

# **Mill Road Winter Fair Association**

## **Minutes of AGM – 12/03/08**

### **Mill Road Baptist Church – 7pm**

*An attendance sheet was passed around and shall be held by the MRWF Association as a record of attendance.*

- 1) **Welcome:** Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain welcomed those attending and gave a warm introduction that was well received. He ran through the business of the meeting, namely to vote on the proposed Constitution, to hear Officer reports and have attendees ask questions of Officers and to elect a new Executive to sit on Committee.

*At this point, there was a 5min adjournment for attendees to read the draft Constitution and complete nominations forms to stand for an Executive post and hand them to Secretary John West.*

- 2) **There was a discussion on the Motion ‘That this AGM approves the Mill Road Winter Fair Association Constitution’**, as proposed by the Committee. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain introduced the discussion, saying the document was the product of widespread consultation with the local community and had the unanimous support of the Committee. He added his belief that it would confer legitimacy to the structures of the organisation of the Fair. Richard Wilson (local resident) spoke from the floor to praise the draft, saying it was written in ‘English that can be understood’ and that it covered the ‘important’ areas of elections, financial management and amendments. Secretary John West reiterated that the document, if approved, could be amended by a subsequent AGM to better fit the needs of the Fair, as need be. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain asked if there were any further comments. There were none. The motion was put to a vote.

*At this point, attendees completed their ballot papers, marking clearly their preference either YES or NO on the motion. Once attendees had completed their ballot, they were collected by Committee Member Caro Wilson and Secretary John West. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain asked a non-Committee member to count the ballots with Secretary John West. Joanna Young (local resident) agreed. The votes were counted – there were 22 ballots, of which there were 22 YES and 0 NO. The motion was carried unanimously.*

Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain invited Secretary John West to call out the result, which he did. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain thanked Secretary John West for his work in drafting the Constitution.

- 3) **Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain** then introduced the **Officer reports**, beginning with his own as Chair.
  - a. He first paid tribute to the ‘marvellous experience’ of the Mill Road Winter Fair, Saturday 1 December 2007. He hailed the incredible range of participation. He thanked those who had gone ‘beyond the

call of duty' to make MRWF a success. He said that communities come from the people and that there were many who had contributed and who continue to do so. He then thanked a number of those who had pitched in, including Cambridge City Council, Janet Walker, Ridgeons, Kim Willis, Sam Motherwell, Aiysha Malik, Kym Lau, Smart Cartridge and other sponsors and individuals. He was sure the next MRWF will be a huge success. He concluded that MRWF is carried by the spirit of those individuals who come together to make it what it is and added that in The Koran, God made Man from different types of clay from all over the world – a suitable analogy for the diversity of Mill Road and the Fair itself.

- b. **Secretary John West** said he was proud to have served on Committee, working to introduce new working practices for the Committee and drafting the (newly ratified) Constitution. He added he was proud to have served on Committee with his colleagues and was delighted with the diversity and success of the Fair and paid tribute to the many members of the Community and sponsors who had given so generously to make MRWF a success.
  
- c. **Petersfield Coordinator Suzy Oakes** hailed a 'wonderful event' and dubbed Mill Road 'a street where we all pull together'. She commented that this year proved the success of events on the streets and that attention should focus directly on these spaces and not on venues that stretch too far away from the central artery of Mill Road. She strongly argued for further community involvement and invited attendees to bring ideas to the table to further improve this wonderful highlight of the calendar. She finished by adding that there was a move to break jobs into fun bite-sized chunks so that all can be involved, no matter what time they can commit.

- d. **Romsey Coordinator Sonia Cooter** focused on the positives of the day – among which were the success of Romsey Mill as a venue, the participation of St Philips, traders, events such as the insect circus and community action groups such as No Mill Road Tesco. The Mayoral tour and visit by David Howarth MP were highlights. Looking ahead, she added that more venues were needed and that she would look to designate dedicated music venues, with a range of entertainment on offer. She hoped to be able to widen participation amongst the traders. Hailing the contribution of Argyle St Housing Coop, she also said that she would love to see more happen there next year as it was a popular highlight. She stressed the need to engage with more social groups.
- e. **Safety Officer Jonathan Goodacre** outlined his responsibilities in dealing with local safety authorities and thanked the Cambridge Safety Advisory Committee and relevant officials from the police, fire brigade, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. He also offered profound thanks to the St John Ambulance, who went beyond the call of duty to be of service to the Fair. Finally, he thanked the c.40 stewards – the backbone of the safety operation – who did sterling work and were visible throughout. He added that more stewards would make the job of supervising events easier and called out for further volunteers. He noted that with the MRWF programme becoming much larger, there were issues with distribution which need to be addressed for the next MRWF.
- f. **Treasurer Lenore Muskett** presented a balance sheet (a copy had been given to all attendees and it is available from MRWF Association – contact [winterfair@mill-road.com](mailto:winterfair@mill-road.com) for details) with a bottom line surplus of £1,284.27 – ring fenced for decorations for upcoming Fairs. She was pleased with newly-introduced accounting practices, including the opening of a separate MRWF bank building society account and the introduction of expense forms, invoices and invoice request forms. Collecting money from traders had been successful and the red collection boxes had the added bonus of advertising MRWF.

