

Chairperson:  
Don Surridge  
7 Hellas Drive  
Barry  
CF62 8AW  
Tel: 01446 735437  
Email: don.surridge@ntlworld.com

Secretary: Robert N. Wardle  
Tel: 07762 126533  
Email: robert.n.wardle@tesco.net

Treasurer:  
Richard J. Thomas  
Tel: 01446 737218  
Email: rjthomas@maintop.co.uk

# Q1 Minutes

MARCH 10 2014



Time- 14:00 Held At The: Dow Corning Training Centre, (TrainC02) W109

## Welcome and Apologies

Robin Pitcher, Steve Kraus, Frank Matlby, Don Partridge, Val Caple, Annie & Milton Eskins, Muriel Longden, Nora Lindop, Margaret McMillan, Brian Rich, Gerry Goodman

### 1. Chairman's Report



Many thanks to you all for attending this meeting and your continued support. Your committee has now settled down and carry out the many tasks that are presented to them. We are now going through a very stable period and I am hopeful, no confident that our Rob Wardle will continue as secretary for the foreseeable future. The sub committee's are working very hard and look forward to there individual reports.

I would like to thank Ken Doble and Rob Wardle for the superb tour they arranged to Liverpool. We had a super time despite the very cold and sometimes wet conditions.

We have a guest speaker Mr. Clive Curtis who will be discussing the role of the VCVS and the services they offer.

Thanks to our friendship group for organising our speaker.

Dow Corning are tightening up security on site and apart from our meetings in this training centre, you will not be given access to the site unless you sit and pass the \*induction test. You can be allowed on site if escorted by Dow Corning supervision,

*Thank you - Don Surridge - chairman*

### \* Induction Test

*To go beyond the training centre unescorted, personnel have to undertake a 1 to 1.5 hour safety induction programme. You may have to explain as to why you need access to site on a regular basis.*

*To register for the safety induction which is held at the south gate security office contact reception 01446 732350 and ask for the south gate. Give your name and proposed day/date that you intend taking the induction.*

*Inductions are carried out every Monday and Wednesday morning. The Wednesday programme can be a little quieter.*

*Once completed, the induction is recorded electronically and is valid for 12 months (It seems one rule for all). You will be told by reception when it has expired you will need to re-book if you want to continue with your access to site.*

**NOTE:** The computerised version of the **Induction Programme** is **NOT** available to contractors, retirees, regular visitors.

*Rob Wardle - secretary*

## 2. Secretaries Report

Most will know I have always had an interest in Fire Safety. Details below were put together by Cherry Park a freelance journalist writing for many fire magazines.



### Smoking Pigeons, Micro waving Toilet Rolls & Other Fire Hazards

Overheated pants, magic spells, a pigeon with a cigarette, and a micro waved toilet roll were among the more unusual causes of fire reported by the London Fire Brigade (LFB) in 2013.

Among the 2,000 fires analysed by the Brigade's fire investigators, the following causes were identified:

A teenage boy lit a can of deodorant he had just sprayed on himself before going on his first date, igniting the gases and causing an explosion.

A micro waved toilet roll that someone was attempting to dry out after the person dropped it down the loo caught fire. Another person tried to use a toilet roll as a candle holder.

A dog hit the controls of a toaster with its paws as it leapt onto a kitchen worktop to reach some food, setting fire to bread left in a bag on top of the toaster.

A mouse got into the back of a fridge freezer and shorted the electrics, causing a blaze

Pants on fire: A man vigorously using a pair of boxer shorts to apply linseed oil to a floor caused the pants to overheat and start a fire.

A pigeon dropped a discarded lit cigarette down a blocked up chimney, setting fire to a bird's nest inside it.

Unattended incense candles bought as part of a magic spell set fire to the user's flat.

A bacterial reaction ignited dried out potting compost left unattended in a basement room over winter, causing the room to catch fire.

"There's never a dull moment in the fire investigation team," said LFB station Manager Charlie Pugsley. "On one occasion it even turned out that the family dog had started the fire by pawing at the cooker, inadvertently turning the gas on and setting light to food left on the hob."

But while they may be amusing, all these cases highlight the multitude of possible causes of fire that people may not have thought of, and emphasise the importance of taking simple fire-safety precautions.

**Moral:** Fire safety can never be taken for granted.



Make sure you have smoke alarms on at least every level of your home.



Plan your escape route and make sure everyone knows how to get out in a fire.

