

# Salisbury Wine Interest Group

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## Minutes of the SWIG Annual General Meeting

**HELD** at the White Hart Hotel, Salisbury on Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 7:30pm.

The chairman, Nick Hodgson, welcomed everyone to the inaugural AGM.

The Treasurer, Kerry Attwell Thomas, explained that he intended to work through the agenda which had already been distributed to members together with all the supporting papers and an explanatory email. A copy of all the papers was also available for inspection at the meeting. He reiterated that all the proposals in the agenda were supported by the Committee and had also been presented and amended after meeting with the Steering Group.

Agenda Point 1. Amended Constitution. KAT explained that the proposed constitution was an amalgam of items that are required for a members' club and some explanation of our procedures.

- a) The proposed constitution now splits the operation of SWIG between the formal, administrative side of the club which will be looked after by the small three-person Committee and the events side which will be looked after by an informal body called the Tasting Advisory Group or TAG. A club like SWIG relies on its members to volunteer for activities. Public Liability Insurance has been taken to protect the Committee and Volunteers from third party claims, and also includes Employer's Liability Insurance for its volunteers and officers so that they are able to claim against SWIG for losses they might suffer as volunteers.

The TAG is not just looking for volunteers to devise and present tastings, but for members to undertake other tasks that facilitate the smooth running of an event, such as pouring wines, supplying bread and washing spittoons. Frank Smith explained that the White Hart staff were excellent at setting up and clearing up the room to our specifications, but the spittoon cleaning would involve extra work and expense, and FS had agreed with the White Hart management that SWIG would do this task themselves and return the clean spittoons to the hotel for storage. FS would be convening an inaugural TAG meeting.

KAT said that we would also be looking for volunteers to deputise for the Treasurer and Membership Secretary roles, and the website management role fulfilled by FS. He explained that the Committee was looking for an individual independent of themselves - to undertake a risk assessment of our activities. Rosemary Pemberton kindly offered her services.

- b) Annual members of SWIG would be known as Full Members under the proposed constitution. This is to distinguish them from the proposed Pay as You Go ("PAYG") category of membership. This is a new membership category for those who only want to attend a few times a year. PAYG members will have fewer rights than Full Members and pay an £8 supplement per event. It is proposed that Full Members are entitled to bring guests to events for a premium of £5. There is no limit on the number of guests or the number of visits by a guest.
- c) The proposed amendments also outline the right of members to call an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss any urgent concerns, eg to remove one or more club officers.

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- d) Other proposed amendments include the definition of a Committee quorum, Committee tenure, and communication methods.

The proposed constitution was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Point 2. Finances. SWIG had more cash than had originally been expected at the start of the year, just under £330. Reserves were slightly higher at just over £430 because annual website costs had been prepaid in 2019. The cash position after the aborted February meeting was just under £530. Rosemary Pemberton asked if we would have more detail regarding expenses in future. KAT said that full accounts would be provided for 2020 at the next AGM. FS added that the meeting finances were fairly simple with fixed costs of around £150 per event before wine costs. The unknown factor was predicting the popularity and therefore the attendance. The Steering Group had gone ahead and bought two bottles of each wine to taste allowing a total attendance of 48. An income statement and balance sheet are produced after each tasting event, enabling the Committee to react promptly if problems arise. Additionally, the club is looking to build up its reserves as, in 2020, all tastings are planned to be self-financing from the £20 fee payable by attendees. Guest premiums and membership fees will all go into reserves together with any surpluses. This means we should be able to buy parcels of wine as they become available, eg tonight's Beaune was purchased several months ago by FS to buy the wines on SWIG's behalf.

Jeremy Barlow noted that the year-end was 31 December, but membership ran annually to 31 March. KAT explained that April 1<sup>st</sup> had been chosen for renewals to avoid the potential hazard of renewals coinciding with dry-January. Following a suggestion at the members' meeting last November, it was agreed that the AGM should be held ahead of the March tasting to set the fee level for the following year. The December year-end allows sufficient time to prepare and distribute accounts ahead of the AGM.

Agenda Point 3. Data Protection Policy. All SWIG correspondence should come from the Treasurer or the Membership Secretary, Paul Tyler. All emails would include a statement advising members about their rights. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Point 4. Membership Fees. KAT explained that SWIG is asking all members to sign a Membership Application Form when renewing to acknowledge their responsibilities as a result of the consumption of alcohol amongst other things and to certify that they are 18+. This is a condition of SWIG's use of the White Hart Alcohol Licence. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Point 5. Presenter's Expenses. KAT explained that it was important that volunteers should not be out of pocket for incidental expenses. £20 could be reclaimed for each event which would not have to be receipted. APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Point 6. Other Issues – mainly information

- a) Presidential. Mark Brandon's role as Life President was confirmed and that Membership Fees had been waived for him and Sue. This was greeted with widespread approval.
- b) KAT explained that it was not absolutely clear that a club such as SWIG is required to have Employer's Liability insurance, but that it is sometimes easier and cheaper to follow the path of least resistance. Seeking legal advice would cost hundreds of Pounds and still might not provide a clear answer. Additionally, as explained earlier there are clear benefits in having such insurance for both Officers and volunteers. KAT explained that this

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approach had also been followed with regard to alcohol licensing which both Wiltshire and Hampshire County Councils said applied to our activities.

- c) Volunteers/Role Substitutes. Already discussed.
- d) WhatsApp Group. KAT explained that we are hoping this will be set up by someone outside the Committee. To participate, members would need to have a Smartphone. It is envisaged that the WhatsApp group would be open to current and past members – and may be a useful way of attracting past members back into the fold. Official SWIG business, bookings etc would still be carried out by email, but WhatsApp could also be used to promote events, to share information about wine offers, etc. As with any WhatsApp group, anyone can contribute and members can join or leave as they pleased. Melissa Hodgson kindly volunteered to take this on following the AGM.
- e) KAT asked members to pay separately for tasting events and membership as it is difficult to work out what is happening when payments are aggregated.
- f) Own Cellar Wine Policy. FS explained that TAG would develop a policy to buy wine from members' own cellars (agreeing a fair price) where applicable. The idea is to introduce members to more expensive and / or unobtainable wine to supplement tastings. This has already featured in January's Left Bank tasting where FS supplied ones of the wines.

Agenda Point 7. Election of Officers. Re-elected unopposed.

Agenda Point 8. AOB. No items raised.

Close.

Certified as a true copy of proceedings:

Nicholas Hodgson

Chairman

Kerry Attwell Thomas

Treasurer