

FERRING RETIREMENT CLUB

MINUTES OF THE 29th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE GLEBELANDS CENTRE, GREYSTOKE ROAD, FERRING BN12 5JL ON WEDNESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2023 @ 2 PM

Present

Lilian Holdsworth (President and Chairman for this meeting)

Valerie Simpson (Chairman of Ferring Retirement Club)

Bernadette Griffin (Secretary)

Brian Bigwood (Treasurer)

Trustees

Roger Abbott, Lynda Gould, Yvonne Linzey, Betty McCann, Jeannette O'Sullivan, Susan Pratt, Ann Smith and Lindsay Taylor

Club members

Rosamund Bailey, Barbara Black, Phillip Boobyer, Chris Bradley, Sharon Bradley, Valerie Clitheroe, Robert Cunnington, Kirstie Davidson, Michael Dwelly, Sheila Elphick, Pamela Harland, Elizabeth Hawkins, Peter Holmes, Anne Hunt, Marion Jones, Audrey Mason, Sharon Miller, Shirley Milsom, Colin Oliver-Redgate, Gordon Parmenter, Vivien Shoemaker, Michael Simpson, Jan Tapper, Marion Whittington and Sue Young.

Guests

Jane Crathern (Independent Examiner)

John Johnson, John Manning and Sue Samuel (Friends of Ferring)

Jacqui Swindells (Beehive Care, formerly the Abbeyfield Ferring Society)

Simon Cornish (Ferring Village Hall)

Welcome

The meeting was opened by Mrs Lilian Holdsworth (President), who welcomed all.

Apologies for absence

Apologies from the following members and invitees were noted: Valerie Baillet, Paul Bezencon, Marilyn Catterill, Rosemary Ebers, Clyde Fordyce, Margaret Guest, Ann Holmes, Chris Jackson, Josephine Jones, Robert Linzey, Janet Parmenter, Brian Rosser, Roland Silcox and Lesley Smith

Declarations of interest

Lilian Holdsworth declared an interest in items concerning the Glebelands Community Centre and Friends of Ferring. Betty McCann declared an interest in the item concerning Friends of Ferring.

Minutes of the 2022 AGM

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 had been displayed in the Club Room all year. They were agreed as a true account and duly signed by the President.

Matters arising

None

Presentation of the Annual Report by Valerie Simpson

Valerie Simpson (Chairman of Ferring Retirement Club) reported as follows:

“My third year as Chairman started on a rather turbulent note as many of our members were hit by a surprise wave of Covid, just when we thought we were out of the woods. A number of key personnel were indisposed, as a result of which some activities were disrupted, but we kept the ship afloat, thanks to a strong body of helpers. The true value of teamwork was never more appreciated as people stepped in to cover the duties of absent colleagues.

Since taking office in November 2020, I have been fortunate in having Brian Bigwood by my side as Treasurer. Having been elected to his post a year earlier than I, he had his feet firmly under the table, so to speak, and this was a great comfort to a novice Chairman. Brian has been a loyal and painstaking guardian of our finances and has chaired our Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) since its inception. Sadly, he has taken the decision to stand down and this will be a great loss to our Club and especially to me. However, I take comfort in the knowledge that Brian has developed systems that will, I am confident, enable his successors throughout the coming years to carry out their duties as efficiently and effectively as he has done. I am very pleased that Brian will continue as Section Leader for Table Tennis.

Club Secretary, Bernadette Griffin, has never failed to offer support and guidance, and I personally value her wise counsel. Apart from preparing all meeting papers and meticulously keeping minutes of meetings, Bernie has spent countless hours reviewing our existing policies and procedures, as well as drafting new ones. She keeps a watchful eye on any changes required to ensure that we comply with the requirements of the Charity Commission and has added, this year, a Safeguarding & Wellbeing Policy. Bernie also serves on the F&GPC and our newly formed Communications & Welfare Group (CWG).

