

CHERRY TREES RESIDENTS' AMENITIES ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on Monday 25 November 2013
St. Mary Abbots Hall, Vicarage Gate, W8**

Committee Members Present

Charles Penney, Chairman	CP	Mimi Carney	MC
Ashley McNeile, Treasurer	AMcN	Myrto Rochat	MR
Thomas Blomberg	TB		

1. Apologies and Opening Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting promptly at 8pm and welcomed those in attendance, some 75 members. Apologies had been received from the following Committee members: Monique Bahadur, Jennifer Crompton, Bruce Fair, Brett Burkhart (BB) and Rae Than.

The Chairman offered a special welcome to Councillors Robert Freeman and Tim Ahern, and passed on apologies from Sir Malcolm Rifkind, our MP, who was unable to attend because of government business.

2. Minutes of the 2012 AGM

The Chairman presented the minutes of the 2012 AGM, held on Monday 26 November 2012. The minutes were approved by the meeting.

3. Sponsorship

The Chairman went on to report on the events of the year. The association held 2 parties, a Summer Party in the vicarage garden, by kind permission of the Vicar, the Rev'd Gilleen Craig; and an Autumn Party in Inverness Gardens, by kind permission of the Inverness Gardens Management. Both parties had been well attended and enjoyed. The Chairman particularly thanked:

- Strutt and Parker
- Winkworth
- The Huntsworth Wine Company

for their generous sponsorship of the catering at the parties.

In answer to a question from the floor, AMcN said that it was not possible to say exactly how much we received in party sponsorship because generally the sponsors pay the caterers directly and the sum does not go through our books.

4. Accounts for the Year Ended 31 October 2013

Ashley McNeile, Treasurer, presented the Accounts for the Year Ended 31 October 2013. The accounts showed a small deficit, of £29, for the year. The funds in the bank stood at £4,528. As the association is a non-profit organisation, this is satisfactory. Membership receipts were slightly down, but this was offset by a reduction in the costs of catering the parties because of sponsorship.

The Accounts were approved by the meeting.

It was also reported that no change to the current Member's subscription rate of £6 per year (£15 for three years) was proposed.

5. Composition and Election of CTCAA Committee for 2014

A draft List of Portfolios for 2014 had been provided to everyone at the meeting. CP said that no changes in portfolio were planned for 2014.

The List of Portfolios was approved by the meeting and the various officers listed were duly appointed as members of the Committee for 2014.

6. Status of Membership

AMcN reported that the membership was steady at about 370. This was down from a peak of 430 a few years back, probably because of the general increase in the number of short term residents on business secondment, and that we were probably not as successful at identifying newcomers and inviting them to join as Willoughby Wynne had been. All members were encouraged to ask new neighbours to join. TB said that he would put the CTCAA Membership Application Form on the website (www.CTCAA.co.uk) so that it could be downloaded.

7. Environment

Sylvia Andrews commented on the Cherry Trees Noticeboard in Inverness Gardens. The Chairman reassured her that we do our best to keep it up-to-date.

Andres Mejia raised concern about the state of the wall at the south eastern end of Inverness Gardens. Julien Spencer-Smith, representing the Inverness Gardens management company, said that it was not in imminent danger of collapse, and that he will be writing to the developers working at the DGA site over the road to see if they might contribute to making repairs.

Cllr Tim Ahern reported a number of Council initiatives:

- From the beginning of 2014, PCSOs would be able to issue £80 fixed penalty notices for dog fouling.
- "Big Belly" solar powered self-compacting bins are being trialled at the bottom of Campden Hill Road. If the trial is successful, they may be deployed more widely.
- A new Council mobile 'phone application will allow people to report broken lampposts and pavement stones. The app. will make it possible to upload a picture of the damage to the Council.

8. Police Liaison

AMcN said that the local police had accepted an invitation to attend the AGM but had to decline at the last minute as all hands were required to provide security at an event elsewhere in the borough.

AMcN said that one of the activities of the association was to attend the ward liaison meetings of the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team and contribute to setting the local policing priorities. These were currently established as:

- Anti-Social Behaviour in general
- Dangerous cycling and/or scootering
- Burglary.

