

**Friends of St Lawrence Surgery**  
**AGM Minutes Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 7pm**

1. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for coming.
2. Apologies for absence were received from P. Newton and L. Hosford. There were about 25 patients who attended the evening.
3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate report.
4. Chairman's report

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015-2016**

Since my last report, our hardworking and supportive group of volunteers has continued to work together to achieve our main aim – to support the professional staff at the surgery by providing and/or assisting in the provision of equipment and facilities to further enhance the patient experience. However, realistically our brief is much wider than this and encompasses many aspects – raising awareness regarding self-care and providing opportunities to promote patient's well-being – mentally and physically.

The spectrum of support is very wide and on occasions patients have been very dismissive of our efforts – “the NHS is free I'm not buying a draw ticket”, “cancer awareness evening – that's of no interest to me”. Fortunately, the majority of patients have some limited understanding of the problems which GP Practices are currently facing – problems which are unlikely to disappear in the near future. If our group can offer some help, some support and a perspective to help maintain the excellent reputation of our surgery then our existence is justified.

Our specific activities have largely followed the pattern of previous years.

In 2015 there was no Health Promotion/Community Day as the event is now bi-annual. However, it will return on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June and we are hoping for a brilliant sunny day so that all planned activities can go ahead. The preparation is well-advanced and hopefully will provide the structure for a celebratory day. Lots of new ideas have been added to the basic recipe and hopefully the Worthing Steel Band, the Laughing Yoga demonstration and the appearance of Jump Start Jonny will provide our younger patients with a physical work-out.

The committee, walkers, singers invited guests and staff shared a magnificent Christmas Celebration Meal at the Indoor Bowls Club. The catering and the atmosphere created was brilliant and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our thanks to Chris Moon-Willems, Ian Leedham and his wife Mary for organising the occasion so well.

Our Christmas Draw managed to raise about £1300 to purchase an AF stick to help doctors and nurses detect Atrial Fibrillation in patients both at the surgery and off-site. We were indebted to Electronic Instruments Ltd. (ETI) for their generous sponsorship and support and the acquisition was greatly appreciated by doctors as an aid in detecting stroke.

Our Christmas Coffee Morning was well-attended – an opportunity for committee, patients and busy staff to share brief chat whilst eating a mince-pie and sipping coffee!

Our traditional Quiz Night returned to the Old Palace in February and once again proved a sell-out. Over £300 was raised and the evening was once again a lively occasion.

Our Easter activities were not as well-supported as they have been in the past – unfortunately few younger patients turned up for the Easter Egg Hunt – sadly adults had to eat the residue of chocolate eggs!

The on-going sale of books in the surgery generates a valuable regular income and is very popular with many patients. We are grateful to Phil Skitt for looking after sales and restocking empty shelves. Inflation has meant that suggested donations have been increased and we have had no complaints to date.

The Walking group continues to grow in strength and numbers – every Tuesday both long and short walks are undertaken and the weather has never beaten us. We are now a fully independent group although we liaise with the three other Worthing groups under the umbrella of Worthing Healthy Walkers. During the year the number of walk leaders has increased as we have adopted our own training procedures. In addition, several off-site walks have been undertaken and the programme is constantly expanding. Eric Bridger has undertaken many of Ian Leedham's responsibilities and we are grateful for his expertise and commitment. I would like to thank the walk leaders in particular for their good humour and regular commitment to the group. We would be lost without you. They now meet formally every two months to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern – this has been a very positive move. Sometimes we have a logistical problem regarding the lack of space the Education room – a problem which celebrates the success of the group.

The Singing Group continues to sing! The input of Jean Gardiner, Phil and Judith Skitt is greatly appreciated by all those who regularly attend. Continuity has been a problem but Sue Pickering our co-ordinator, endeavours to address these gaps on a fortnightly basis. Her commitment and generous hugs are appreciated. Generally, the group has been well-supported but the evening timing proves difficult during the winter months. Nevertheless, the group continues to provide both fun and enjoyment. Attendance recently has been excellent and we trust that this will continue. Chris Moon-Willems in her role as Self-help champion has attended several meetings and conferences during the course of the year. Recently she has formed a sub-committee of committee members, representatives from the surgery and a delegate from the Clinical Commissioning Group. They are currently working on a self-care strategy which will focus on a different health related topics each month. Literature will be made available to patients and will be included on our web-site. This important on-going development is intended to raise awareness of some alternative routes to seeing a GP and hopefully will benefit both patients, doctors, paramedics and nurses in the long term. In addition, Chris liaises regular with the National Association of Patient Participation. We are fortunate to be able to benefit from Chris' expertise and commitment.

