

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Onslow Gardens Residents' Association, held on Thursday, July 15th, 2010 in the Woodcote Room of Wallington Public Hall.

David Duncan was in the Chair, and there were 21 members present, and Councillors Jayne McCoy and Monica Coleman and Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant Peter LeShirley. Apologies were received from Mary Wallis, Richard Vernon, Martha Fearlin and Councillor Colin Hall

Address by Peter LeShirley.

The Safer Neighbourhood team has moved into an office in Crosspoint House; they should still be contacted through the old Police Station. He expects changes initiated by the new government to affect the working practices of the SNT, but that there will still be a team in the area.

Anti-social behaviour is one of the main concerns of residents, though much of what is reported is perception rather than reality.

There was a problem last year with rough sleepers in the high street and Square. They have gone now, and Peter asks to be 'phoned if they are seen again.

He asks for any ideas for improving the environment, such as the fencing which has been put up in Carew Road, to be given to himself or the councillors.

He urged residents to 'phone him with any problems they have. Calls will be answered if any of the team are on duty; if there is no-one there, they will respond to the caller as soon as they are back.

In an emergency, for instance if one has suspicious callers, or sees suspicious behaviour in the street, one should 'phone 999 immediately.

There was a question about the effectiveness of CCTV cameras. Peter said this was an emotive subject because many saw them as intrusive. He said the ones in the streets work well and are well monitored, the ones held privately in shops are of less use because their owners are not trained to use them.

Address by Councillor McCoy.

Jayne outlined the progress made with the Wallington Integrated Transport package. There had been consultations earlier in the year, and the main concerns were on parking and congestion. It was felt that the environment, and the variety of services in the town centre could be improved.

This feedback has been worked up into proposals 'to make Wallington a more attractive place, where it is easier to walk, cycle and use public transport to get about'. There is also the desire to 'give Wallington a heart'.

The four areas key to the scheme are the library and town hall, Woodcote Road high street, Ross Parade and Wallington Square.

The proposals will be on display for a fortnight from Saturday, July 17th in the library, and we were urged to view them and give our feedback on the spot or by filling in a questionnaire.

Address by Councillor Coleman.

Monica spoke primarily of planning matters, outlining some currently being considered, and mentioning two where the Council's objections had been overruled.

She also drew attention to a Council Tax banding scam, where residents were being offered the chance to object to their banding on payment of £1500 – 2500. She pointed out that objections could be made for free from the Council directly.

She also mentioned the topic of schools admissions policy – there is a call for more places in local schools to be given to children within the borough.

Monica was asked if the traffic-light co-ordination was working. She replied that it was contentious and being monitored over a year.

The problem of the multiple applications to develop land at 52 Blenheim Gardens was raised. There is to be an appeal hearing, and residents are urged to attend as numbers are seen as an indication of the strength of local objection.

There was a question about what controls there could be in tenancy agreements about the behaviour of tenants; landlords seemed unprepared to deal with badly-behaved tenants. Councillor McCoy said there were sessions arranged for landlords to help them in such matters, but of course, bad landlords did not attend such courses.

Chairman's Report.

David reported on the Committee's activities during the year.

A member of the committee had monitored planning applications on Sutton's website. These applications can also be seen through our own website. We had put in objections to several proposals. Members of the committee attended the Beddington and Wallington Area Committee meetings, the Safer Neighbourhood Panel Meetings and the Sutton Police Forum.

He reminded residents of the need to maintain 'leafy' front and back gardens in order to retain our designation as an Area of Special Local Character. Without such standing we are less likely to succeed in stopping inappropriate development in the area.

David referred to our yearly Carol Singing, said that we had collected for a local charity, the Diamond Riding Centre, last December, and would be singing again this year.

He called for volunteers to serve on the Committee, and Martha Fearon has offered her services.

Treasurer's Report.

Hilary said we had an excess of income over expenditure of £29.85. We had £762 in the bank, which was not enough to finance us if at any time we needed to fight a court case.

The Carol Singing last year raised £179.65 for the Diamond Riding Centre.

Election of Officers.

The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary were all due to stand down according to the Constitution.

Steve Cook was nominated for new chairman by David Duncan, and the nomination was seconded by Hilary Alexander and passed unanimously. Jim Mills was appointed vice-chairman. Anne Hadfield was elected treasurer. No-one offered to be secretary, so it was decided to leave that appointment to the next committee meeting.

The date of the next committee meeting was announced to be September 8th at 8pm at 48, Blenheim Gardens.

The meeting ended at 9.20pm.

After the formal meeting there was only a very short time for socializing as we had to leave the building by 9.30pm. Dick had as usual provided sumptuous refreshments.

Glenise Coxon

Hon Sec

16/10/2010