

**Minutes of the AGM Association of Talking Friends held on Saturday, 21st April 2018
the Priory Rooms, Bull Street.**

01-18 Present Alan Johnson, Sue Thompson, Anne Austin, Gillian Bryan, Jules Morris

02-18 Prevented Diana Lampen, Rose John, Tim Landsman, Nick Tulley, Mary Agnes Moore, Helen Begg, Barbara Forbes, Antony Barlow, Hilary Davies.

03-18 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the AGM 2017.

There were no matters arising.

04-18 Presentation of the Trustees' report.

We have received the Trustees' Annual Report to the Association for 2017.

We note that amongst the activities of the Association in 2017, we have seen the redesign of the Talking Friends website. It was produced by Brian Homer and has a clear and updated design, easily navigated and clear to read. The website address is still www.talkingfriends.org.uk.

There has been a successful Appeal in the Friend, raising to date, £2,628.00. We are grateful to Friends for their generosity.

The Talking Friends Association applied for and was granted status as a Quaker Registered Body at Meeting for Sufferings in December.

We thank the Trustees for their work.

05-18 Presentation of the Accounts for 2017. Gillian Bryan presented the Annual Accounts.

Income, because of the decline in the number of subscribers, has fallen to £828.00 this year. The appeal has increased incoming resources. Major expenses were £537.00 to Bridge Digital for the updating of the recording software; also £927.00 for redesign of the Website. The cost of the Appeal was £304.00.

Gillian commented that over the last five years income from subscribers has fallen, and that outgoing resources have increased during the same period. Without the income from the appeal we would have been in deficit by the end of the year.

We thank Gillian for her work.

06-18 Anne is willing to continue as a member of the Committee for a year.

07-18 The Future of Talking Friends. This discussion took into account the following points:

- We need to consider how best to serve blind and visually impaired Friends.
- We should consider succession planning and what future steps might be taken.
- We need to consider the financial viability of the Association; the declining trend in the number of subscribers and income from subscriptions has been noted.

- We should weigh the energy that is expended in providing a service against the value to the receiver.
- We need evidence for any decisions we make: undertaking a survey of Local Meetings views and needs was supported by a Minute from CEAQM in December. The response from this survey will help to give us information for decision- making.
- There is evidence that the work done by Alan and Hilary in brailleing the titles of AV materials is useful for blind and visually impaired Friends wishing to access material at Woodbrooke.

We are aware that membership of the Society of Friends has been falling in recent years. It seems likely that the readership of 'The Friend' has also declined.

We shall return to this discussion at our next AGM. We shall continue to search for the way forward, being aware of the abundant goodwill shown to Talking Friends by the Society.