

CHERRY TREES RESIDENTS' AMENITIES ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Cherry Trees Residents'
Association**
held on 17 November at St. Mary Abbots Hall, Vicarage Gate
Minutes no. 4 for 2008

Present: Willoughby Wynne (WW, Chairman) Huw Thomas (HT)
Maurice Fullerton (MF) Tori Robertson (TR)
Myrto Rochat (MR) Ashley McNeile (AM)
Mary Marshall (MM) Fiona Simmons (FS)
Charles Shaw (CS) Jennifer Crompton (JC)
Brett Burkhart (BB) Charles Penney (CP)
Mimi Carney (MC)

1. Apologies and Opening Remarks

WW opened the meeting promptly at 8pm and welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were received from Thomas Blomberg, Stewart Robertson, Jan-Otto van Boetzelaer, Evelyn Ellison, Caroline Tanner, Tony and Jeannie Cargon, Ray Tannent and Gary ???. The Chairman offered a special welcome to Huw Thomas, the Honorary President of the CTRAA.

2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM

The Chairman asked whether there were any comments on the minutes from the 2007 AGM. Cllr Buckmaster suggested a correction be made to the 2007 AGM minutes to reflect the fact that David Prout and Cllr Moylan had asked the developers of the Notting Hill Gate area (Land Securities and Delancy) for a 5-10 year plan for the future (correcting the error in the minutes which stated that the two would put in place such a plan). The 2007 AGM minutes were further corrected by noting that Malcolm Rifkind should be addressed as "Sir." With those corrections duly noted, the corrected minutes of the 2007 AGM were proposed by John Basket and seconded by MM.

3. Accounts for the Year Ending 31st October 2008

WW referred to the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October, 2008 and reported that CTRAA ran a surplus of £157 for the fiscal year, with a modest rise in interest income. He further confirmed that the Association's bank balances were strong with £5,025 on account, an increase over the same period in 2007. The Chairman also noted the £50 retirement gift for Mr. Basil Tsavalos of Olympic Electronics, which was widely approved by those in attendance as a deserved recognition for Mr. Tsavalos's contribution to the CTRAA over many years.

4. Composition and Election of CTRAA Committee 2009

The Chairman announced the resignation from the Committee of Jan-Otto Van Boetzelaer, as he has moved from the area. The Chairman led those in attendance in thanking Mr. Van Boetzelaer for his contribution to the CTRAA Committee. The Chairman then announced that Charles Penney would be taking on the role of Deputy Chairman. Finally, the Chairman reported that Thomas Blomberg would shortly begin working full-time in London (from Stockholm) and, henceforth, would have more time to devote to the newsletter ("The Cherry Tree"), with the next edition expected by May of 2009.

5. Status of Membership

The Chairman stated that membership had fallen to 344 members, as compared with 454 at this time last year. WW reflected that membership numbers have varied over the years, with the current level roughly 150 fewer than the CTRAA's highest membership tally.

6. Neighborhood Watch

6a. Official Report. Charles Franklin, Community Safety Officer and Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator apologised for the absence of Police Sgt. Annalisa Andrews and Ward P/C Roberto Rossi. Mr. Franklin reported the following:

- Street Surgeries Organised: Members of the public are invited to attend these surgeries to air concerns and talk to community officers. They are scheduled for: 20 November at Kensington Library; 6 December at Aubrey Walk Tennis Club; and 11 December at Kensington Library.
- Crime Levels: Crime levels are quite low, with a decrease residential burglaries and robberies. However, motor vehicle crime continues to rise and remains a concern.

6b. Garden Security Scheme. Tori Robertson of the Garden Security Scheme Ltd. (GSS) reported that the GSS was working well with the Ward Council and concurred with Mr. Franklin that police officers were doing well in our area. TR explained that the GSS is a voluntary scheme, established 6 years ago to increase the presence of security personnel in the area at night. Current funding levels are sufficient to provide for security coverage 7 nights a week from 6:30pm until 6:30am. She went on to note that residents can subscribe to the scheme can be made at any time, with the GSS achieving a successful resubscription rate.

7. Environment

7a. Trees, Lamp Posts, Dog Mess and Pavements. FS confirmed that the general condition of the Cherry trees in the area was good, with nothing in particular to report. She went on to highlight the gradual installation of the new whiter, brighter light bulbs on our lanterns, with Inverness Gardens and Inverness Terrace being among the first to get such bulbs. Several residents commented on the persistent problem of dog dirt and the number of uneven pavement stones on all the CTRAA streets.

