

# Wimbledon Park Residents' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 8 pm  
in Wimbledon Park Hall, Arthur Road, SW19

Committee:      Iain Simpson (Chair)      Kathy Blackburn      Michael Tyler  
                      Nigel Israel                    Elaine Sandon  
                      Michael Moore                Pamela Hunt  
                      Beata Eberhardt              Ingrid Dickinson

Ex Officio:        Cllr Oonagh Moulton, Cllr Linda Taylor, Cllr Janice Howard  
Apologies:        Ken Ball, DeNica Fairman, Paresh Modasia, Peter West, Spike Clarke  
In Attendance:    Stephen Hammond MP, Jill Farmer

1. **Minutes of the AGM held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014**

The Minutes were approved without comment.

2. **Matters Arising**

Items for comment will be covered during the course of the meeting.

3. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman gave his report and invited members to comment on topics as necessary.

a) **Vineyard Hill Road Surgery**

Following receipt of the letter sent to all residents from NHS England announcing its closure, and a public meeting, a coalition formed on behalf of the community to try and keep the Surgery. The involvement of Paresh Modasia, our Councillors and Stephen Hammond MP, who made contact with NHS England at the top level, Nigel Israel together with several others, resulted in the Surgery being taken over by the current doctors. They have decided to go ahead with the necessary renovations in spite of not having heard anything further from NHS England re funding. Oonagh advised those residents who had moved to another surgery to re-register and come back. Numbers are believed to be 4,000 as opposed to the original 5,000 patients registered.

b) **Planning issues**

i) **Butchers**

Destruction of this site has caused a lot of consternation; Dave and Rosemary Dawson and Nigel Israel contacted English Heritage to get the shop listed. This was received but not in time to stop destruction of one interior wall of original tiles which the developers carried out despite the Council visiting and telling them about the pending application. A condition was put on the planning consent that they had to reinstate with replica tiles. The developers have applied to have that condition set aside. Nigel said English Heritage listed the shop and the local Council is required to oversee compliance. The front has also been destroyed by widening the original doorway. Nigel is investigating the establishment of another law enforcement body to take such matters out of the Council's control.

ii) **Phone masts**

Masts have been rejected in Revelstoke and Ashcombe Roads.

c) **Parking around the Mosque**

It was felt that Wardens were not enforcing the parking regulations, especially between 1 – 2 pm on Fridays. There has been some improvement but there is still parking against the barrier. Oonagh has been asked to lobby about free parking over that time.

d) **Advertising**

Kathy Blackburn has retired her role after 8 years gathering advertisers for the newsletter. Pamela Hunt has taken over this role.

e) **Incorporation**

Currently committee members and general members are subject to unlimited liability. Applying for the WPRRA to become a Company Limited by Guarantee is being investigated. Consideration is also being given to registering as a Charity.

f) **Treasurer**

Ivan Scott stepped down from the Committee during the year, but has continued to do the bookkeeping. Nigel Israel has agreed to take over as Treasurer.

**g) Durnsford Rec fruit trees / gym equipment**

Some walnut trees were planted earlier in the year. The fruit hedges which were planted 3 years ago have fruited abundantly this year. Abundance Southfields was contacted for their project to make good use of excess fruit. It is not widely known that this fruit is available for all residents to pick. Pamela Hunt said she will be arranging for signage to be erected on the gates next year, explaining what is growing and when available for picking.

Pamela noted that help is needed to prune the hedges on 30<sup>th</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> November.

Pamela is getting in touch with the Council to see about installing gym equipment in the Rec. This has been successful elsewhere.

**h) Wimbledon Park Community Trust**

The WPCT runs the hall and leases the café. The first accounts up to the end of July 2015 have been prepared and are available on the website. There has been satisfactory rental income from the hall. The café was leased from the end of October 2014. A lot of money was raised by the WPRA for the hall and all that money has now been transferred. The total amount in the fund amounts to £48,000. At the end of the coming year, there will be a review of the financial situation. Should there be an excess of funds, the Trustees might consider making grants to the local community. WPRA residents will be invited to put forward eligible candidates.

**i) Greyhound Stadium**

An 'information evening' meeting at Kohat Hall last Thursday was attended by 30-40 people. The feeling by members of WPRA and other statutory bodies is that none of the major issues previously raised have been addressed adequately in the second application, relating to flooding and traffic congestion. The Council had also previously turned down an application for a new secondary school for similar reasons and also because it was on the borough boundary. Most people had not been aware of this, although our Councillors in opposition had.

Q. A question was asked about why did the WPRA favoured a new school versus AFC in the latest leaflet. In response the chairman replied that this interpretation of the leaflet was not entirely correct. A new secondary school in this part of the borough was badly needed and good sites were difficult to find. It appeared that issues of flooding and traffic congestion were not an obstacle for the Galliard application, supported by the Council, so it seems that there were other considerations that determined the Council's rejection of the site for a school.