Executive Committee: *Our Trustees have continued to meet bimonthly but, in September, they resolved to meet quarterly with effect from the start of the next financial year. However, every Trustee will serve on at least one of our three subcommittees – the F&GPC, the CWG and the Events Management Team (EMT). These three advisory bodies will now each meet once between Trustee meetings and present their recommendations to the full Trustee body for approval. This structure will enable the Trustees to focus more on strategic issues at meetings and make the most of the time available.*

Roger Abbott, our Assistant Treasurer, has deputised as Treasurer in Brian’s absence and we hold him in high regard for his financial acumen and scrupulous bookkeeping skills. He oversees the management of our funds and investments, undertaking the necessary research with the utmost care. Roger serves on the F&GPC and also undertakes the counting, collating and banking of all monies paid by members for annual membership, weekly activities and other events.

Our Membership Secretary, Yvonne Linzey, collects membership applications and payments, updates the database and keeps activity registers continuously updated throughout the year, ensuring that accurate records are maintained. Yvonne serves on both the F&GPC and the EMT, and has also demonstrated exceptional skills in project management – especially in the planning and delivery of a highly successful Christmas Lunch.

Lindsay Taylor, our Manager, is an essential presence both in front of and behind the scenes at all events as well as running our Coffee Morning, Fish & Chip Lunches, Chinese Suppers and Cream Teas. In addition to serving on our EMT and CWG, Lindsay keeps us supplied with coffee, tea, cakes and biscuits, and her untiring efforts are greatly appreciated by us all.

In October 2022, Robert Linzey, with Yvonne’s assistance, started Saturday Bingo sessions, and members appreciated having somewhere warm to go in the winter and something to do at weekends. Bob is another member of our EMT as well as our Maintenance Officer, carrying out a multitude of tasks in that role, in

addition to acting as Fire Safety Officer and Health & Safety Officer. Thank you, Bob, for taking on all these areas of responsibility.

The start of 2023 saw a repeat of our Burns Night Supper and thanks go to Barbara Black for arranging this successful event. Barbara also organised our first St George's Day event, with Morris dancers, communal singing and a cream tea. I would like to thank all those who assisted Barbara with the preparations for these events. I am sorry that Barbara resigned as a Trustee in March 2023 but grateful that she continues to serve on the EMT.

When we started serving cream teas on Saturday afternoons last autumn, Lynda Gould, Barbara and Lindsay shared the responsibility and the result was a most professional-looking lay-out of tables with pretty cloths, napkins, flowers and, of course, cake stands with the traditional sandwiches, scones and fancy cakes. Lynda also helps with the catering at other activities, is Section Leader for Tuesday Seated Exercises, and serves on the EMT.

Ann Smith, our second longest serving Trustee, can be seen helping behind the scenes with refreshments at concerts and other events. She serves on the EMT and is one of the hand-deliverers of our Newsletters, along with Bernie, Brian and Roger. This is essential for keeping those members informed who do not have access to email.

In December, we were sorry to learn that Marilyn Catterill was resigning; she had been an excellent and well-loved Welfare Officer and we have missed her well-judged contributions around the meeting table. However, we have been very fortunate in recruiting three new Trustees, one of whom, Susan Pratt, has taken on the Welfare Officer role. Sue has many years' experience in trustee and governance roles, and has brought fresh skills to our team. She serves on the EMT and CWG, and stands for election today.

Our other new recruits are Betty McCann and Jeannette O'Sullivan. Betty stands for election as Treasurer. She is treasurer and trustee with other local organisations and now serves on all three of our sub-committees.

Jeannette is another experienced charity trustee and has rapidly found a niche for herself in the role of Communications Officer, chairing our CWG as well as serving on our other two sub-committees.

We welcome all three of our new recruits and hope they will enjoy their involvement with the governance and management of our charity.

Though not a Trustee, Sally Davidge-Pitts, attends our EMT meetings and, in that role, has been involved in the planning and execution of all our events and activities. Thank you, Sally!