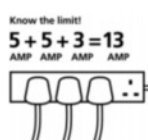


Test it

Smoke alarms save lives, but only if they're working. Test them regularly.



Take extra care in the kitchen and never leave cooking unattended.



Do not overload electrical sockets and watch out for faulty and over-heating electrical equipment and wiring/cables.

# Stethoscopes could spread hospital infections



The stethoscope is used to listen to the heart and lungs

"Stethoscopes ' more contaminated' than doctors hands," BBC News reports after new Swiss research has suggested that the much-used instrument may spread bacteria inside hospitals, including MRSA.

The BBC reports on an observational study involving 71 patients carried out at a Swiss university teaching hospital. Doctors were asked to perform a routine physical examination of these patients. None of the patients had an active skin infection, but around half were known to be colonised with MRSA before the examination took place.

After the examination, four areas of the doctors' dominant hand (or glove) and their stethoscopes were pressed onto culture media (liquid or gel designed to support the growth of bacteria) to see how many bacteria were grown in the laboratory. Hands (or gloves) and stethoscopes were sterilised prior to the examinations, so the researchers would only find bacteria transferred onto them after the single examination.

Overall, the study found that after the examinations, the most contaminated areas were the fingertips, followed by the diaphragm (the round "listening part") of the stethoscope. The diaphragm was more contaminated than other regions of the hand, such as the skin around the base of the thumb and little finger or the back of the hand.

The study serves as an important reminder for doctors and other health professionals about the dangers of cross-contamination. Transferring equipment from one patient to another without disinfecting the items in-between could pose as much of a risk as unwashed hands. This study has only investigated stethoscopes, but the results could just as easily apply to other hospital equipment, such as blood pressure cuffs and thermometers.

Where did the story come from?

The study was carried out by researchers from the University of Geneva Hospitals and was funded by the University of Geneva Hospitals and the Swiss National Science Foundation. There were no reported conflicts of interest.

The study was published in the peer-reviewed medical journal, Mayo Clinic Proceedings.

The reporting of the study is generally accurate, but all of the sources that reported on it (BBC News, ITV News and the Mail Online website) made the mistake of claiming that stethoscopes were more contaminated than doctors' hands. This is not strictly true.

What the study actually found was that fingertips were most contaminated, followed by the "listening part" of the stethoscope that comes into contact with patients' skin.

**Overall, this study serves as an important reminder for doctors and other health professionals about the potential risks of cross-contamination if hospital equipment and hands are not disinfected between one patient and the next.**

## Dow Corning Sales & Profits for Fourth Quarter and 2013 Year End

### Fourth Quarter (2013) Results

Sales were \$1.59 billion, 7 percent higher than last year's (2012) fourth quarter.

Pricing pressure continued to limit margins in Dow Corning's Silicones segment.

Polysilicon segment performance increased as customers purchased high volumes to meet contractual requirements.

### Year-to-Date Results

Sales were \$5.71 billion, 7 percent lower than last year.

Adjusted net income was \$304 million, 10 percent lower than last year.

	Q4 2013	Q4 2012	% Change	2013	2012	% Change
Sales (in billions)	\$1.59	\$1.48	7%	\$5.71	\$6.12	-7%
Net income (in millions)	\$110	\$(101)	209%	\$376	\$188	100%
Adjusted net income* (in millions)	\$103	\$69	50%	\$304	\$338	-10%

\* Adjusted net income is a non-GAAP financial measure which excludes certain unusual items. The reconciliation between non-GAAP and GAAP measures is shown in the Consolidated Statement of Operations linked below.

Comments from Dow Corning's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer J. Donald Sheets



"In a year characterized by significant oversupply and pricing pressure in our industry, Dow Corning competed well to maintain its industry leading financial foundation. We moved decisively to reduce our cost structure in 2013, providing us the ability to focus on growth through serving our customers in 2014 and beyond."

"Dow Corning continues to remain strong financially. In the past year we've paid down debt and maintained stable cash levels, carrying a strong balance sheet which will enable us to adapt and invest in the growth of our business."

"We continue to manufacture and sell high volumes of materials in our Silicones segment. Our efforts to continually improve the efficiency of our manufacturing operations have been a significant factor in our ability to compete in this volatile economic environment."

"In our polysilicon segment, Hemlock Semiconductor Group delivered positive financial performance despite unprecedented pricing and volume pressure as the solar industry deals with excess capacity and awaits resolution of the global trade disputes."