Nigel raised concern that if AFC attendance was not enough, they might sell the stadium to another club. Ingrid said they might have to share with another club.

Oonagh commented that Kathy Tracey, Government member for schools in Wandsworth, feels that they have enough schools. It is quite possible to school across boundaries.

The question of pre-determination by Councillors was discussed and Iain noted he had written to the Council to suggest that it was inappropriate for Councillor Judge to openly promote AFC's application. This was not upheld by the Council's legal representative. Iain has not taken it further but feels it is a grey area. Oonagh also noted Linda Kirby, his wife, is Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Q. There was a question as to who had replied to Iain and whether he should take it further.

Q. Relating to process, Wandsworth has concerns since the Stadium is entirely within Merton. They see difficulties on their side of the boundary and have objected to Merton in principle and could refer the matter to a higher level – what is the process? Cllr Taylor said there is a strong possibility it could be called in if passed by LB Merton Planning Committee. GLA Planning will make a decision to go to the Mayor.

Stephen Hammond said very few of these applications have been called in by the Mayor. Key points are the issue of the flood plain and the Environment Agency which Planning is legally required to look into; the 600 units (1500 + people) increases pressure on the two junctions which during normal times are still a significant issue that has not been overcome.

**j) Discussion ensued about Crossrail 2 starting at Wimbledon through Tooting Broadway, or more likely Balham. The Council and Crossrail 2 are in disagreement about where the tunnel should start. A route option will be coming out soon and this may cause delay. Stephen favours the tunnel starting before Wimbledon to aid regeneration of the Wimbledon town centre. Sites such as Dairy Crest/Safestore, and Waitrose have been designated for contractors' sites.**

k) **Haslemere Industrial Estate**

A meeting of local residents was held to discuss the proposal to redevelop a majority of that estate by First Base; town houses and a very large block of flats over 8 storeys are big issues arising particularly with planning. National planning guidance does not permit regeneration on a flood plain.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

Ivan presented the accounts. In reply to a question, transfer of money to Wimbledon Park Community Trust is complete. £32,000 was raised from three fairs, plus £1,500 received from Merton Council for hall delay. The acceptance of accounts was proposed by Pamela Hunt and seconded by Kathy Blackburn.

5. **Membership Secretary** – The Chairman advised that a new Membership Secretary is needed as DeNica Fairman wishes to concentrate on other things. The role is to proactively control the database and follow up subscription renewals.

6. **Safer Neighbourhood Team**

PC Roberts addressed the meeting. He has been in the role for 18 months, currently assisted by one PCSO. Government cut backs threaten to remove their jobs. This is one of the safest Wards. However, a recent theft of donations from Christ the King, and a diesel theft in Weir Road have been the subject of successful arrests. In reply to a question from Oonagh, he said that thefts from motors had been reduced. Simple things like making sure the car is locked properly, and not just relying on the key fob working, is one of the things he has noticed. The office in the Park is still available but only open on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday afternoons. Opening times are on the website.

Q. In reply to a question about who is responsible for policing the Stadium, PC Roberts said this would be part of what is called 'aid' policing where the Yard co-ordinates provision of police cover for large sporting events centrally.

7. **Front Garden Awards 2015**

Jill Farmer announced the results of this year's residents' competition which was started in 1991 by John Uden, who donated the trophy. All gardens visible from the street are eligible; a team of 24 judges was involved. There has been a noticeable decline in the number of attractive front gardens and a trend towards tiled or paved areas resulting in loss of vegetation and soakaway for rain water. She suggested residents could heed the advice issued by the RHS regarding sustainable gardening. Her photographic display showed a number of other gardens which received an honourable mention. The winners are:

Best "**Summer Interest**" – 8 Wellington Road, Simon and Sam Otter

Best "**Environmentally Sustainable**" – 58 Normanton Avenue, James and Karen Wickham

**John Uden Trophy for overall winner** and best "**All-Year Interest**" – 15 Home Park Road, Jane and David Gosman.

8. **Election of Officers**

The committee for 2015-2016 was proposed by Jane Gosman and seconded by Kathy Blackburn.

Iain Simpson (Chairman)

Nigel Israel (Treasurer)

DeNica Fairman (Membership Secretary)

Ken Ball

Spike Clarke

Beate Eberhardt

Paresh Modasia

Elaine Sandon

Peter West

Ex Officio: Cllr Oonagh Moulton, Cllr Janice Howard, Cllr Linda Taylor

Kathy Blackburn

Ingrid Dickenson

Pamela Hunt

Michael Moore

Michael Tyler

9. **Any Other Business**

Nigel Israel wished to express some good news and congratulated the Mosque for its open weekend on 3 – 4 October. Many residents had enjoyed the event.

Thanks were expressed to Kathy Blackburn for her 8 years co-ordinating advertising in the newsletter, and to Michael Moore for his huge commitment to planting and maintaining the flower boxes over many years.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 pm.