I am indebted to my fellow Trustees for their loyalty and support, without which our Club could not function. They all undertake additional tasks that do not appear in their Role Descriptions and may well go unnoticed by club members; but I notice them, and I am most grateful for all these little tasks that are so essential to the smooth running of the Club.

Membership: Our closing membership at the end of September 2022 was the highest ever at 249 but a number chose not to renew their membership for a variety of reasons – some had moved away from the area, others had become too frail to attend activities, and a few had, regrettably, developed life-changing conditions that sadly necessitated their move to residential care. I am saddened to report the deaths of five members – Peter Bentley, Margaret Metcalf, Janet Courtenage, Betty Weaver and David Jeffcock. Peter was a stalwart of our Terry Clough Choir, and Margaret was a much-loved member of our Dance Fit and Poetry groups. Janet and Betty enjoyed Seated Exercise classes, while David was a loyal member of our bridge section.

Numbers soon picked up again as we found ourselves welcoming new members on a weekly basis so our membership at the close of the financial year on 30 September 2023 stood at a magnificent, all-time high

of 261! This is, of course, good news for us but it does mean that our section leaders are managing larger numbers and we are most grateful to them as they are an essential part of our management structure; without them, we could not run any of our activities. Special mention must be made here of Wendy and Roger Tallett, who both served as section leaders for nearly 13 years but have now relocated out of the area. They devoted much time and energy to ensuring the smooth running of our events and this earned them the well-deserved status of Honorary Life Members.

Finance: As part of my annual report, I must advise members of the Club's Policy on Financial Reserves. Our Reserves Policy governs the funds that we hold, where we keep them and our plans for their use. We have also adopted a club specific addendum, which is reviewed on an ongoing basis by our F&GPC, chaired by our Treasurer. They report any changes at Trustee meetings and the Policy is specifically reviewed by the executive committee every six months.

We maintain a total reserve of £360,000; this is split into an expendable reserve of £20,000, held in an instant access savings account with a high street bank, and an investable reserve of £340,000, which is split into four deposits with different UK financial institutions. Thus, all our funds are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

The Trustees have taken the decision to maintain our Reserve so that the interest generated can be used to support the activities run by the Club and contribute towards the running costs and maintenance of our clubroom. For the benefit of our members, we decided once again not to increase the annual membership fee or activities fee for 2022/23. Participants in our exercise classes will know that the cost of a session with us is significantly less than at other similar classes run locally. We also subsidised the ticket price of our Christmas Lunch and Summer Supper to make these events more affordable for our members.

Change of charity name: Many of you will be aware of Friends of Ferring (FoF) – the wonderful organisation that transports clients to and from medical appointments asking for no more than a donation towards expenses. What you may not have realised is that FoF operates under the same charity number as Ferring Retirement Club (FRC), although the two organisations have always functioned completely independently of each other. In view of this, the Trustees of FRC have, after much deliberation and consultation with FoF, proposed that the two entities should separate. Although FoF would no longer operate under FRC's charity number, there would be no other material change, and FoF would continue to operate as it has always done. The rationale for this has been explained more fully in a circular that all members have received. A vote will be taken today on the resolution to change our charity name from Ferring Retirement Club (Incorporating Friends of Ferring) to Ferring Retirement Club.

Clubroom Lease: Although the lease on our clubroom expired this year, I am delighted to say that we are in the process of securing a new lease, which will take us through to the end of 2036. I would like to express my thanks to the Directors of the Glebelands Centre for granting this and to our Secretary, Bernie Griffin, for the many hours spent negotiating our way through the legalities.

In conclusion, I must admit that I am filled with pride when people tell me that our Club's support has made such a difference to their lives, enabled them to overcome a challenge or inspired them to do something better. Of course, without our Trustees, Section Leaders and casual helpers, there would be no club. In fact, our future existence depends on retaining and recruiting the right people to act as Trustees and we are working very hard to keep the club running as effectively as possible for the benefit of our members. Only those who undertake a particular task can fully appreciate just what it entails and, unfortunately, it is only too easy to take people for granted. So I would like all our volunteers, in whatever capacity, to know that any contribution they make to the smooth running of our Club is greatly valued and I thank all our members for their continued support."

