



**BERKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION**  
Registered Charity 1097355  
President: Joan Dils

Email: [secretary@blha.org.uk](mailto:secretary@blha.org.uk)  
Website: [www.blha.org.uk](http://www.blha.org.uk)

## **The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Berkshire Local History Association**

**Saturday, 23rd March 2024**  
**St Mary's Church centre, Wargrave**

Those present: Joan Dils (President), Ted Collins (Vice President), David Cliffe (Chairman), David Lewis (Treasurer), Ann Smith (minutes), Margaret Simons, Jonathan Brown, John Chapman (committee members), and twenty-three other members.

Apologies: Jo Alexander-Jones, Dave Osborne, David Burfitt

1. Welcome by President Joan Dils, who thanked those attending and especially the members of the Wargrave Society for their hospitality.
2. The 45<sup>th</sup> AGM minutes had been circulated to members in advance and were agreed as a true record. The minutes were proposed by Margaret Simons and seconded by Sheila Viner.
3. There were no matters arising.
4. The report from the Treasurer had been provided to members in advance. David Lewis summarised the year: 2023 subscriptions at £1,493 are lower than the previous year of £1,518, but remain sufficient to cover the Association's running costs and no increase in the subscription rate is proposed for the foreseeable future. The Association's unrestricted reserves remain enough to cover its continuing operations, standing at £4,983. The Association's restricted reserves, available to members to support either research activities or publication costs, stand at £3,287. The Association has total cash reserves of £8,270, held in the Charities Aid Foundation bank. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by John Chapman, seconded by Audrey Curtis and unanimously accepted by the meeting.
5. Journal Editor's report had been provided to members in advance and was summarised. Acceptance of the report was proposed by David Lewis and seconded by Ann Smith.
6. Newsletter Editor's report had been provided to members in advance and was summarised. John Chapman has resigned and Jo Alexander-Jones is the new editor. The report was proposed by Catherine Sampson and seconded by Margaret Simons.
7. Membership Secretary's report had been provided to members in advance and was summarised. The report was proposed by Caroline Piller and seconded by Sean Duggan.

8. Web Designer's report had been provided to members in advance and was summarised. It was proposed by Margaret Simons and seconded by John Dearing.
9. Chairman's report had been provided to members in advance and was summarised. In 2023 there were 3 walks round Windsor and Eton led by David Lewis and a Robert Gibbings study day in Long Wittenham led by Martin Andrews. Berkshire Historic Churches Trust has joined the BLHA. The Association took part in the successful second Berkshire Heritage Fair in February 2024. Sheila Viner, who is researching mills, asked about publishing her work in Berkshire Old and New as an individual. There is no local history society in her home town, Wokingham. She was reassured that contributions from individuals are welcomed. David Lewis explained that the BLHA can give research and publication grants to local historians. The report was proposed by Joan Dils, who thanked David Cliffe for all his work, and seconded by Ann Smith.
10. Election of the President: Joan Dils was proposed by John Chapman, seconded by Audrey Curtis and elected by the meeting.
11. Election of the Vice-President: Ted Collins was proposed by Catherine Sampson, seconded by Peter Halman and elected by the meeting.
12. Election of Officers: David Cliffe as Chairman, Jo Alexander-Jones as Secretary and David Lewis as Treasurer were proposed by John Chapman, seconded by Sheila Viner and elected by the meeting.
13. Election of Members of the Executive Committee: Jonathan Brown, Dave Osborne, Margaret Simons and Ann Smith were proposed by Peter Halman, seconded by Audrey Curtis and elected by the meeting. John Chapman resigned from the committee and his post as Newsletter Editor. He was presented with a card and hamper of Berkshire produce by the committee to thank him for all his work for the BLHA.
14. Election of the Honorary Examiner of Accounts: Dr Stephanie Hovland was proposed as auditor by David Lewis, seconded by Margaret Simons and elected by the meeting.
15. Any Other Business: David Cliffe thanked the Wargrave Society for their hospitality. He asked members at the AGM if they found the BLHA's listing of local history events on the website and in the newsletter useful. The Newsletter Editor and Web Designer spend a lot of time updating this. Two members said they found it useful and would like to see it continue, and Ken Hulme said the BLHA had good listings and that's why he came to the AGM. It was agreed to keep the listings and review it next year. John Dearing and David Lewis drew the attention of members to the books on sale on the society stalls.
16. After lunch, and a chance to look round the stalls of the different societies, it was decided to abandon the idea of a walk round the village on account of the strong wind and threatening rain. Instead, we were given a tour of the church next door, followed by a talk on the history of Wargrave back in the hall.