some tree planting. The history group has prepared an information board to be displayed outside the Bowling Club.

Thanks were expressed to Howard for all his work on this.

Howard has also instigated a conversation through Edge on traffic on Brincliffe Edge Road. NENG has received a great deal of correspondence on this subject. It was noted that the Nether Edge Active Neighbourhood scheme, instigated by the council, seems to have been shelved. Ken said that one role of NENG is to keep up the pressure to improve the area.

Ken offered a massive thanks to everyone who works on behalf of NENG. Although there are too many to name, special mention should go to Howard Fry for his tremendous contribution.

3. **Reports from NENG sub-groups.**

Nether Edge Market

Report by Howard Fry.

The markets are going well, although three markets had to be cancelled because of covid and public health protocols made re-establishing them a little more challenging. Reducing the number of stalls from 80 to 53 has meant a slight drop in income but given more satisfaction to stall holders and made the market a more sociable occasion. The March market received 100 applications for stalls for 53 places. £2,100 was taken and after expenses, £1,800 was donated to the Nether Edge and Sharrow food bank. Some small stalls have shared, which has worked well. It has been agreed that there will only be stalls on one side of Glen Road, which enables people to move more freely and see the stalls.

8 new members signed up to NENG at the last market.

The market committee is a strong group led by David Pierce and has recently been joined by several new, younger members who are very welcome.

The next market is 12th June 2022.

Festival Sub-committee

Report by Vicky Phillips, festival chair

Planning for this year’s festival has already started. There have been several changes to the committee with Richard Taylor and Mark Doel standing down as co-chairs but remaining part of the group. Jean Allen and Gareth Jones are also stepping down but Jean has already organised several concerts to be held at St Andrew’s Psalter Lane Church. The festival will open with the traditional carnival and finish with a picnic in the park both of which were extremely successful last year. The scarecrow trail will be back, plus another I-Spy trail. The history group has proposed some film screenings and possibly a talk on world war 2.

Many thanks were expressed to Richard and Mark for their very valuable work.

Richard responded by thanking Vicky for a smooth transition and he said that the committee would welcome newcomers.

History Group

The history group report was published in the March issue of Edge. There are proposed history walks and a book on the silver jubilee.

Edge Editorial Board - members: Ruth Bernard, Nicky Erlen, Kevin Hickey, Stephen Houfe and David Pierce.

Kevin said that Stephen’s input had improved the newsletter tremendously. Edge is published 10 times a year and the editors try to gather stories that celebrate achievements and changes in Nether Edge. New and diverse editors, would be welcome and would be well supported by the Board. Stephen has been responsible for designing a welcome pack for new neighbours, which is available to all distributors of Edge.

Howard’s letter on the subject of road traffic had struck chord and received more response than on any other subject recently.

Marion Gerson would like NENG to pursue the idea of a 20 mile an hour speed limit on the through roads of Nether Edge. Ken agreed and said he was disappointed that Howard’s letter to three local councillors had received no response. NENG will keep up the pressure.

Friends of Brincliffe Edge Woods

Report by Howard Trott

 The group has been in existence for ten years and has a steady committee, recently joined by Wendy Brown from the Bowling Club. The number of volunteers has increased and to promote covid safe working, people are asked to let the organiser know if they can help so that jobs can be allocated in advance. However no-one who turns up on the day will be turned away. The group works closely with John Gilpin from the council who regularly walks the woods and agrees a programme of work, which includes replacing steps and revetments. Ash dieback has necessitated recent felling but notices have been put up to keep people informed. The group also planted 50 buckthorn whips, to encourage the brimstone butterfly.

Thanks were expressed to NENG for its support.

Kenwood Community Growers

Report by Sharon Watson

The group grew from the Nether Edge street trees campaign with the aim of supporting peoples’ mental health and growing sustainable local food. Started in 2020, the group were fortunate in being allowed to use a site at the Kenwood Hall hotel. There have been many positive benefits associated with the group including ‘green exercise’ and building a strong sense of community. There has been much positive feedback from the Kenwood community. All the food grown has been donated to Food Works in Sharrow. The group asked for funding of £1600 from the Co-op but were delighted to receive £5000 with which they bought seeds, tools and repaired some damage caused by snow. Unfortunately, last year the growers were given notice to quit and are now looking for a suitable plot of land hopefully in the Nether Edge/Sharrow area as the money from the Co-op has to be used within this area. However the group are thinking they might have to work differently and plans to run Zoom workshops this year. They might also run some practical activities and they are also looking at creating small patches of wildlife friendly planting in Nether Edge. They would very much welcome new members and need a new chairperson.

Some suggestions of possible sites were put forward.

Many thanks were expressed to Sharon.

Friends of Chelsea Park

Report by Helen Ryal

 There were many complaints about the state of the playground in the park. Howard Fry, having contacted the Council and received no response, organised a petition and a group of interested volunteers met to discuss ideas. Amy Rowland of the Parks and Countryside Section identified money in the Annie Francis Memorial Fund set up for the upkeep of Chelsea Park. £22,000 was identified plus £2,000 from NENG, money from the market and £617 raised by the Brownies.

Swings were replaced and the very muddy ground drained by Amey. Tiger mulch around the climbing frame was laid at a cost of £1400. The camel has a new spring and the roundabout was sent away to be powder coated. The work was co-ordinated by Bob Parkin of the Parks and Countryside Section. Jim Taylor has kindly offered to refurbish the benches.

Howard is to arrange a day in the summer to clean up the climbing frame.

The history group are planning another display board for the park.

Many thanks were expressed to Helen and the Friends of Chelsea Park for all their work.

Open Gardens

Report by Howard Fry

This year gardens will be open on 19th June. Howard appealed for more gardens, saying they don’t have to be posh! There is to be a pullout section detailing the gardens in the June edition of Edge. It is hoped that the pocket park, Frog Walk, will be included.

Art Group.

Report by Richard Taylor

 The group is considering a name change to the Nether Edge Village Art Group. There are now 20 members both novices and established artists who meet regularly sometimes in the Bowling Club or members’ gardens. New members are welcome. The group takes commissions, has been part of the Nether Edge festival and hopes to have an exhibition at the June farmers market and to contribute to ‘Art for Ukraine” a Sharrow community event in April. The group would also like to have somewhere to display some collaborative work.

Ken said that this illustrates the diversity of activities under the umbrella of NENG and thanked the group for their contribution.

4. **Election of Officers**

NENG is still struggling to find a treasurer but meanwhile Ken, Howard and David O’Connell are carrying on. Our bookkeeper, Tayab has moved but is still doing the books this year.

Mazhar Hussain has resigned as vice-chair and from the committee. Many thanks were expressed to him for his contribution over the years.

Nominations: chair - Ken Lambert

 vice-chair - Ruth Bernard

 secretary - Howard Fry

 treasurer - vacant

Trustees. Mazhar and Nicky Erlen have asked to step down as trustees. Richard Taylor and Ken Lambert should also stand down this year but are both happy to be reinstated as trustees along with Howard Fry and David Pierce. This satisfies the requirements of the Charities Commission.

Ken said the committee would welcome new members.

Marion Gerson would be happy to join and possibly become a trustee.

The meeting closed with thanks from Ken to everyone for joining the meeting.