There were no questions from the floor.

The President thanked Valerie for all her hard work as club Chairman and for being instrumental in moving the club forward over the past few years.

Accounts

The Annual Accounts were presented by the Treasurer, Brian Bigwood, who reminded those in attendance that copies of the accounts had been circulated with the Notice of AGM.

The Treasurer reported that the accounts summarise the financial position at the end of the accounting year on September the 30th 2023. The accounts had been prepared by the Treasurer and checked by the Independent Examiner, Clyde Fordyce, and will be submitted to the Charity Commission with the annual return.

The Treasurer further commented as follows: *“The accounts reflect a thriving club, with income and expenditure increasing substantially from last year. I am happy to report income exceeded expenditure as at year end but we have two financial commitments outstanding, which will utilise the profit we have made. We do scrutinise all expenditure and where that has increased from last year, it reflects that we are running more activities and serving more members.*

Our financial reserves are maintained to support the activities we run even if they do not cover their running costs when you include hiring fees and instructors’ fees plus our overhead utility costs. They also provide a safety net to cover the cost of maintaining our continued occupation of our club room. In addition they have been used, so that we did not have to increase the annual membership fee or the fees you pay for the activities, though we have increased the fees we pay our instructors. We are also able to run social events where we can subsidise ticket costs in order that members may find them more affordable.

As this is my last duty as Treasurer, I would like to firstly thank Roger Abbott, who does so much to make the Treasurer’s job easier. Thank you to all members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for giving up their time to participate in these additional meetings and all the Trustees I have worked with. Thank you to our Chairman for her commitment to hours of unseen work to ensure that the club survives and thrives and continues to offer our community such a wide range of social activities. Thanks also to our Secretary, who has been such an asset since she has joined the trustees. Hopefully later in this meeting, you will elect my replacement: Betty McCann. The club is very lucky that she has stepped forward to be our next Treasurer and with her experience I expect a seamless handover, I wish her all the best.

Lastly, thank you to Clyde Fordyce our independent examiner is also stepping down today. He has been undertaking this unpaid role for the club for many years and I thank him for his time and wise advice he has given to the club and its treasurers over the years.”

The Treasurer invited questions from the floor. A question was asked regarding Flagstone. In response, the Treasurer explained that Flagstone is an investment management company, approved by the Charities Aid Foundation and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, which provides small charities with risk-free investment opportunities across a wide range of platforms, through which good interest rates are achievable.

A member asked whether there were any plans to spend the money held by the club. The Treasurer explained that the club had been using membership income and interest from the Flagstone deposits to cover club expenditure, which meant that the club has been able to keep membership fees and activity charges at the same level and not seek to increase costs to members for the 2023/24 membership year. Any expenditure proposals would need to be appropriate and fall within the club’s constitutional powers.

The President provided an overview of the legacies that make up the club’s reserves.

Trustee Resignations

The following resignations were duly noted:

Brian Bigwood as Trustee and Treasurer

Barbara Black and Marilyn Catterill as Trustees

Election of Officer Trustees

The President read out the nominations for the Officer Trustees, namely:

Chairman: Re-election of **Valerie Simpson** (proposed by Roger Abbott, seconded by Ann Smith)

Secretary: Re-election of **Bernadette Griffin** (proposed by Lindsay Taylor, seconded by Lynda Gould)

Treasurer: Election of **Betty McCann** having been appointed as a Trustee since the last AGM (proposed by Bernie Griffin, seconded by Jeannette O'Sullivan)

These were the only nominations and were elected unanimously by those present.