7b. Building Works. MR announced that the CTRAA had invited officials from the Borough's department for Planning, to speak on the subterranean development and the Borough's regulation and oversight of such projects. However, she noted that no Borough official one was able to come from the borough to speak on that matter and instead, Paul Morse, Director of Health and Environmental Standards, would address the related issue of residential development and noise.

Mr. Morse reported on the borough's efforts to control the noise levels and building works in the local area. He began by noting that the consultation deadline for the Council's policy on Subterranean Development was 16 December. He went on to note that there are two aspects to the consultation: (i) planning controls; and (ii) controls the Borough has over all building works. He stated that the Borough sought to give residents sufficient information about party wall agreements and what can be achieved through such agreements. He clarified that he himself had no oversight of the Borough's building works policies as they relate to structural and water table matters – but only as they relate to noise levels.

Mr Morse further stated that section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act required that notice be given to control noise in any instance where there is a "statutory nuisance". Such notices can only be served after the event to the people/company causing the noise (not before). Section 61 of the Act covers "Prior Consent Notices" which apply to larger, long-term projects. Such section 61 notices apply to developers who implement plans, systems and hours in a manner so as to ameliorate expected noise nuisance.

A CTRAA resident raised the matter of 55 PGT, which was reported to have asked for permission for a 90 foot long, 20 foot wide underground trench under the back garden of the property. It was suggested that this would pose certain structural risks, as well as negatively impact the water table. It was suggested that the project would cause disruption for a period of approximately 2 years. The concerns raised by this and similar projects were expanded upon and shared by several other CTRAA members in attendance.

Bruce Fayre highlighted the problem of noise and congestion at the top of Kensington Church Street from buses queuing there. Mr. Morse replied that Borough legislation would not address such problems. His colleague, Steve Eccles (Manager of Noise for the Borough) stated that bus companies do not need Council/Borough approval to change bus routes. He went on to explain that Volvo buses (for example, those used on the 328 route) were louder than others (but do conform to EU standards) – and that the 328 route will be altered in the early morning and late evening to reflect this louder noise level.

In response to a question from HT regarding the persistently early loud noises resulting from building works on Brunswick Gardens, Mr. Eccles clarified that normal hours of building works were from 8am – 6pm Monday – Friday; and 8am – 1pm on Saturday. However these hours were for guidance only and were not strict regulations. As a result, residents should report all noise complaints for officers to investigate and, if necessary, issue fines.

8. Traffic, Parking and Congestion Charge

MM reported that there had been no announcement as to when the new, smaller configuration of the Congestion Charge area would be implemented.

9. Planning Issues

9a. Vicarage Gate Care Home. Cllr Buckmaster began by noting that the future of the care, which has been debated for over 7 years, would next be addressed at a public inquiry to be held on 25 November at the Town Hall in the Council Chambers. He lamented that the site was getting more derelict with time, but that the developer which owned the site continued to press for the change-of-use to "Residential" from "Social and Community Use." The Council has determined to continuing resisting such pressure from the developer.

9b. Holland Park School. David White confirmed that the revised plans, resubmitted with affordable housing moved offsite, had been approved by the Council. Nonetheless, issues remain surrounding the sale of the southern portion of the school site -- so that, the school remains open (with strong and favourable oversight from Ofsted) and no building work has begun (despite over £7million spent in the process of securing the plans and the planning approval).

9c. Notting Hill Improvement Group. John Scott explained that Land Securities' plan for Notting Hill Gate had been put aside due to the current credit "crunch".

Nonetheless, the drive to attract more small independent shops continued, with the Chatsworth Farm Shop doing well on Kensington Church Street.

10. **2009 Garden Parties**

The Chairman noted that there would be three garden parties:

- Spring Party at Inverness Gardens: Wednesday, 13 May 6:30 – 9:30pm
- Midsummer Party at St. Mary Abott's Vicarage: Tuesday, 23 June 6:30 – 9pm (TBC)
- Autumn Party at Inverness Gardens: Sunday, 13 September Noon – 2:30pm.

11. **AOB and Concluding Remarks**

The Chairman opened the meeting to any other business, with Cllr Freeman thanking both WW and the Committee for their good work and high standards. With no other business to be discussed, the Chairman concluded the meeting promptly at 9:15pm.