"In 2014, we are in a strong position to focus on growth by providing our customers with industry leading products and services. We are confident that our product portfolio and talented team are well positioned to help return Dow Corning to the trajectory of growth we expect."

*Author: Dow Corning News and Upcoming Events 06/02/2014*



*Rob Wardle - Secretary*

### 3. Treasurers Report

#### 1. Financial status year to-date:

Current account balance	3063.01
Cheques not presented from 2014:	
2480 – R. Durose (Hospital)	-10.00
2483 – Macmillan Support Group (In memory of J. Baker)	-20.00
2484 – Dow Corning (Shop takings)	-585.00
2485 – J. Harvey (Hospital)	-10.00
2486 – J. Sugden (Hospital)	-10.00
2487 – K. Bolt (Hospital)	-10.00
Cheques not presented from 2013	
2454 – M. Thomas (Tesco Voucher)	-10.00
2471 – Cancer Research Wales (In memory of T. Powell)	-20.00
Savings account balance	1660.63
Float totals	350.70
	=====
<b>Net Assets YTD =</b>	<b><u>£ 4399.34</u></b>

See additional sheet (Income and Expenditure Account for 2014 up to the end of February) for a summary of 2014 accounts year to-date.

A further breakdown is available during the meeting for those members wishing to see it. Any further queries please contact the treasurer.

#### 2. DCRA accounts for 2013:

The 2013 accounts have been prepared ready for audit. Dave Edwards has kindly agreed to audit the accounts again but he will not be available until the latter half of March, the files will be sent to him then. I expect the audit to be complete prior to the June meeting.

See additional sheet (Income and Expenditure Account for 2013) for a summary of the 2013 accounts.

A further breakdown is available during the meeting for those members wishing to see it. Any further queries please contact the treasurer.

#### 3. Bringing the Membership Year in line with the Financial Year:

This went ahead recently with the previous year finishing on 31<sup>st</sup> December and the current year starting on 1<sup>st</sup> January. This was definitely a plus from my point of view and I believe it was the same for the Membership Secretary (Val Caple). If anyone is aware of any negatives resulting from this move, please let a member of the committee aware of it.



*Richard J Thomas - Treasurer*



Dow Corning Retirees Association					
Income and Expenditure Account for 2014					
2014 Income - up to 1st March			2014 Expenditure - up to 1st March		
Members			Welfare		130.00
Subscriptions	617.00		Xmas cards/gifts		0.00
Dow Corning Part Matched			Manning DC Shop		55.64
Subscriptions	0.00		DC Shop Takings		585.00
Manning DC Shop (Paid by Dow			Admin		0.00
Corning)	1038.04		Coach Trips		420.00
DC Shop Takings	585.00		Annual Dinner (2014)		58.00
Admin	0.00		Tesco Vouchers (plus cheques - overseas		
Coach Trips	40.00		members)		0.00
Annual			Skittles Group Expenses		0.00
Dinner/Lunch	0.00		Walking Group Expenses		0.00
Interest earned (end Jan 2014).	0.07		Secretary's Expenses		0.00
			Treasurers Expenses		0.00
	Total			Total	
	Income	2280.11		Expense	1248.64
<b>Surplus for 2014</b>					<b>1031.47</b>
Balances -End of Dec 2013			Balances - End of Feb 2014		
Current Account	2146.61		Current Account		3063.01
Unpresented Cheques year to-			Unpresented Cheques year to-date		
date 2013	-790.00		2014**		-675.00
Savings Account	1660.56		Savings Account		1660.63
Treasurers Float	-7.34		Treasurers Float		-7.34
Secretary's Float	0.00		Secretary's Float		0.00
Skittles Float	8.05		Skittles Float		8.05
Walking Group					
Float	39.17		Walking Group Float		39.17
Coach Trips Float	10.82		Coach Trips Float		10.82
DC Shop Float	300.00		DC Shop Float		300.00
			<b>Net Assets year to-date 2014</b>		<b>4399.34</b>
			<b>minus surplus year to-date 2014</b>		<b>-1031.47</b>
		3367.87			3367.87
			** Includes 2 unpresented cheques from 2013		

