

MINUTES OF THE AGM
Held on Friday 5th February 2016
At the EG Sports Club 17.30-19.30

Present:

Sir Nicholas Soames	Norman Webster, EGTC
Ginny Heard	James Moore, Green Light Co.
Stuart Scholes, CEO	Jacque Russell, EG Town Council
Roger Martell, Treasurer	Bob Russell, IQ Projects
Caroll Everest, Administrator	Clive Martin, Ya Media
Kate Bennett, EGBA	Sue Todd, Frontline
Margaret Martell, Martell's	Barney Durrant, Bluebell Digital
Jackie Huggett, EG Sports Club	Bob Mainstone, EGTC
Elaine McGloin, Buss Murton	Jessica Nicholas, Nicholas Electrical
Peter Robinson, RES	Margaret Belsey, Golfguard
Lee Farren, BGL Communications	Edward Belsey, Golfguard
Peter Daniels, Buss Murton	Ian Hopping, Auditel
Fiona Bewers, The Caravan Club	Pam Mitchell, AGE UK
Dawn Spalding, EG Promotions Manager	Nicholas Castiglione, AGE UK
Charmaine Hallmark, Hallmark Travel	Jacque Huggett, EG Sports Club
Dick Sweatman, EG Town Mayor/Councillor	Rhianna Lawrence, Martells
Charlie Martell, Martell's	Judy Theobald, Knighthood
Margaret De Jong, Pertinax Partnership	Martin Robinson, Girl Guiding

1.	<p>Apologies: Were received from Matt Cole, Cole's Estate Agents. The CEO, Stuart Scholes, welcomed the turnout to the meeting, which was much appreciated.</p>
2.	<p>Financial Report and Adoption of Accounts Copies of the accounts were distributed. Roger Martell the Treasurer said that the Accounts had been checked by Alexandra Durrant – and they were thanked for this work which was voluntary. Roger Martell, Treasurer, said that to date 78 members had paid their 2016 fees. It is usual for final amounts to take 2-3 months. It would be appreciated if everyone could pay promptly to save on admin costs. At the end of the year the balance was £18,000 par of which included £1900 from subscriptions for the current year. Small profit of £500.00. 2015 – the closing balance was less than hoped for and as always we need more members to become self-financing. Although we appreciate the support from MSDC for annual funding we could not rely on this always being available. In future we may be restricted to specific projects. Approved: Lee Farren Seconded: Peter Robinson</p>
3.	<p>Review of 2015</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involved with Town Council and Town Team on station to statue project which has been incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan. 2. Some work carried out on the Meet & Greet scheme on Saturdays in the summer months. Unfortunately this year there have been staffing issues. Rex Whittaker and SS were active however we need volunteers and a co-ordinator.. 3. We have spent some time with Meridian FM and they have a Monday business pm slot for 3 hours run by Elephant Communications. Once a month EGBA have been invited and bring along 3 business members who talk about their business in EG and local issues.

	<p>4. www.visiteastgrinstead.com – this was relaunched and KB heavily involved. All businesses receive a FREE listing, although paid advertising is needed to cover costs. The aim is to make it the definitive site for EG and it is showing up well on searches on Google.</p> <p>5. Involved more in social media arena – on Facebook, Twitter and have a members Group on LinkedIn.</p> <p>6. Young Enterprise Project – KB and SS were both invited as judging panel.</p> <p>7. Work closely with Burgess Hill & Haywards Heath Associations. Attend a number of meetings with them which were organised by MSDC.</p> <p>8. Starting work on a Food and Wine Festival to be called fEast Grinstead in 2016.</p> <p>9. Networking – 2 events per month, one at La Farola and our members Buzz meetings.</p> <p>10. Inaugural ‘Business Lecture’ was delivered by the CEO of White Stuff, Jeremy Seigal. This went well and was well attended, although the timing could have been better to ensure more schools involved.</p>												
<p>4.</p>	<p>Election of New Committee Members</p> <p>SS said there are 6 committee members, 2 of which step down each year. This year a third member has stepped down for personal reasons so we need three.</p> <p><u>Stepping down:</u> James Moore, Fiona Friend, Peter Robinson.</p> <p>Three members volunteered to stand for the Committee and were duly elected:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="300 840 1228 963"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Proposed</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Seconded</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Barney Durrant</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Lee Farren</td> <td style="text-align: center;">James Moore</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Matt Cole, Cole’s Estate Agents</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Sue Todd</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Ian Hopping</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fiona Bewers, The Caravan Club</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Peter Robinson</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Bob Russell</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Proposed	Seconded	Barney Durrant	Lee Farren	James Moore	Matt Cole, Cole’s Estate Agents	Sue Todd	Ian Hopping	Fiona Bewers, The Caravan Club	Peter Robinson	Bob Russell
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<p>5.</p>	<p>Reappointment of Officers</p> <p>CEO, Stuart Scholes Treasurer, Roger Martell Caroll Everest, Administrator Kate Bennett, Business Manager All were re-appointed.</p>												

