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Frinton Beach Hut Association

Minutes of the AMM at McGrigor Hall, Frinton on May 17, 2025

Present: deputy-chairman Graham Waltham, membership secretary and treasurer Robert Hughes, minutes secretary Sue Totham, damage coordinator Jane Watts, Steve Cole, Joy Saunders, Sue Webb.

Apologies for absence: Committee members Hayley Hill, Sally Perry and Jo Lowery, and 40 members sent apologies.

Welcome and introduction from Graham Waltham

Approval of Minutes of AMM 2024

Re-election of committee, and appeal for more committee members. Unanimous vote proposed by Andrew Smith, hut 344, and seconded by Helen Harvey, 151.

Business: Nina Underwood from TDC sent an update on several issues. Maintenance work on the Walings structures, and two sets of steps at the Leas was being organised. People who had applied for commercial leases (for more than ten days rental a year) had been given permission to rent their hut pending the issue of leases. Illegal adaptations such as invasive balconies, decking and steps would soon be inspected. Steve Green, 670, complained that his view had been totally impaired by his neighbour's extension, and wondered if the specifications would be enforced. Others agreed that their enjoyment had been spoiled by the careless development of other huts. It was agreed that although some builders refused to enhance huts beyond the specification, others were less scrupulous, or ignorant, and celebrated flouting the rules.

Jenny Kemp, 455, said if orders to remove structures were ignored, as has happened, owners should have their licence revoked. It was agreed this would save months of letters, and court orders, and deter others. Derek Pinner (151 the Leas) said owners should be reminded of the specifications. Trevor Burdett, (614) said small amendments, for safety, not hindering other huts, should be allowed.

Patrols: Jane Watts thanked all patrollers and co-ordinators for their crucial work. Of 800 beach hut members, 42 make up the team of volunteers who patrol the front of all huts every day. During the past year 113 reports of damage included 43 incidents of vandalism, a gradual increase back to pre-Covid times. She said sometimes break-ins were via the back of huts or roofs, and said the patrols were now going to check the back of all huts on High Wall during the summer months. PLEASE put numbers on the back of the huts to enable accurate reporting. Jane also recommended storm shutters where possible, and continual maintenance to deter opportunist vandals. New patrollers always welcome.

Membership report Robert Hughes said 823 members was a very healthy representation of Frinton hut owners. He about to launch into a massive membership audit to update all information. Please send changes in emails and phone numbers to Robert. He also reported that some members, possibly ex-owners, are still paying the £6 subs from more than ten years ago, but as part of his audit he will try to cancel these. Meanwhile Robert has liaised with Brightlingsea and Walton beach hut committees for a discount deal at Brewers DIY shop. Any discount code will be passed on as soon as possible.

Also to help members, AGS security is planning an alarm system for private hut owners. If a code is not used on entry, the security company's office is alerted, and the owner notified. This system is reliant on Wi-Fi... Robert will update when details are finalised.

Treasurer's report: We have £29,443. Biggest costs are rafts - a seventh has just been added - and security patrols, which have just risen in price for the first time in ten years. Considering the healthy balance Elaine Rowland (279H) asked if the AGS patrols could be increased to once-a-day during the summer holidays.

On the same tack Peter Hart, (357) and Helen Harvey (151) said **subs should rise to £20 a year**. Robert said he had been considering this for some time, and chairman Graham Waltham put it to the vote. It was carried unanimously, along with the vote for **daily hut patrols through June, July and August**, which will be re-assessed next year. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Peter Hart and Toby Sallows (92).

Gas: Jenny Kemp (455) asked for clarification on gas cylinders. Officially these should be removed when the hut is empty and TDC advise the portable picnic gas cookers should be used. However, most insurance cover does not restrict storage of cylinders in the huts, as long as cookers are cooled before owners leave.

BBQs: Following the devastating fire in April which destroyed two huts, there was a call to ban disposable bbqs. Suggestions included more signage especially near the boat ramp, urging shops not to sell the bbqs, moving plastic bins away from huts, or providing fire-proof disposal depots near the taps. The committee agreed to discuss with TDC and research other areas, offering to pay towards any system to prevent further fires. Glen Oldershaw, whose mum's hut was destroyed in the fire, thanked everyone for raising the alarm, and for their help and support. Both huts to rebuilt by summer.

Cycling: more signs were requested to prevent an accident as cyclists seemed to getting faster. It was suggested that the beach wardens took an more active role in stopping cyclists.

Bins: happy for them to be chained alongside the seawall and away from huts. More frequent collections need to made on busy days. Robert suggested a call to the seafronts team when bin collections are missed, to enable a quick response.

New committee members: always welcome – three meetings a year, be the voice of hut owners and protect our happy places! Minute taking skills welcomed especially, as Sue is retiring from the role after many years.

Meeting ended at 11.05am. Thanks to everyone who attended. All queries and requests to be forwarded and discussed with the TDC seafronts team.