



## **St. Stephen's Conservation Area Residents' Association AGM : Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026 Minutes**

**Attendees:** Around 40 attendees, which included the RA Steering Group, Councillor Samia Chaudhary, Councillor Farhaan Rehman, x 1 prospective Councillor and x 2 Community Police Officers.

### **1. Welcome – Josephine de Souza**

Josephine welcomed everyone who made time to attend our AGM, and then went through the agenda.

### **2. Tracing the Past of Your House – Kristin Dean**

Kristin took everyone through various online tools which we can use to research the history of our homes. This included library archives and recommended books. Kristin shared the links to get people started.

### **3. Summary of RA 2025 – Kristin Dean**

Kristin then did a brief overview of RA activities in 2025.

### **4. Treasurer's Report – Liz West**

- Balance of account at the end of the last financial year, £862.30
- Applied for community grant in March 2025 of £950 which we received. Thanked Councillor Afzaal Kiani for his support in this.
- How our money has been used in 2025:
  - Community events, such as Wreath Making, Yard Sale, Litter Picks, Knit & Natter, our AGM and Steering and Planning Groups.
  - Producing and printing of newsletter.
  - Updates for our website.
  - Purchasing litter pickers, bibs, a new outdoor PA system and the replacement of broken gazebos.
  - Monies were also used for dog fouling posters, marketing, flyers, plus food and refreshments for such events as the AGM.
  - All of last year's grant money that we received has been spent, plus 40% of our reserves.
  - **Our balance as of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 is £591.55**



- We are hoping that we can apply for another grant this year for several activities.

## 5. Social Committee – Jo Smith

- **Craft Afternoons:** takes place once a month at St. Stephen's Church. Offers our neighbours a chance to mingle over a cup of tea. Is also a 'lifeline' for those who might be living alone and need some company.
- Our **Litter Picking event**, Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025: many of our neighbours took to the streets to clean up any litter. Children helped too. Followed by pastries, tea and coffee.
- **Yard Sale**, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025: Gave the opportunity for our neighbours to have a clear out, sell what they no longer needed and purchase things that they liked from others; 'what's one man's trash is another man's treasure'. Food and music were provided. Good turn out and popular event. As the event was outdoors, unfortunately it started raining towards the end, otherwise we think that the turnout would have been much higher.
- **Wreath Making:** this was our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual wreath making event. Is proving really popular. Places sold out. We had kids also involved this time. We had attendees from outside of our Conservation Area. Very likely that we'll do another event this year too.

## 6. Election of Officers – Josephine de Souza & Tessa Archbold

Josephine talked about the importance of community and volunteering for our community; that we need support and help; and hoping for people to join our Steering Group, particularly someone to put themselves forward for *Neighbourhood Watch*. Being part of our Steering Group also gives our neighbours the opportunity to shape how our community is going forward.

Josephine then thanked those who help outside of our Steering Group and acknowledged current members.

Tessa then formally let everyone know that all existing Steering Group members will step down, including the Co-Chairs.

She asked for anyone who would like to put themselves forward for the role of Chair.

Kristin nominated Josephine

Josephine nominated Kristin



A few people backed both Josephine and Kristin to continue as Co-Chairs for the Residents' Association. No one objected.

Tessa then asked if anyone would like to put their hands up to join our Steering Group. No show of hands, so Tessa asked people to have a think and come and talk to one of us after if they would like to. NB. Good news, one of our neighbours, Adrian, approached Tessa after, to say that he would join our Steering Group.

Tessa finally added that at the next RA Steering Group Meeting, the other roles would be discussed and roles assigned.

## **7. The Borgen Project – Jaya Noonan**

Jaya has grown up living in St. Stephen's Road for many years. She is passionate about community work and has recently started a job at The Borgen Project.

The Borgen Project is an influential ally for the world's poor. They work with leaders of the most powerful countries in the world to improve their response to humanitarian issues. For over 20-years, The Borgen Project has been advancing policies and programs that have large scale impact for people hit hardest by war, famine and poverty.

*Sing For Change:* The charity event which Jaya is organising, with the support of the RA; all proceeds will go to The Borgen Project.

The Event is like an open mic event of singing, so anyone can join in, or just come and listen.

Date of event: Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April

Venue: St. Stephens' Church

Timings: 7.00pm – 9.30pm

Jaya then gave a performance / song, so that attendees of the AGM could get a sense of what the evening would be like. Her father John played on the guitar during the performance.

We would encourage everyone to try and attend the event, supporting not just one of our young neighbours, but a good cause.



#### **8. Close of Meeting – Josephine de Souza**

Josephine thanked everyone for making the time to attend, asking people to stay for drinks, food and to mingle.

We also had an impromptu thanks from one our neighbours, Jane Joseph, who stood up to thank the RA Steering Group for all the work that we do, ending on a really positive note.