CHERRY TREES RESIDENTS' AMENITIES ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association held on Monday 26 November 2012 at St. Mary Abbots Hall, Vicarage Gate, London W8

Committee Members Present

Charles Penney (CP) (Chairman)
Ashley McNeile (AM)
Thomas Blomberg (TB)
Mary Marshall (MM)
Mimi Carney (MC)
Brett Burkhart (BB)
Bruce Fair (BF)
Rae Than (RT)
Isabelle de Hennin (IH)

1. **Apologies and Opening Remarks**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8pm and welcomed those in attendance (there were some 55 people). Apologies had been received from the following Committee members: Jennifer Crompton, Paul Lewitt, Peter Revell-Smith and Tori Robertson. The Chairman offered a special welcome to Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP, Councillors Buckmaster (with mayoral chain!) and Freeman and the 4 police officers who were in attendance (see below).

2. **Minutes of the 2011 AGM**

The Chairman presented the Minutes for the 2011 AGM held on 21 November 2011. The meeting approved the Minutes unanimously.

3. **Accounts for the Year Ended 31 October 2012**

3.1 The Accounts for the Year Ended 31 October 2012 were presented to the meeting. AM explained that subscriptions and total income were up, as too was expenditure, compared to last year, both primarily due to the successful Diamond Jubilee Party in the summer. There was still a fighting fund of just over £4,500 (kept in reserve for any campaigns).

3.2 The Accounts were approved unanimously by the meeting.

4. **Composition and Election of CTRAA Committee for 2013**

4.1 A draft List of Portfolios for 2013 had been provided to everyone at the meeting. The Chairman thanked Isabelle de Hennin, Paul Lewitt, Mary Marshall and Tori Robertson, each of whom was stepping down from the Committee, for their many collective years of great service to the Association.

4.2 The Chairman ran through the draft List of Portfolios, introducing each of those who were present.

4.3 The List of Portfolios was then put to the meeting and the composition and election of the Committee for 2013 was approved unanimously by the meeting.

5. **Status and Membership**

5.1 AM reported that there were 374 members at the end of October 2012 (as compared to 372 at the end of October 2011). Membership was therefore relatively constant over the past two years. All those present were urged to encourage their neighbours to join.

5.2 Following last year's agreement that the Committee would keep membership dues under review, it was reported that the Committee saw no reason for subscription fees to be increased for next year.

5.3 Members were urged to let the Association have their e-mail addresses. The number of members on the Association's e-mail address was increasing. Using e-mail does save the Association both time and money.

6. **Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP**

6.1 Our local MP, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, then briefly addressed the meeting. His comments covered an unsuccessful attempt by the Boundaries Commission to abolish the Kensington constituency as currently established, an "extraordinary 12 months for London" (with the Mayor re-elected, the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics) and what an extraordinary city London is with its whole multitude of small and vibrant communities (with Kensington and Chelsea having more active residents' associations than anywhere else).

6.2 Sir Malcolm then responded to questions on the mooted "Mansion Tax" (which he described as "crazy") and "Permitted Developments" under the planning laws (with particular reference to basement developments).

6.3 The Chairman thanked Sir Malcolm for his words and for taking the time to attend the AGM.

7. **Environment**

7.1 MC reported that the cherry trees were pruned by the Council every three years and that no trees were to be taken down this year. The plane trees in Vicarage Gate were due to be pruned in 2013.

There were no particular issues with lampposts at present (all lightbulbs had now been replaced by the brighter eco-friendly bulbs).

Dog mess continues to be left throughout the area and remains an issue, though no worse than usual right now.

Pavements seemed generally under control at the moment with the Council having a rolling programme of pavement replacement (having now completed all of Brunswick Gardens and the majority of Palace Gardens Terrace).

The Association continues (through its Committee Members) to deliver letters to those who leave their rubbish out on the pavements on non-collection days in an attempt to lessen the practice.

7.2 Susan Wolfe, an Association member, who had made a presentation at her request on noise pollution at last year's AGM, reported continuing issues with noise (e.g. with cranes coming

onsite the previous day). She was urged to take up any such issues with the Council (and indeed had done so with Councillor Buckmaster).