Re-election of Trustees

The President read out the nominations for the Trustees standing for re-election, namely:

| Nominee | Proposed | Seconded |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Roger Abbott | Lynda Gould | Sue Pratt |
| Lynda Gould | Ann Smith | Robert Linzey |
| Robert Linzey | Lindsay Taylor | Roger Abbott |
| Yvonne Linzey | Lindsay Taylor | Betty McCann |
| Jeannette O'Sullivan | Yvonne Lindsay | Susan Pratt |
| Susan Pratt | Jeannette O'Sullivan | Ann Smith |
| Ann Smith | Bernadette Griffin | Betty McCann |
| Lindsay Taylor | Roger Abbott | Lynda Gould |

The above named Trustees were duly re-elected unanimously by those present.

Election of Trustees appointed since the last AGM

The President read out the nominations for the Trustees appointed since the last AGM and standing for election at this AGM, namely:

| Nominee | Proposed | Seconded |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Jeannette O'Sullivan | Yvonne Lindsay | Susan Pratt |
| Susan Pratt | Jeannette O'Sullivan | Ann Smith |

The above named Trustees were duly elected unanimously by those present.

Independent Examiner

The President expressed thanks to Clyde Fordyce for the auditing of our accounts and wished him well. The appointment of Jane Crathern was duly noted and Jane was thanked for accepting the role of Independent Examiner as Clyde's successor.

Friends of Ferring Chairman's Report

John Johnson, Chairman of Friends of Ferring, presented his Annual Report and commented as follows: *"Firstly, I would like to thank Bernadette for inviting us to be here today and present our 2023 annual report. 2023 has been another successful year for Friends of Ferring. We have continued to transport members of our community to their various hospital, doctors and other medical appointments. Taking them to; waiting for them to be seen, and then returning them back home. During the past 12 months, Friends of Ferring drivers have made a total of 527 journeys, a very impressive number, to destinations ranging between Chichester, Brighton and occasionally beyond.*

We also undertook a slightly different venture for us. In July and August we committed to taking one local man for a series of radiotherapy treatments. This involved delivering him to appointments at Preston Park clinic on 20 consecutive weekdays regardless of traffic conditions or mishaps. The timing of his treatment was critical and had to be met, and none were missed. We asked our drivers if they would be prepared to commit, and I'm happy to say that we were oversubscribed with volunteers.

In the past 12 months, there has been a small turnover in our number of volunteers. So we now have a total of 30, comprising telephonists, co-ordinators and drivers, some of whom have dual roles. But we are always on the lookout for new members.

You all have now had the opportunity to read Bernadette's circular regarding the separation of Ferring Retirement Club and Friends of Ferring. In it, I think she has expressed very clearly the position of the Trustees of the Retirement Club. The two committees have met and discussed at some length what is involved, and we at Friends of Ferring are very comfortable with her recommendations.

Our Committee has worked hard to ensure that this transition runs as smoothly as possible and without hitch. And I would like to thank Bernadette for all her help to us in order for us to achieve this.

I put this proposal to our AGM last Saturday and it was agreed unanimously that we should proceed with the separation. We remain committed to providing Patient Transport to Ferring residents. In future we shall be known as Friends of Ferring Association.

As this will be our last presentation to you, thank you for your time, and on behalf of the Committee of Friends of Ferring we look forward to being of help should you require us."

The President thanked John Johnson for his report.

Separation of Ferring Retirement Club and Friends of Ferring

In advance of the meeting every club member had received a circular, jointly produced by Ferring Retirement Club and Friends of Ferring outlining the rationale behind the separation proposal.

The Secretary commented as follows: *"You will all have had a chance to read the joint statement by Ferring Retirement Club and Friends of Ferring setting out the reasons for the proposal to separate the two organisations – by this we mean in terms of sharing the registered charity number. You have also just heard from John Johnson confirming that Friends of Ferring are supportive of the proposal.*

Before going further, I just need to make a small correction to section 2 bullet point 7 of the joint statement, where I stated that the two organisations have never shared premises. Lilian has pointed out to me that the two organisations did, in fact, share premises and a telephone number when originally set up. That

was, of course, decades ago and so this very minor error does not, in my view, affect the spirit of the circular or the key messages and rationale for the proposed separation and change of name.