Dow Corning Retirees Association					
Income and Expenditure Account for 2013					
2013 Income			2013 Expenditure		
Members Subscriptions	38.00		Welfare	200.00	
Dow Corning Part Matched Subscriptions	311.00		Xmas cards/gifts	165.93	
Manning DC Shop (Paid by Dow Corning)	4347.96		Manning DC Shop	292.20	
DC Shop Takings	5225.00		DC Shop Takings	5225.00	
Admin	0.00		Admin	1061.18	
Coach Trips	770.00		Coach Trips	1088.00	
Annual Dinner/Lunch	0.00		Annual Dinner (2014)	75.00	
Interest earned (end April 2013).	0.84		Tesco Vouchers (+ cheques for o/seas members)	3175.00	
			Skittles Group Expenses	31.94	
			Walking Group Expenses	160.83	
			Secretary's Expenses	15.07	
			Treasurers Expenses	3.81	
	Total Income	10692.80		Total Expense	11493.96
Deficit for 2013					-801.16
Balances -End of Dec 2012			Balances - End of Dec 2013		
Current Account	2347.84		Current Account	2146.61	
Unpresented Cheques at end Dec. 2012***	-140.00		Unpresented Cheques year to-date 2013	-790.00	
Savings Account	1659.72		Savings Account	1660.56	
Previous Treasurers Float	-2.38		Previous Treasurers Float	0.00	
Current Treasurers Float	-3.53		Treasurers Float	-7.34	
Secretary's Float	8.63		Secretary's Float	0.00	
Skittles Float	39.99		Skittles Float	8.05	
Walking Group Float	-65.06		Walking Group Float	39.17	
Coach Trips Float	23.82		Coach Trips Float	10.82	
DC Shop Float	300.00		DC Shop Float	300.00	
			Net Assets year to-date 2013	3367.87	
			Plus deficit year to-date 2013	801.16	
		4169.03			4169.03
*** Includes 2 unpresented cheques from 2011.					

#### 4. Shop Report

For the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014 sales have increased by 35% over the previous year.

This is partly due to the special discount on many Pyrex items given to us by our suppliers, and the very generous price we sell sealants to our customers.

The future of the Retirees Association depends largely on the success of the shop and to the continued generous contribution that Dow Corning gives for running this facility. Your support therefore is crucial to its success.

My thanks as always to our helpers and to Ruth Beasley for the continued support she has given us.



*Regards Don Surridge*

#### 5. Social Committee Reports

##### Trips



41 members and guests left Dow Corning by coach on February 3<sup>rd</sup> for Liverpool. Our intended hotel, Atlantic Towers, Thistle informed the coach driver that they had suffered a burst water tank and that we may not be able to stay at that hotel they would know for definite at 3:00 p.m. Before we arrived at The Atlantic Towers hotel, we were told that we would all be staying there

On Tuesday we took in a 2 hour guided Beatles Tour. Elaine, our guide, gave us a very interesting and detailed history of the Beatles lives and also about Liverpool itself.

The afternoon was spent independently at the Liverpool One shopping centre, or one of the two Cathedrals in Liverpool or one of the numerous museums around the Albert Dock.

Wednesday we boarded the Mersey ferry SNOWDROP. Even though the Mersey looked quite choppy, the ride across, down and back to our starting point was very smooth. When we embarked the majority joined the coach to travel to Southport, about 15 miles north. Whilst on our way, we experienced our first rain of the holiday, unlike South Wales which had suffered continuous rain and very strong winds.

We arrived home on Thursday afternoon to the heavy rain that South Wales had been having for the previous few days.

Commencing on October 27, we have planned a possible four day trip to a, 1 day in Bletchley Park OR Milton Keynes AND 1 day in Duxford Imperial War Museum OR Cambridge. This is a 4 day/3 night trip, staying in the Swan Hotel in Bedford. (Check it out on [bedfordswanhotel.co.uk](http://bedfordswanhotel.co.uk)) At present there are quite a few seats available, so those who have never availed themselves of a Dow Corning Retirees Adventure, can phone Ken Doble (01446734679) or Rob Wardle (01446745441).

*Ken Doble - A full report of the above trip should appear in your next Newsletter.*

##### Skittles

Jim and Sue have both been away on vacation. Since returning, the skittles group have managed to organise one eventful evening on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>. Nine regulars turned up for a great evening.

*Jim and Sue Sugden - skittles organisers*



## Friendship Team

The Friendship Group have now been active for several months, so far we have had no requests for assistance with transport.

We have continued exploring the responsibilities to make the group safe and legal. Various external bodies have been enlisted to assist with these tasks and ventures we have undertaken on a practical nature to define our needs.