8. **Neighbourhood Watch and Police**

8.1 PC Rehill, Sgt. Dhother, PCSO Powell and PCSO Antunes attended the meeting on behalf of the local police. They are part of the Campden Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

8.2 PC Redhill gave a presentation, the salient points of which were as follows:

- of the 22,245 burglaries in the London Metropolitan area last year, 423 were in Kensington and Chelsea of which 18 were residential burglaries in Campden Ward (down from 22 in the previous year);
- there had been 5 robberies in Campden Ward in the past 3 months (again, a decrease);
- the 2 key issues for police were (a) Safer Cycling and (b) ATM (cash point machine) crime;
- on Safer Cycling, there was a campaign under way to stop cyclists cycling on the pavements and cycling through red lights (since April 2012, the police had given out 9 fixed penalty notices and 50 warnings for cycling on the pavement and 12 fixed penalty notices and 30 warnings for cycling through red lights);
- on ATM crime, Operation Marshall has been under way for a while to prevent ATM crime (which is prevalent on Notting Hill Gate, including inside the Barclays branch, and on Kensington High Street);
- there is a "ring scam", particularly around Vicarage Gate, that everyone should be alert to.

The police then answered a number of questions from members present (including on fixed penalty notices, cyclists without lights, trainer bikes and scams involving fake utility company employees).

8.3 The Chairman thanked PC Redhill and his colleagues for their attendance and valuable contribution.

9. **Traffic, Parking and Congestion Charge**

BB noted that there were no specific issues to report this year.

10. **Planning Issues**

10.1 **Kensington Place Surgery:** It was reported that the Committee had spent a lot of time in the past year on an ultimately unsuccessful campaign to keep a surgery in our area following the closure of Kensington Place Surgery. The Ward Councillors present said that they were still hopeful that we may have a surgery locally in the future.

10.2 **Basement Developments:** TB updated the meeting subterranean (i.e. basement) developments. The Association had been keeping abreast of various initiatives on behalf of its members.

Our area currently had a number of basement developments already carried out, approved, under construction or under application. 2 worthy of comment were:

(i) 10 Strathmore Gardens (a double basement had now been approved); and

(ii) the corner of Brunswick Gardens and Inverness Gardens (at least 2 basement developments if approved).

The Committee had put in representations to the Council on all of these.

In addition, various new BT broadband boxes had appeared in our area.

10.3 **Vicarage Gate Care Home:** It was reported that demolition of the old care home had now taken place and that a revised (but more sympathetic) planning application is currently in with RBKC for decision.

10.4 **Notting Hill Gate:** It was reported that there were new owners of the proposed Notting Hill Gate redevelopment area. The Notting Hill Development Group had been formed, consisting of representatives of residents' associations, the landowners and the Council. They were keen to have feedback locally as to what residents wanted by way of shops, residences and services. The Group had already raised the question of including a surgery.

10.5 **Lancer Square:** It was reported that the owners of Lancer Square wish to demolish it and rebuild (losing the office space and having apartments over ground floor shops). Public viewing of the proposals was under way.

10.6 **Events in the Royal Parks:** One member expressed concern at the proposed equestrian event in Kensington Gardens next summer and the risk it created of setting a precedent for events every year, denying locals use of that park space.

10.7 **Planning Objections:** Councillor Freeman informed the meeting that generally individual letters of complaint (and not identical letters) were likely to be more effective than petitions.

11. **Website**

TB reported on the Association's new-look website (www.ctraa.co.uk) and urged members to look at it when they had the chance.

12. **2012 Garden Parties**

The Chairman reported on a very successful Diamond Jubilee Party at the end of May (with local businesses having been generous sponsors). It was agreed that a similar timing for parties (May or June Summer Party, September Autumn Party and November AGM) would work well for 2013.

13. **AOB**

In response to a question, CP confirmed that the Association was not a registered charity.

14. **Concluding Remarks:** The Chairman thanked all the Committee members for all their work on behalf of the Association over the past year and then concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.