

# **North Cray Residents' Association**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 22nd June 2009 at 8pm in The Bothy**

The meeting commenced with an informal gathering in which members mixed and mingled before the commencement of the AGM.

The Chairman welcomed our members as well as our Councillor, Don Massey.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from

Mr. & Mrs. Gibbs  
Mr. & Mrs. Wirth  
Mr. & Mrs. Langford  
Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Barr-Hamilton  
Mr. John Burgess

### **2. MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM HELD ON TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2008**

At the request of the meeting these were taken as read.

### **3. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer read out the figures of the General/Community Account followed by the Balance Sheet which amounted to our funds totalling £3224.72.

Following the Treasurer's Report, the figures on the Balance Sheet were questioned by a member attending the meeting. His query was subsequently verified by the Treasurer as being justified. After studying the figures the Treasurer confirmed that it was a typing mistake and amended them. It did not affect the grand total which remained £3224.72.

JNH then thanked Gill Burgess and asked for agreement from the meeting that we adopt the Report with the corrected figures. This was agreed.

Bridget Harrington then thanked the following collectors who had been exceptionally helpful this year during John's disability:

Debbie Ronchetti, Mary Stubbs, Julie Hardstone, Malcolm Card, Andrea Rabin, Betty Rae and Malcolm Barr-Hamilton.

She also thanked Gill Burgess for undertaking the job of Treasurer last year. Unfortunately she is unable to continue, but we have been most grateful for her help.



#### 4. CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

##### Review of the year

On the Planning front, the major concern continued to be the Application to build 13 dwellings on the site of the Weatherley Fencing & Garden Centre. The Association had vigorously opposed this development and we were pleased to learn early in the year that the Application had been withdrawn.

Other Applications over the year opposed by the Association included a renewed attempt to build a dwelling on a former builders yard at the foot of Parsonage Lane, for which Planning permission was again refused. The Association also opposed the removal of four sycamore trees on the boundary between Holt Close and the driveway to the Church, following which Bexley allowed pruning only. Similarly, the Association obtained strict conditions regarding the temporary use of a garage in Ruxley Close as an insurance office.

There was major concern at an Application for continued use of the Little Acre Stud Farm on Bunkers Hill as a private gypsy caravan site. Bexley's refusal became the subject of a Public Inquiry, which was attended by members of the Committee. Disappointingly, the Inspector allowed the continued use of this land for this purpose but in doing so he applied strict conditions – the permission would be restricted to one family and be for a term of five years only. He also required the owner to have a scheme for planting and woodland management, and to commission an ecological survey in respect of a rare and protected species of newt on the land.

The Association has also initiated investigations by Bexley's Enforcement Officer into several activities considered inappropriate in the Green Belt, for example the open storage of ice cream vans at Pond Farm, Cocksure Lane.

It is in this area that the Association most needs your help: members are urged to keep their eyes open for any inappropriate activities and development which, if not opposed in a timely way by the Association, could become lawful on the grounds of "established use".

The Chairman then reported that he had represented the Association on the Civic Society Planning Committee, the Natural Environment Focus Group, the Traffic & Transport Focus Group with particular emphasis on the 492 Bus route, and the Council's Conservation Advisory Committee dealing with listed buildings and Conservation Areas of which there are two in North Cray.

##### Statement of Agreement required by Council

The Chairman informed members of a new requirement requested by Bexley Council that the following statement be ratified at the AGM of all similar organisations recognised within the Borough:-

*"It is agreed that representation on behalf of the Association relating to planning applications will be made by the Chairman or Secretary of the Association."*

This was proposed and seconded and the directive duly adopted.



### New Officer appointments:

The Chairman pointed out that this year sees quite major changes in the officers of our Association.

He added that Bridget and he had long felt that the jobs of Chairman and Secretary should be passed to younger people than themselves, and for some time we have had in place a Sub-Committee for the Protection of the Green Belt which had been dealing with our planning issues. Those in charge of this Committee were now moving in to head the mainstream of our organisation.

This involved the Chairman and the Hon. Secretary who would now replace Bridget and himself and these appointments would dispense with the need for a Sub-Committee.

John Harrington stated that we had been most fortunate that David Cook had agreed to be **Chairman** and gave the meeting some of David's biographical details

David had worked all his life in the Financial Services industry specialising in retail and institutional pension scheme development. He had held directorships at Rothschilds (Investment Bank), Heath Consulting (National IFA) and The Alliance Trust. Although now retired, David continues to accept consultancy roles.

John added that he was glad to be able to report that he had also had nominations for both Secretary and Treasurer which would be put to the meeting shortly.

Jean Gammons had proved herself a **Secretary** par excellence during the time she had worked on the Sub-Committee. She was a formidable monitor of our planning applications whose focussed letters to the Council reflect all the work she had undertaken in researching the particular application she was questioning. She had been assisted by Angela Goodman who was also committed to preserving the rural aspect of North Cray.

The Chairman added that Gill Burgess was unable to continue as **Treasurer**, but that we had been fortunate that Geoff Waldmeyer, whose wife Irene used to be on our Committee some years ago, had agreed to accept the post. The Chairman ended by thanking all who had helped Bridget and himself in holding the Association together in difficult times – especially for the faithful support of some of our long standing Committee members, and to some who were not even on the Committee but who were unfailingly helpful year after year.

## **5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE**

### **Chairman**

As previously stated, David Cook had been nominated. He was subsequently formally proposed, seconded and accordingly elected.

### **President**

David Cook, the new Chairman, talked for a few moments about his own appointment and then turned to the election of a President.



He gave an outline of John Harrington's local activities and thanked him for his work over many years. This ended with the proposal that he be made President of our Association which would mean that he will not be losing touch and would be available for advice and guidance.