We have discussed these needs with Residential Homes and have discovered some considerations / concerns to incorporate in our operating procedures.

Most of this work has been carried out by our Treasurer acting as secretary for the Friendship Group.

We have undertaken four visits to residences during this period, some of these visits were to gather information to help us run our group professionally.



*Bryan Clements*

## Membership

Please join me welcoming two new members to the association, David & Stephanie Moseley. Dave was until retirement a member of the QA staff.

Some of our members have not renewed their membership namely Sid Wells, Graham Hookings, Dave Whyte\*, Mrs Jean Harray, Mrs Lorraine Morgan. If you could help me locate any one of these members, I would be most grateful or contact Don, Richard or Rob.

\* Mail sent to Dave Whyte at his last known address has been returned to Dow Corning and marked unknown. If anyone knows of Dave's whereabouts please contact me on 01446 775794.

*Val Caple - membership secretary*

## Spring Dinner May 24<sup>th</sup>

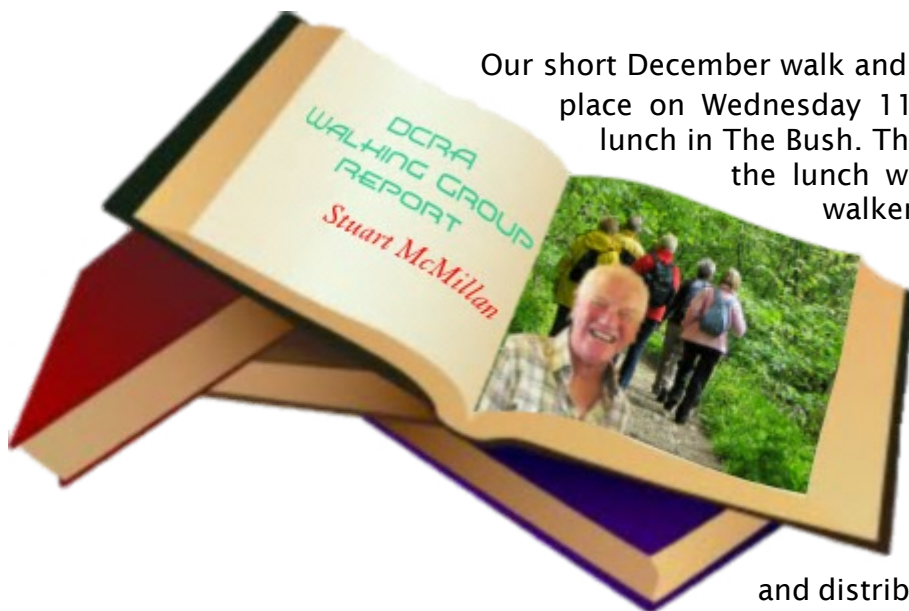
If you are going to attend the Spring Dinner on Saturday May 24<sup>th</sup> please return the completed dinner slip asap as we are already half full and are limited on numbers. I should point out there is a typing error with my address as shown on the return slip fortunately the post office have been correcting the error and popping them through my letterbox. Could you please return your slip to **246 Gladstone Road**. Don't miss out on a great evening of food, fun and catching up with old comrades.



Our entertainer has confirmed for the evening, and we will agree the programme with him. The caterer and bar manager are also booked. We will be addressing the menu details with the caterer as soon as we reach our total number of places available.

You may also reserve tables to be with friends, please let me know who you would prefer to be with on the night. We would love for you to join us for the Retiree Association Spring Dinner at the Masonic Hall, Barry on Saturday May 24<sup>th</sup> 7:00 for 7:30 p.m. Contact Derek Butler on 01446 745269 for full details, reserving tables etc.

*Derek Butler - Social Committee*



Our short December walk and subsequent Christmas Lunch took place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> around the St Hilary area with lunch in The Bush. The walk was rural and enjoyable but the lunch was delightful and attended by 14 walkers.

During 2013 the Walking Group members walked 114 miles, climbing over 17,900 feet over a period of 56 hours with 117 turnouts.

The 2014 Walking Programme was compiled with member's contribution for walk proposals and distributed to all Walking Group Members via e-mail in December.

The annual New Years Day 'walk' up Pen Y Fan had to be cancelled owing to storm force winds and torrential rain that would have made the trip an endurance rather than an enjoyable experience. This is the first time we have had to cancel this walk.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> January 12 walkers turned out to walk the 'Neolithic Trail', that included Wenvoe, The Downs, St Nicholas, Tinkinswood 'Long Cairn' and St Lythans cromach burial stones. The ground conditions were better than expected but the grass fields still resembled wet sponges although the walkers were glad to dissipate cabin fever during the 9 mile stroll.