Just touching on those key messages, I would summarise as follows:

- 1. The two organisations have operated independently of each other for decades;*
- 2. We do not share management structures, policies or procedures;*
- 3. We provide very different services to our respective members and we do not have shared membership databases;*
- 4. We have completely separate financial arrangements in terms of bank accounts, donations, fundraising and insurance;*
- 5. Most importantly, the trustees of Ferring Retirement Club have no oversight of Friends of Ferring's operations, nor do we hold any data relating to their drivers or customers.*

It is clear that there are no operational, financial or other relevant reason for our two organisations to remain connected in any way whatsoever, including under the same charity number. Accordingly, the resolution we are putting to you today is that, in furtherance of the two organisations agreeing to formally sever their connection and to no longer share registered charity number 1040624, the Charity will change its name from Ferring Retirement Club (incorporating Friends of Ferring) to Ferring Retirement Club."

Resolution: by unanimous vote by those members present, the following resolution was duly passed: That the Charity has resolved to change its name. In anticipation of Ferring Retirement Club and Friends of Ferring agreeing to formally sever their connection and to no longer share registered charity number 1040624, the Charity will change its name from Ferring Retirement Club (incorporating Friends of Ferring) to Ferring Retirement Club.

Section Reports

Choir: Section Leader, Valerie Simpson, said, *"Our choir membership continues to grow and we have been delighted to attract more men this year. We now have over 40 in the choir and have had to introduce a waiting list as, without this, this choir would occupy more seats than the audience in the hall!*

Our Musical Director, Anne Robinson, is to be congratulated, once again, on writing the arrangements for us and putting together such varied and enjoyable programmes. Jenny Jeffrey, our pianist, enhances our performances with her intricate accompaniments and often showcases her own considerable talents with a piano solo.

Our first performance since the last AGM was the Christmas Concert and tickets for both performances were sold out within two days. The choir also led the carol singing at the Ferring Village lights switch-on and a singalong after our Club Christmas Lunch. Both were wonderfully joyful events with a real community spirit.

January brought a new concert programme for us to rehearse – this time on the theme of 'Love' and this was performed at the end of April. In September, the theme of 'Numbers' brought some interesting items, which had the audience singing along and foot-tapping.

Then we were straight into rehearsals for this year's Christmas Concert, which will take place on 7th and 9th December. On 24th November, it was our privilege to perform some of this programme to Worthing Stroke Club.

My thanks go, as ever, to Sharon Miller who sits through all our concerts and writes the reviews, which are published in All about Ferring."

Dance Fit: Section Leader, Sharon Miller, said, *“What a year! We’ve shimmied and swayed and smiled from ear to ear – such is our group’s joy at our regular Tuesday dance-fit sessions. The classes have been so popular, we’ve had a waiting list for hopeful members but we have recently been able to accommodate all those who wished to join.*

We are grateful to Bennie Tilbury, who covered our classes during our instructor Sarah’s maternity leave. Bennie had joined us during August 2022 and took our weekly classes until Easter of this year.

Following the birth of her daughter, Winnie, we were delighted to welcome our regular instructor, Sarah Simmonds, back in April and it has to be said she is doing an amazing job keeping us all fit and happy, whilst juggling the demands of her young and energetic family. We love you, Sarah.

During August, Sarah organised a pop-up, all age, dance event on The Glebelands recreation ground and many members, along with their children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren, enjoyed a sunny morning of dance, dressing up and cake. This proved so popular, it is likely to become an annual event. Thank you to the ladies who helped with the refreshments – and, whilst on the subject, thank you to the ladies who prepare and serve the tea and coffee for our after-class sessions every week, especially Valerie and Margie.

Only last week, we held a ‘pot luck’ lunch for our dance-fit ladies. There was no charge for this event but each of the ladies brought a plate of finger food to share. Many thanks to the Trustees for their support.