<p>6.</p>	<p>The Year Ahead 2016</p> <p><u>Business Lecture</u></p> <p>SS said that we shall be holding our 2nd Lecture this year on 12th October. The timing should be better for the schools and we are liaising with Bob Mainstone over this. Kevin Byrne the CEO of Checkatrade will deliver the lecture and it is hoped that this will attract a wider audience.</p> <p><u>Meet & Greet</u></p> <p>Aim to reinvigorate this important scheme. A co-ordinator is needed to arrange and schedule the volunteers. The aim is for people arriving in EG to be met and supplied with information about the town and what to see and visit. The scheme is supported by the Bluebell Railway.</p> <p><u>EGBA Website</u></p> <p>This is to be reinvigorated and updated. A grant has been received for this from MSDC.</p> <p><u>fEast Grinstead</u></p> <p>The EGBA are keen to be involved in this new event and to make EG a 'Destination'. Dawn Spalding, EG Promotions Manager, is organising and running the event. It will feature food and wine in the area, and is being aided by Campania Wines (Luigi). It will be run in Station Approach on 2 October.</p> <p><u>Young Enterprise Scheme</u></p> <p>The EGBA support this important scheme and will hope to continue to play an important role in it.</p> <p><u>Retailers</u></p> <p>Aim to build a closer relationship between retailers in London Rd and the High Street which to date have operated separately. Matt Cole will drive this forward and will arrange a sub-committee. He has been asked to organise the London Road initiatives and for all retailer to pull together.</p> <p><u>Kingscote Valley Project</u></p> <p>Important tourist destination</p> <p><u>Mayors Ball</u></p> <p>EGBA (SS) has been working with the Town Mayor to arrange and organise a revised 'Mayor's Ball' which this year will be more casual and will be the Mayors' Charity Event. It will be held on 23 April and members were urged to support it.</p> <p><u>Networking Meetings</u></p> <p>We will continue to hold our monthly Meet and Drink networking evenings and our Buzz Meetings (held at a members premises). Members support for these is vital.</p> <p><u>Newsletter</u></p> <p>A monthly newsletter is published. Any company news should be sent to Caroll for consideration.</p> <p><u>Promote EG as a Destination</u></p> <p>To continue with this aim via various projects mentioned. Which in turn will increase footfall in the town and business.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Sir Nicholas Soames</p> <p>Thanked CE for her contribution and to Stuart for growing the Association. He said it had had a tricky 'birth' but after a slow start it has gone well with lots of activities.</p> <p>a) Not enough to look at EG as a tourist town – is all part of what it is. Thanked SS for his various initiatives.</p> <p>b) Need wake up to the opportunities and threats. Going through a period of great technology change. Biggest since the Industrial revolution, unstoppable and permeating. All need to take advantage. When the telephone was introduced it took 75 yrs to reach 75million people. The first iPhone was introduced in 2007 and has 2 -3 bn users! He said this gave an idea of the scale of the change and advance globally. He said we all need to be involved and to take advantage of it and its impact and commercial life.</p> <p>c) Need to be much more realistic about what we are promoting. Portrayal of EG as a nice place to go. Likes the idea of fEast Grinstead and would certainly attend!</p>