John had accepted the nomination and was subsequently proposed and seconded.

#### **Hon. Secretary**

The Chairman pointed out that this post had been held for many years by Bridget who now wished to retire. He thanked Bridget on behalf of the Association and invited the members to do the same.

Referring to what John Harrington had just said about our proposed Secretary, the new Chairman reiterated that we were very happy indeed that Jean Gammons (who had in fact been responsible for monitoring Planning applications for the past 19 months) had agreed to fill this post. Jean had lived in North Cray for 38 years. Her family connections with Sidcup go back well over 100 years – in fact Harland Avenue was named after her great grandfather (who operated the Harland Brick Works on the site). She was totally committed to preserving the Green Belt from the various issues which threaten it. He could think of no better credentials for someone who was going to monitor planning applications on our behalf.

Jean had accepted the nomination for this post and was subsequently proposed and seconded.

#### **Assistant Secretary**

Referring to this post, the Chairman stated that, because the post of Secretary is an onerous one, it had been agreed to appoint an assistant to Jean, and Angela Goodman had been nominated. He added that we had had an Assistant Secretary in the past so this was not a break from tradition. Angela was proposed, seconded and accordingly elected to the post.

#### **Hon. Treasurer**

The Chairman stated that he was sorry Gill Burgess was unable to continue in the post but was happy to say that Geoff Waldmeyer had agreed to accept the nomination.

Geoff (and his wife Irene) has lived at the Bexley end of North Cray Road since 1977. They run a family business providing various security items. In previous lives, Geoff has been a Territorial Army Officer and a Bank Official and is associated with local army units and the Royal British Legion. Geoff Waldmeyer of Vale Mascal Court, No.132 North Cray Road, Sidcup, was accordingly proposed, seconded and duly elected. It was also agreed that all the associated requirements necessitated by this appointment concerning bank accounts as itemised in HSBC's mandate transfer should be carried out.

#### **Committee Members**

The following had agreed to stand on the Committee:-

Mary Stubbs  
Michael Heath  
Linda Moore  
Irene Waldmeyer  
Jacky Cook  
Nik Carter



Bridget Harrington

The Chairman suggested that the Committee be elected en bloc. They were accordingly proposed and seconded.

#### **Hon. Examiner of Accounts**

Dr. Tony Speed had indicated that he would be prepared to undertake this for us, health permitting. This was agreed.

#### **Delegates to the Federation of Residents Associations**

JNH had agreed to represent our Association. He invited anyone who might like to join him to let him know.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman said that the presence of Cllr. Don Massey at our AGM was very much appreciated and invited anyone who had any questions to put them to him.

Various matters were raised including:-

##### Refuse collections.

Several people commented that when these bins were emptied they were often flung across people's driveways causing an incoming car to stop in a dangerous part of the road to remove the blockage from their entrance.

Residents of Parsonage Lane complained that bins were regularly left out in the road (there are no pavements) rather than being returned to the gateways/drives/grass verges where they were initially left. Mrs J Cook had taken a series of photographs of these repeated incidents.

It was again said that fortnightly collections were causing unsightly and, in hot weather, very smelly conditions.

##### Trees in residential roads

A resident in the Grove complained that two or three trees had been cut down outside his property (No. 23) and had not been replaced in two years. Cllr. Massey said he would get the Works Dept. to investigate it.

##### Vehicle Parking at the bottom of Parsonage Lane

A resident of Parsonage Lane had concerns about Weatherley Fencing staff and early customers parking on the bend at the bottom of Parsonage Lane early in the morning while waiting for the gates to be unlocked. This makes it very dangerous for vehicles coming down Parsonage Lane. Cllr. Massey said he would make some enquiries as to what might be done.

##### Dangerous Bend - Parsonage Lane

The question of the dangerous bend at the bottom of parsonage Lane was raised together with a suggestion of installing a convex mirror on the bend so that oncoming vehicles could be seen. Cllr. Massey confirmed that the problem of the dangerous bend had been an issue in the Weatherley Fencing/Asprey Homes matter. He would take the matter up with the Council's traffic engineers to see what could be done.

##### Road Repairs



JNH reported that the state of the High Beeches road surface was a disgrace and had been so for some considerable time. There were other areas which also gave cause for concern, i.e. The Grove and The Spinney where pavement irregularity and instability were a danger to pedestrians. Cllr. Massey said that he thought that road surfacing for High Beeches was scheduled for this year. Every road in the Borough is walked every 6 months. He added that he would get Ron Bridgeman to give JNH a ring and together they could walk the areas which were considered to be in need of immediate attention.

#### Transport for London

Cllr. Massey reported on meetings with TFL with particular reference to the 492 Bus serving North Cray and the irregularity of the service. He said that part of the problem was that there was not enough time to turn around at Sidcup. He added that there was a tolerance in the timing of 5 minutes late and 3 minutes early. If the service was more reliable more people would use it. He felt, however, that some progress had been made.

#### National Grid

Cllr. Massey was asked about the works which were to have started this summer to the cabling tunnel shaft and its route to Falconwood, commencing with a temporary road to the North Cray Road dual Carriageway roundabout from the Hurst sub-station.

BH asked what was happening to the spoil from this extensive excavation which it is understood would be transported back down the North Cray Road. Cllr. Massey said it was his understanding that only three or four lorries per day would be involved in the removal of soil. BH asked about the removal of trees involved in making the temporary road. Cllr. Massey said only three trees would be felled.

#### Council Tax

Cllr. Massey announced that the increase this year would be the lowest ever – two and a half per cent.

Finally, a lady from the meeting stood up and thanked the Committee of the Association for all the work they carried out on behalf of our members over so many years.

The Chairman then thanked everyone for coming, adding a special thanks to Cllr. Massey and invited everyone to help finish up the refreshments before leaving.