The adverse winter weather played havoc with the scheduling of the 8 mile, easy walk around Merthyr Mawr sand-dune complex that started and ended in Newton to the east of Porthcawl. After two postponements 12 walkers turned out on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February to enjoy good weather, a gambol along the beach, a picnic lunch in sunshine and some refreshments in the Jolly Sailor pub at the end.

Our March walk took us to Llangynidr for a 10 mile walk that incorporated a section of the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal towpath, passing through Glanus Park and Estate over to Tretower and its Castle, across the fields and along a Roman road to Bwlch before returning to Llangynidr via the Beacons Way. Fourteen walkers turned out and were blessed with some spring weather and spring flowers.

<b>2 Apr</b>	<b>Llanmadoc, Whiteford Point, Berges Island and iron lighthouse</b> Meet 1030 at Llanmadoc field car park (SS 440935) Low tide 13.57.	<b>10</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>7 May</b>	<b>Llantwit Major to Barry – linear (Wales Coast Path)</b> Meet 0945 at Barry Dock railway station at back of Dock Offices	<b>14</b>	<b>M/C</b>
<b>4 June</b>	<b>Forest Coal Pit, Bryn Awr, Pantygelli, Deri Ridge, Sugar Loaf</b> Meet 1030 at Forest Coal Pit roadside car park (SO 292201)	<b>11.5</b>	<b>C</b>

We thank the Retiree's Association and the Executive for their continued support.

Anyone wishing to join, or wanting more information may contact Stuart McMillan (Tel 029 2070 5234, or e-mail [mcmillan42H@talktalk.net](mailto:mcmillan42H@talktalk.net)).

*Stuart McMillan - Walking Community Coordinator*



## 6. Clive Curtis - Guest Speaker from Vale Centre for Voluntary Service (VCVS)

The VCVS has over 480 group members of which DCRA is now a member. Membership is free providing the annual income is less than £15,000. VCVS offer a wide and varied assistance to its members such as legal advice, help with forming constitutional rules at all stages. This is useful to small groups just setting out. VCVS can offer free equipment loan in some cases, free assistance with developing procedures which is especially useful to DCRA who have recently formed the Friendship Group. VCVS also offers low cost training and workshops e.g. first aid training at a reduced rate which again could be useful to the DCRA Friendship Group. It also offers networking with other groups, participation in joint workshops and forums. VCVS can also help with printing of flyers, tickets etc. and help with designing quality leaflets. Low cost room hire for a small group such as 12 people.

All information stemming from VCVS will continue to be received by Richard Thomas who will be shortly asking Val Caple to attach links to our website to the VCVS information.

## 7. AOB

A suggestion was made regarding the small amount members receive from the association when hospitalised. The suggestion was, should we continue with these small payments or withdraw the payment. The reasoning is, for some people it might be hassle to bank the cheque and maybe it would cut down the administration, i.e. purchasing get well cards, cheque authorisation and finally posting. It was also suggested that some members receiving a cheque may be very beneficial.

The committee present at today's meeting have deferred a response to the suggestion and agreed to add these comments to the AGM Agenda set for September this year.

Another suggestion which has been talked about in the past concerns the payment of membership fees and whether we could pay by standing order in future.

Richard Thomas responded by stating that he has already looked into this and needs further discussions with our bank because currently we would have no idea of who was making the payments therefore we would need the bank to let us know who they had taken payments from and secondly one of the downsides can be if the committee ever increased the renewal fees, we would have to ask people who were making their payments by standing order to inform their bank of any increase. This is because a standing order is only for the set amount as shown on the original request. However as treasurer, it is something to be looked into and maybe trailed with a group of members for 2015.

**Are you aware of the benefits offered by our Friendship Group, an article outlining the main contacts and benefits first appeared in the December '13 minutes. If you need a reminder, please refer to the minutes on the DCRA website. Meanwhile your main contact should be Bryan Clements [jamesbclements@talktalk.net](mailto:jamesbclements@talktalk.net) or 01446 733499 current back up is Richard Thomas [rjthomas@maintop.co.uk](mailto:rjthomas@maintop.co.uk) or 01446 737218.**

Meeting finished at 1605 hours

**DONIM**  
**June 02**