	<p>d) Economy: The national economy is changing very quickly. Facing testing times and still have a large National deficit. Oil uncertainty + over-confidence = uncertain times.</p> <p>e) Employment: In this area in West Sussex we have just 0.8% unemployment the 4th lowest in the country. Only 327 people are unable to work. But will not be insulated forever from global shocks. NS has lived through three, the first in the 70's was astonishing. The economy is now more global and is more attractive. We have an uncertain period and need to make most of all our assets.</p> <p>f) Education & Skills: Large changes in Government. Devolution. NS in favour. Lot of talk about skills. Important that Associations should do what they can. He said we are over-educating children and often they are not suitable for work. In local areas businesses need to keep talking to head teachers to ensure that children can read, write and add up and turn up on time for work. Their attitude is very important.</p> <p>He said there has been enormous growth in the SE and can always get into the service industry. In future however, we need to have skills for modern businesses and this drive has to come from the local economy - industry leaders should make it clearer so that schools know what is expected by employers.</p> <p>Too many children leave school unequipped for work. He does not wish to decry the many highly motivated and educated however the conclusion is that many are not properly equipped for work. One of our roles should be to talk to the schools and advise of the requirements of business.</p> <p>Many should be encouraged to apply for apprenticeships.</p> <p>g) NS said that he was thrilled that the Business Association had done well. We must be very ambitious and attract businesses as we have highly motivated people and resources of this area.</p> <p>h) In Mid Sussex 3020 apprenticeships have been created since 2010. Done very well and deals with those that have not gone to University.</p> <p>i)</p> <p>Q: Girl guiding: said they had tried to recruit apprentices but were unable to find anyone. NS said that a lot is due to the very low unemployment in the area. Schools know who should and should not be encouraged to go to University. Driven by Government. Need to get what is best for each individual. There is a reservoir of jobs for those that are not suited for University.</p> <p>Stuart Scholes, thanked Sir Nicholas for his input and it was very interesting to hear what he had to say.</p>
8.	<p>Expanding the Association</p> <p>SS reiterated again that we need to expand the membership to be self-funding. We need more members and everyone is requested to assist in this regard. If everyone bought just one new member each year we would achieve this aim.</p>
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><u>Town Carnival</u> – this is to be resurrected this year and will be held on Sunday 3 July. RW said that there will only be a minimum number of floats – due to H&S reasons. Have a lot of support and EG Town council are assisting. Lots of opportunity for companies to advertise. Question: Whether it would also promote the fEast Grinstead</p> <p>SS/RW said that all the events should promote each other and help each other.</p> <p>Dawn Spalding, said all events were actively promoted via social media. Should be a lot more opportunity and co-operation for all the markets, fayres, events etc.</p>

	<p><u>Waste Initiative</u> AN EGBA waste collection service was launched, which could offer reduced rates to members – the aim being to offer additional benefits to members. However, to date the take-up has been limited. Ian Hopping, at Auditel – who is driving the project on behalf of the EGBA, suggested we should also offer additional cost reduction packages such as stationery etc. He will look at energy and stationery. Deals with big stationery companies and could set up a portal with a core list of products – with some income that could come back into the Association. This was thought to be a good idea to wide our offer to include waste and stationery. Ian will organise this.</p> <p><u>Mayors Charity Event</u> To try and make something special and make more accessible. EGBA will have a table. Anyone interested in attending should contact Stuart Scholes for tickets.</p> <p><u>Business Programme Meridian FM</u> SS said monthly event was not run/held in Dec or Jan. However, we are committed the 22nd February and each month thereafter. 3 members are required for each event – several have already taken part. If anyone is interested they should contact Stuart Scholes. The aim is to talk about business in general. Then while the programme is on air each company gets a chance to record a talk about their business – which is free advertising for them – and this is then aired later.</p> <p><u>Your Association</u> SS asked members – what they want. How do we get more people involved? For more attendance at the various networking events. Support for the other events ie Mayors Ball etc. Barney Durrant: suggested that a meeting of the larger organisations could be arranged to clarify the benefits for them. To get a clearer proposition for the larger companies. Caravan agreed this would be beneficial. SS to put on the next Committee meeting agenda. Question: Edward Belsey – asked about membership from Charlwoods Rd and Birches Industrial Estate. Stuart, Caroll and Kate have all been round these estates several times, but with little support/success in attracting members. Many you cannot even get through the door/get an answer. Several are Head Office and /or don't have many local people working there. Ya Media: suggested that EGBA leaflets be given to the Burger vans on the estates to perhaps attract the businesses in those areas.</p> <p><u>Assistance</u> SS said that a lot of the work is voluntary; only Kate/Caroll receive a remuneration. More assistance is required by other members with the work and initiatives.</p> <p><u>Charities:</u> Age UK asked if there were many charities involved. SS said only a couple. She said that they should be run and considered as businesses and would benefit from being members. www.visiteastgrinsgtread.com Lee Farren said that companies should get friends/colleagues to 'like' their place on this site which feeds into Google and helps with their listing.</p> <p><u>Business Associations</u> Norman Webster said that he was keen to keep up and have good working relationships between the three local associations. They run training events – at minimum cost – is this something we should/could consider. CE said that although a good idea, we had run 2 on digital high street skills and LinkedIn, but both were not well supported after a lot of effort in marketing them both and little cost involved.</p> <p><u>Rex Whittaker</u> Offered thanks to Stuart, Kate and Caroll and the team for their efforts.</p>
10.	The AGM closed at 7.30pm.