Finally, I could not close this report without extending my sincere thanks to my friend, Pam Chamberlain, who supports me as Section Leader every Tuesday.

We have made so many friends through dance. It’s definitely spin/spin and win/win!”

Table Tennis: Section Leader, Brian Bigwood, said, *“The section continues to provide an excellent opportunity for exercise, fun and friendly competition on a Thursday morning.*

We have welcomed several new regular players during the year and consequently, in mid-summer, we were pleased to start using again our fourth table, which had not been used since pre-Covid. As a majority of the newcomers were ladies, we introduced, for the first time, a ladies’ singles competition to complement our usual open singles and doubles competition.

My congratulations to the 2023 winners:

Open singles – Tony Wan Ladies singles – Jill Symonds Doubles – Tony Wan & Julie Bigwood.

We would still welcome anyone who wants to play and we can provide bats for you to try a game or two. I would like to thank Graham Ray and Chris Bradley who act as my deputies and help me with the set-up of the room, plus the ladies who make the post-game refreshments.”

Club Chairman, Valerie Simpson, read the reports for the remaining sections on behalf of their section leaders:

Art on behalf of Jo Jones, who said: *“It is very pleasing to be able to report, once more, a happy and enjoyable Wednesday Art Group. Our numbers vary, along with the weather, school term times, and various health or home issues, but mostly we have a great attendance.*

There is a good harmony and friendliness about our group, and painting is progressing, if slowly - restrictions of time and space notwithstanding. Alas, we are not yet ready to exhibit, but that is not a problem, as we only paint for enjoyment. Painting is one of the very best ways for putting any troubles out of the way.

Although our numbers are few, that actually is for the best, giving more room for individual attention, if requested. With double our numbers, it would probably be advisable to do a double session or perhaps two separate sessions; painting takes time!

Just one more thing - grateful thanks to the Officers and volunteers who run this very popular Ferring Retirement Club, without whom, none of the activities would take place: they must be the cheapest on the Planet! Also, a huge welcome to the new Trustees."

Bowls on behalf of Alan Plummer, who said: *"Last year in my report I mentioned that we were looking for more players. The situation is the same now but for a different reason, in that we have started a second two-hour session from 4pm - 6pm on Wednesday. We did this as we sometimes had 15-16 people wanting to play which meant that there was a long time spent sitting around rather than bowling.*

At this time, we are still in the 'trial' stage because we sometimes do not have many players at each session. We compensate for this by each of us bowling more times every turn we have, which is good practice, but we would prefer to have a few more players!"

Bridge on behalf of Mike Simpson and Brian Rosser, who said: *"The Monday bridge group has had another enjoyable year but the Friday group was less well attended. To remedy this, we undertook an advertising campaign in 'All about Ferring' and displayed posters in the local area, promoting the Friday session as a Beginners Bridge class. This started on 8th September with Brian Rosser as tutor and, to our delight, the first session attracted 14 people, the majority of whom were non-members and have now joined the club.*

We have, regretfully, had to introduce a temporary waiting list for new bridge players until the current course is completed in the early New Year. We shall then be pleased to welcome any member or non-member wishing to learn bridge in a friendly, relaxed manner.

Mike Simpson continues to act as Section Leader for the Monday session and would welcome more players – perhaps some of those who are currently on the Beginners' course might like to join the Monday group when their course is completed."

Coffee Mornings/Fish & Chips/Chinese Suppers/Cream teas on behalf of Lindsay Taylor, who said: *"Coffee Mornings have continued to grow in popularity as our members look forward to meeting friends socially over coffee and cakes after the weekend. The toasted teacakes are very popular as are members' own home-made cakes. This section is often a way into the club for new people who like to find their feet before opting to join other activities. The general hubbub in clubroom is a sure sign that our members are enjoying themselves.*

Monthly Fish & Chip Lunches are as popular as ever, but Chinese suppers and Saturday Cream Teas have not been as popular as when first introduced, so reluctantly, the Trustees took the decision to discontinue them. Of course, there is no reason not to reintroduce them in the future, if the demand is there."

