

**GUILDFORD AND SOUTH SURREY BRANCH**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**held on Tuesday 27 February 2024 at 2 p.m.**

1. **Welcome by the Chair.**

A good turn-out of some 50 plus Members assembled in Shalford Village Hall for the AGM. David Lowther welcomed Katy Slade, Community Fundraiser for Thames Valley as the Parkinson's UK representative at the meeting. She had previously been the Fundraising Manager for our area. Katy was accompanied by Katherine Dennis who has succeeded her for our area.

2. **Apologies for absence:** Lin and Colin Woolmington .

3. **Minutes of the AGM February 2023:**

The Minutes as published in ***The Park*** in May 2023 were approved.

4. **Treasurer's Report:**

Steve Heron tabled a detailed report of the Branch finances for the year ended 31 December 2023. It had been a very successful year, largely thanks to a very generous donation from the Vernon Ely Charitable Trust, such that the Branch ended the year with higher financial reserves than at the start of 2023. This would ensure that the current level of activities would be maintained through 2024 and possibly beyond. However he stressed that the Branch was responsible for its own funding and received no financial support from PDUK. Fundraising must continue to remain high on the Committee's agenda.

The move to cash-pooling with PDUK had its advantages: the Branch now received interest on its bank account which in 2023 amounted to over £1300.

A colourful analysis showed a successful year in terms of the aims and objectives of the Branch. The subsidised Exercise class provision remains the biggest expenditure (58%) with almost 100 members participating on a weekly basis. The Committee had endorsed the recommendations in the Budget proposed for 2024 and the Branch looked forward to yet another successful year. The report was warmly received by the Members who joined in a vote of thanks to Steve for his hard work on behalf of the Branch.

5. **Report of the Committee by the Chair:**

David Lowther felt the year had gone well with membership showing a constant upward trajectory. This is in part thanks to referral processes by the Parkinson's Specialist Nurses. Newly-diagnosed individuals are given a copy of ***The Park*** and encouraged to consider joining the Branch. Over the past 12 months, the number of new members attending meetings at the Seahorse pub in Shalford had increased from about 5 to 25. The Treasurer's report demonstrated the range of activities/events members could take part in should they choose to do so, and the Committee continues to look for new opportunities for members in line with our mantra:

*stay physically active : stay mentally active : stay socially active.*

Communication had been substantially improved; in addition to the Chair's monthly Newsletter, and ***The Park*** (published three times a year) the Branch has a well-maintained website, and new information leaflets are published on specific areas of interest, such as local car schemes for help with transport. Getting the message out

to GP surgeries and pharmacies involved legwork by volunteers for which he and the committee were very grateful. The Chair concluded by thanking the Committee for their commitment to the Branch, and also thanked the “occasional” volunteers – which he immediately reworded, saying that they go way beyond helping “occasionally” but give their support week-in week-out.

**6. Election of Lead volunteers:**

The Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary – all offered to serve for the year ending 31 December 2024.

**Katy Slade**, PDUK, presided over the Election of:

**Chair: David Lowther** ( nom.-Joan Peacock; seconded- Nick Hetherington.)

**Vice Chair: Hilary Austin** (nom.-Valerie Box; seconded- Rona Lester)

**Treasurer: Steve Heron** (nom.-John Oldham; seconded-Janet Oldham)

**Secretary: Sharyn Bullen** (nom.-Clare Price; seconded:-Tom Kelso)

( All elected *Nem. Con.* )

**7. Election of the Branch Committee 2023:**

All serving members of the Committee were eligible for re-election and were nominated *en bloc* by Sharyn Bullen, seconded by Paul Dowson:

**Keith Black (Membership Secretary), Debbie Gaskell (Communications), Myra Newnes-Smith (Carers' issues), Clare Price (Events), and Margaret Westwood (Minutes & Meetings Secretary).**

**8. Any Other Business:**

**Katy Slade** invited members to raise points/issues under AOB and one member described the problem of variable availability of the medication needed by his wife. It was argued that chasing supplies (going from one pharmacy to another) was extremely stressful for all concerned, but changing to an alternative drug could also cause problems. It seemed that GPs and PDSNs were unable to give a reason for the shortage of supplies and were equally frustrated. Katy was sympathetic to the questioner and suggested contacting PDUK's procurement specialist. This issue was also picked up by Keith Black, the Membership Secretary.

The Business Meeting closed at 3.05 p.m

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Everyone was ready for tea and cake (an important feature of the AGM). **Katy Slade** offered to prepare a summary of her role and that of her successor to be published in **The Park**. During the serving of tea and a tempting variety of cakes, Sharyn called the Raffle which ensured a significant number of members went home clutching their winnings.

Before the Meeting closed, Nicholas Henderson activated the *One Hundred Club draw*. The lucky winners were Adrian Austin (Hilary's grandson) Sharyn Bullen and Ann O'Connor.

**Margaret Westwood,**  
*Minutes and Meetings Secretary*