Our Treasurer, Judith, continues to excel and her regular reports to the committee are both detailed and much appreciated. During the course of the year we have purchased a number of items requested by the surgery, as highlighted in Judith's report, and this function remains part of our brief. We are grateful for all the support we have received in our fund raising efforts and are particularly grateful to patients and families who have donated money as an expression of thanks to the work of the surgery. Perhaps some of the more dismissive patients mentioned earlier should talk to them!

Our Secretary, Alan Hardwick, has continued extremely hard to inform, advertise, publicise, remind and distribute a whole variety of material in connection with the group. Alan is retiring as secretary and we will all miss him as an Officer, committee member and supporter of the cause. Fortunately for us and the surgery he has agreed to continue as our web-site co-ordinator and editor of the regular newsletter to patients. Alan has served on the committee for the last six years

undertaking the role of Deputy Chair as well as his other responsibilities. Clearly we will miss him but he won't escape too far!

Our thanks to Christine Osborne for undertaking the role of Minute Secretary, for her long service to the committee since it was formed in 1996 and for her previous role as Treasurer. It has been a delight to have Christine on the committee and I personally have always valued her opinion. We wish her well in her retirement – her cats will be delighted to spend more time with her.

A big thank you to Eric Bridger. During the course of the year Eric has co-ordinated the Walking Group and supported our work in a variety of other ways such as helping to plan the Health Promotion Day. Sincere thanks to Patsy Newton for co-ordinating and delivering the catering requirements. Her cheerful, good humoured and efficient manner is greatly appreciated. During the course of the year we have welcomed Lis Hosford to the committee. Liz has demonstrated great passion regarding organ donation and organised a Patient Education Evening Talk - lots of patients missed out on a very informative evening.

Unfortunately, Lucy Toghill has had to stand down during the course of the year - her committee contributions will be missed but she will continue to support our work in a variety of ways particularly with regard to younger patients.

In addition to specific responsibilities, committee members have assisted at numerous flu clinics, events and at the regular Patient Education Evenings.

Unfortunately one of this year's aims has not been met. We have endeavoured to involve younger patients to the seek their views as to how the surgery might better encompass their needs.

Despite liaison with a variety of agencies and sharing views with another surgery this aim has not materialised. We need to think again but the problem is not specific to us – it is a general one.

At our regular committee meetings we benefit from the input of doctors and Jo Wadey the Practice manager. Their input keeps us abreast of developments within the surgery and also draws out attention to more generic problems. This at times enables to committee to undertake the role of ambassadors for the surgery. Many PPG groups do not have this level of involvement – we feel it is crucial and thank the surgery for their reciprocity and commitment.

Anecdotal views, web-site feedback and annual Patient surveys continue to praise the work of the surgery. Despite the current difficulties encountered by all surgeries, epitomised by the recent closures of 3 surgeries in Worthing, there is a determination to provide, within the resources available, the best quality of care – patients to be treated as the doctors and nurses themselves would like to be treated.

If our small group of volunteers can provide some support in a variety of ways to underpin this aim we should be justifiably proud. May I, as Chair, thank each and every one of you for your support and endeavours. Also to all those patients who understand and support our activities – they usually buy a raffle ticket!

**4.** Copies of the Treasurer's report were distributed and formally adopted by the meeting. They were proposed by Christine Osborn and seconded by Sue Pickering.

Tony Ede was proposed by Alan Hardwick and seconded by Judith Skitt to continue as the independent examiner of the accounts for 2016.

**5.** The election of Officers and Committee members was carried out in accordance with the Constitution.

The following were elected as Officers:

Chair - Bob Barden

Secretary - TBA

Treasurer - Judith Skitt

The following were elected as committee members:

Chris Moon-Willems, Patsy Newton, Phil Skitt, Ian Leedham, Eric Bridger, Sue Pickering, Dave Horton, Hillary Stoner.

**6.** There was no other business.

Following the business meeting Jo Wadey gave a short talk on the challenges facing all GP surgeries. Two surgeries in Worthing have recently closed and another, Highdown, is due to close in July. These closures are having a major impact on the remaining surgeries with two having in excess of 20,000 patients on their lists. There are 16 GP vacancies across Worthing and it is difficult to fill them. Three doctors have recently been interviewed for St Lawrence Surgery and have been offered appointments. Dr Stokes continued on the same theme encouraging patients to self-care where possible. Use a nurse, paramedic practitioner and the pharmacists for less serious and minor illnesses.

The evening was concluded with drinks and nibbles together with social conversation.

The meeting finished at 8.15pm.