Further detail on police activities in these areas is available at their website, <http://content.met.police.uk/Team/Kensington/Campden> . As the priorities are constantly under review, AMcN asked that members contact him if they have opinions on local policing priorities.

9. Private Security Scheme

CP reported that there had been some confusion in the administration of the private security scheme, which was not the responsibility of CTAA. There was now no longer a local committee running the scheme and, when the contract for providing the local security patrol had come up for renewal two companies, Granimpex Ltd. and Defence Security (the previous incumbent) had both been bidding for the contract. Of the two, Granimpex was keen to provide the service and Kris Vaskilis, its principal, had asked the indulgence of the meeting to provide a short address.

Kris Vaskilis then provided a short summary of the advantages of having a neighbourhood security patrol, which he gave as:

- Acting as a deterrent to criminals and trouble makers
- Providing a watchful eye over properties and the streets
- Giving an escort to residents returning to their homes at night

- Giving added security to the neighbourhood, beyond that provided by local policing.

Tony Allston and Andres Mejia said that they thought it important that we continue to have a security scheme. Sylvia Andrews and Mary Marshall confirmed that they had benefitted from being escorted when returning home late at night.

Terry Mowschenson suggested that the CTAA should recommend a security company. AMcN said he felt it was important that membership of the CTAA and the Security Scheme were separate, and that he felt that there needs to be a local committee to run the scheme.

CP thanked Kris Vaskilis and suggested that any questions or views on the Security Scheme and how it should be taken forward should be addressed to Kris Vaskilis or Tori Robertson.

10. Traffic and Parking

The problems caused by the basement excavations under way in the area were reported on, in particular:

- There are currently 12 permanently suspended parking bays
- On more than one occasion, a street has been effectively blocked off by lorries delivering or removing material
- The heavy builders and cement lorries are causing damage to the pavement (e.g., outside 10 Brunswick Gardens).

Andres Mejia said that Palace Gardens Terrace was becoming a parking lot for lorries. Their number is such that they queue, with their engines running, to await their turn to access a site. Local children are no longer able to play in the street as they used to.

Brian Hudson raised the matter of the double yellow line near his property. For some reason, the Council had painted over one of the lines, but left the parking restrictions in place. As a result, 12 cars had received tickets. Cllr Robert Freeman said he would follow this matter up.

Sylvia Andrews said that the bay outside 2 Brunswick Gardens looked like a normal resident's bay, but was actually designated for Car Club use. She had received a ticket for parking there. It was agreed that BB would be asked to look into whether it was properly marked.

Julien Spencer-Smith asked about the notice given on parking bay suspensions. It was formerly an objective of the Council to give 7 days' notice, but now it seems that only 3 or 4 days' notice are given. The Council does provide an email warning service, but it does not relieve you of the need to check your car. BB was to be asked to follow this up with the Council.

11. Planning Issues

TB reported that, over the last year, the Council had approved an average of one basement excavation per month and there are 10 excavations approved for our streets. There was a widespread feeling that the number and scale of basement excavations being given approval is excessive. TB reported on two initiatives that aim to bring better control:

- The Council is attempting to introduce new planning guidelines on basements. The CTCAA is engaged in the consultation process with the Council; but the process has to go through a number of stages yet, including approval by the Secretary of State, before the new regulations come into effect.
- A Private Member's Bill has been tabled in Parliament, but its chances of success are uncertain.

TB also reported on the reported that the plans for Newcombe House. The Council has been trying to forge a scheme but there have been signs that this is stalled, and the owners of Newcombe House have been going ahead with a scheme of their own; and canvassing local residents' associations for their views. They plan to submit an application for their redevelopment scheme in the spring. The plan involves replacement of Newcombe House with a building of about twice the height.

Finally, TB reported on the plans for Lancer Square. The site was last redeveloped about 20 years ago. The new proposal is much more massive. In addition, the proposal includes underground office space for which huge light wells will be required. All the construction traffic for the development will have to use the alleyway by the fire station.

12. Website

TB reported that he had substantially remodelled and improved the CTCAA website and urged members to visit it at: www.CTCAA.co.uk.

13. 2014 Garden Parties

CP said that members would be notified of the dates for the 2014 parties once they had been agreed, in early 2014.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.