Poetry on behalf of Lesley Smith, who said: *"Well, another year has passed and very enjoyable it has been! Though we number only five, what we lack in number, we make up by our enthusiasm. We have two very revered poets, both worthy of publishing their works. In fact, I am in awe of their contributions!*

We enjoy our alternate Wednesday morning meetings and experience many emotions – sadness, comedy, empathy, friendship. But, above all, it can be therapy for any dark days one might encounter and I have learned so much from my colleagues, one of whom said she had never been part of anything similar and her hopes at the start were to test her ability to read her own work in front of an audience – something she had never done. She has learned that she can do that but much more besides. She can listen and learn from others, and her poetry isn't as obscure as she thought – it can strike a chord with other lovers of

words. The group has proved invaluable as a safe and happy place to exchange ideas – it's small but perfectly formed."

Rummikub on behalf of Rita Pierpoint, who said: "Every Thursday from 2-4pm a cheerful group of players turn up ready to enjoy the afternoon games and a lovely time is had by all. Tea and cake is served, adding to the very friendly atmosphere. The group has grown in popularity over the past year but new members are always welcome and experience is not necessary as we can show you the ropes. Many of those who now play regularly were complete novices when they joined."

Seated Exercises on behalf of Lynda Gould and Jan Tapper, who said: "The seated exercise classes continue to be very popular and are well attended. Kirstie's instructions keep us flexible and supple, and improve our mobility and wellbeing. Our thanks go to Kirstie for her excellent tuition. We particularly enjoy the sessions when Kirstie dresses up, whether it be as an Irish leprechaun or a Halloween skeleton and, of course, the obligatory Christmas jumper. After our session we all enjoy the coffee and biscuits get-together in the clubroom. We greatly appreciate Kirstie's dedication and skill in running the sessions for us."

Any Other Business

Club Chairman, Valerie Simpson, paid tribute to Brian Bigwood, who was standing down as Trustee and Treasurer today. She said, "Although this will be a great loss to us, Brian deserves a well-earned rest after working so hard for the club for the past four years. He and I faced huge challenges when the Covid pandemic struck in 2020 as we had to adapt procedures seemingly on a weekly basis as legislation changed, but Brian's pragmatism and ability to learn quickly helped steer us through those difficult times. In addition, since we were without a Secretary throughout much of 2021-2022, Brian shared the secretarial duties with me and, for this, I was most grateful. Brian is an individual of the highest integrity, with an excellent eye for detail and an admirable ability to focus on the finer points, whilst maintaining a broad overview of our charity's finances. His reliability, communication skills, leadership, critical thinking and decision-making have proved invaluable to us. It goes without saying that a good treasurer must operate with accuracy and precision – skills that Brian possesses in spades. Fortunately for those Trustees with non-finance backgrounds, Brian has the knack of advising on the financial implications of strategic and operational plans, and of communicating the information in language that can be understood by the layman. Above all, though, Brian has good, solid common sense.

I know that Brian is keen to spend more time now with family and friends, so I invite you all to join me in wishing Brian and Julie all the very best, as we thank them both for all they have done and continue to do for the club."

President's Closing Remarks

The President commented that she was delighted by the burgeoning membership numbers and congratulated all concerned in ensuring the continued vibrancy of the club since re-opening following the covid closure. In particular, the President paid tribute to Lindsay Taylor for her dedication to the club. Monday coffee mornings are packed and the fish & chip lunches are incredibly popular. The President also commented on the standard of the Terry Clough Choir, run by Anne Robinson, who is an amazing musical director. Concerts are always sold out and the performances are outstanding. Finally, the President paid tribute to Valerie Simpson, for her superb chairmanship, and to the Trustees for their hard work.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 20 November 2024

The meeting closed at 3.15pm

President: *Lilian Holdsworth*

DATE: 20/11/24