- g. **PR Officer Claire Bisdorff** said she and Secretary John West had been very pleased with the way they had shaped the PR effort. She said the fundraising drive had yielded a great deal of interest from traders who wanted to be involved and put MRWF on a solid financial footing. She thanked design guru Aiysha Malik for designing a highly professional-looking programme that beguiled traders and MRWF-goers alike. PR Officer Claire Bisdorff added that the compilation of the programme was a solid achievement of which she was proud. She added that the left over programmes will be useful to the next PR and fundraising teams. There are also now permanent banners that can be used to advertise the event. She said that good coverage had been secured in the local press, on local radio and on county radio – all of which swelled the record turnout. She thanked Sam Motherwell for the superb image used on all publicity materials, including posters, flyers and invitations. She thanked Cambridge on Ice, with whom Secretary John West had secured a *quid pro quo* publicity deal. Their support was very important. She further added that the day was a big success and she was proud to have been part of it. She noted that she had proposed splitting the PR and fundraising efforts, now recognised in the newly-ratified Constitution. Secretary John West added that the PR team wished to thank the Books for Amnesty volunteers, who distributed thousands of flyers in the locality.

*Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain here thanked the Committee members for their hard work and paid tribute to their dedication.*

There was then the opportunity for questions from the floor. Tansy Tucker (local resident and trader) asked why the Christmas trees cost £537.82. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain explained that this cost was made of more than one Christmas tree and that the full break down of accounts was available for inspection at the front of the hall should she wish to pursue the matter. With no further questions, the officer reports were accepted.

- 4) **Elections:** Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain invited Secretary John West to read out the received nominations for Executive positions. These were:

Chair: Abdul-Kayum Arain  
Proposed: Suzy Oakes  
Seconded: John West

Secretary: Caro Wilson  
Proposed: John West  
Seconded: Claire Bisdorff

Petersfield Coordinator: Suzy Oakes  
Proposed: Lenore Muskett  
Seconded Jonathan Goodacre

Romsey Coordinator: Sonia Cooter  
Proposed: Jonathan Goodacre  
Seconded: Suzy Oakes

Treasurer: Mahmoud Al-Kilani  
Proposed: Lenore Muskett  
Seconded: John West

Safety Officer: Jonathan Goodacre  
Proposed: John West  
Seconded: Claire Bisdorff

Fundraising Officer: Joanna Young  
Proposed: Claire Bisdorff  
Seconded: John West

PR Officer: Richard Rippin  
Proposed: Kym Lau  
Seconded: John West

*As all the positions were uncontested, Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain asked the candidates to briefly introduce themselves and then there was an affirmation that all candidates be accepted one-by-one into their roles. The candidates were duly elected.*

- 5) **Co-opted roles:** Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain reminded attendees that there are other roles that would be open to volunteers and that all attendees should have a sign-up sheet to register any interest.
- 6) **AOB:** Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain reminded the AGM that only events officially recognised by the Mill Road Winter Fair Committee (i.e. placed by the Committee into the programme of events) are insured by MRWF's policy.

Edward Jenkins (local resident) asked whether charities had to pay MRWF Association to participate in MRWF and whether MRWF Association approves paying those raising money for charity. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain asked Petersfield Coordinator Suzy Oakes to answer the question. She said that charities, good causes and those raising monies for such organisations are only charged where there is a cost incurred by MRWF (i.e. stalls). Otherwise, she added, those raising money are permitted to contribute to MRWF – with a performance, say – and they will pay no charge at all and, having been approved by the Coordinators and Committee, will be entered into the MRWF Programme. This gives the opportunity to such good causes to promote themselves – and to receive publicity. She further added that MRWF cannot give money to an individual good cause because there are so many in the community that it would create a sense of special measures and a potential conflict of interest. The current set up leaves a level and open playing field, she concluded. On the issue of paying for any performance, again, Petersfield Coordinator Suzy Oakes added that MRWF is a community event and that the Committee wishes for performers to donate their time to the community in the goodwill spirit of MRWF. She added that there is one group paid by the Committee that performs on the day, but that this is a Cambridge City Council-funded group and that the MRWF Committee is expected to use part of the Cambridge City Council grant MRWF receives to secure its services; this is, in effect, a 'historical accident' and an exception. Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain stressed his view, concurring with that of the Committee, that MRWF ought not to pay for performances as this would be detrimental to the giving nature of MRWF and the sense of community this engenders.

With no further questions forthcoming, Richard Wilson (local resident) thanked the Committee – those standing down, those staying on and those newly elected. There was a round of applause.

Mrs Gee (resident and trader) offered warm thanks to Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain for all his hard work on MRWF and 'for all you've done for the community.' The comments were warmly received with a round of applause.

Following a question from the floor, Chair Abdul-Kayum Arain confirmed the Mill Road Winter Fair 2008 will take place on Saturday 6 December.

He then called the meeting to a close.