

FINAL DRAFT (15.12.17)

**Cherry Trees Residents' Amenities Association
Annual General Meeting**

Tuesday 14th November, 2017 8pm at St. Mary Abbots Hall, Vicarage Gate, W8.

Committee Members Present: Charles Penney, Chairman (CP), Ashley McNeile, Treasurer (AM), Thomas Blomberg (TB), Myrto Rochat (MR), Frances Manthos (FM), Mimi Carney (MC), Caroline Cuffe (CC), Rae Than (RT), Monique Bahadur (MB),

1. Apologies and Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all members and opened the meeting at 8.10pm.

Apologies were received from Committee members Romanos Brihi, James O'Neill, Bruce Fair (BF) and Brett Burkhart and from PC Gurjit Rehill.

The Chairman offered a special welcome to Councillor Robert Freeman, Councillor Catherine Faulks and former MP Victoria Borwick.

2. Minutes of the 2016 AGM

The Chairman presented draft Minutes of the 2016 AGM, held on 15 November 2016. The Minutes were unanimously approved subject to amending certain erroneous words relating to the Boundary Commission in paragraph 14 (amended on Cllr. Freeman's request).

3. Sponsorship

The Chairman thanked this year's sponsors, Knight Frank (Summer Party), Strutt and Parker (Autumn Party), John D Wood (Matthew Harrop) (who kindly sponsored this evening's refreshments) and Huntsworth Wine who kindly provided the wine for all parties at cost, noting special thanks to Tuggy Meyer of Huntsworth Wine. All have generously supported our parties throughout the year.

4. Accounts for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

AM presented the accounts which were distributed at the meeting. Subscriptions received were in line with previous years. Special cards were printed inviting new arrivals in the neighbourhood to join CTRAA. Donations were roughly in line with previous years. The cost of the summer party was higher than usual due to the jazz band which proved very popular. Sponsorship is shown as £1,300 but this does not reflect the total amount of sponsorship as some of our sponsors pay the caterers for parties directly. Actual sponsorship is nearer to £2,500, approximately twice that of subscriptions, which is likely to be unsustainable given the current state of the property market. Therefore the committee is looking to increase subscriptions. The accounts were unanimously approved by the meeting.

5. Composition and Election of CTRAA Committee for 2018

A draft list of portfolios for 2018 was circulated at the meeting. James O'Neill has resigned from the committee as he has moved away from the area. The Chairman thanked him for his valuable service. In his place, Ryan Mullins from Strathmore Gardens has joined the committee. CP asked for approval of the portfolio for 2018 which was given. CP thanked the committee for their work throughout the year.

6. Status of Membership

AM noted that paid up membership has been dropping: there are a number of reasons including the changing demographics of the area: this has also affected other residents'

associations. Our previous Chairman, Willoughby Wynne, was extremely active in recruiting new members. AM said that we have not been as good and would like to improve. He said that a campaign started this year with welcome cards, but we would like to do more. Our membership is steady and loyal and our parties are well attended. CP asked attendees to tell their new neighbours about CTRAA. It was suggested that we advertise in Kensington Magazine; however, others noted that this is not targeted to our specific area.

7. Local Retailer Discount Scheme

CP announced the launch of a discount scheme for members. MR gave details of the scheme whereby local retailers will give members of CTRAA a discount. MR thanked RB for his excellent work on this scheme. As members leave the meeting they will be given a card which will give discounts to local restaurants and services covering our local area. If the scheme works well this year, it will hopefully be extended next year. The list is not exhaustive as we will add businesses as they join, so members should check the website regularly to get an up-to-date list of participating retailers. Members must present their card to obtain benefits. AM said that CTRAA had only made cards for paid up members. CP offered thanks to RB, MR, FM and MB (as well as James O'Neill) for their hard work on this.

8. Membership Fees

AM noted that the CTRAA is very reliant upon sponsorship which is likely to become harder in the present market conditions. In order to maintain the quality of our parties and to fund recruitment, we need to raise the fee for the first time since 2006. We would like to set a rate to give us a sustainable footing. The proposed new rate is £10 per year or £24 for three years. We would like to encourage standing orders and therefore the reduced rate of £8 each year will apply to standing orders. For the next year, until October 2018 we will accept renewals at the old rate. The new rate will be shown on the party invitations. CP asked whether the meeting was happy to approve the increase: this was so voted unanimously.

9. Environment

The council has a very effective noise and nuisance phone line which works both day and night: CP encouraged members to use this. Cllr. Faulks said that people can ring them up for burglar alarms and car alarms. Cllr. Freeman said that the RBKC runs an excellent noise and nuisance service. The number is 020 7361 3002.

MC reported that a few trees are scheduled for removal (two on Brunswick Gardens, one on Berkeley Gardens) and apple trees were removed in Vicarage Gate and will be replaced by flowering pears. This year is pruning year; all the cherry trees in the area will be pruned after they flower in April 2018.

RT reported that the amount of dog mess is decreasing despite one or two repeat offenders. One member said that the small bins are rarely emptied. RT said that we managed to install three small bins. They are ordinary rubbish bins; however, they are off the route for the usual rubbish collections - they are to be emptied by the street sweepers who do not work at weekends when they become full. RT said that there was no obvious solution; she suggested that members call the helpline and speak to Bill Green about this issue. CP thanked RT for her work placing signs and deterring offenders.

10. Police Report

CP welcomed Kris from Granimpex, the area's local private security firm. They will do a mailshot in the next couple of weeks. The OWL messaging service is a useful method of notifying people of ongoing crime such as moped thieves. AM said that crime in this area is outlined on the police website; it has declined slightly over the past year. A map shows where crimes have taken place over the last month. Copies were made available at the meeting. Police mentioned thefts of and crimes involving two-wheel vehicles, up 38% this year. 18% of burglaries in our area are opportunistic, i.e. due to open doors and windows. Police advise everyone to make sure that your building is secured when you are not present. Caryl Harris,

from a South Kensington residents' association, is a neighbourhood watch coordinator and has started an initiative to improve the way we communicate with the police. AM will work with her on this issue. The local police station on Ladbroke Grove is slated for closure; the Kensington Society has fought this issue; Amanda Frame, chairperson of Kensington Society, said that the station has been designated as an asset of community value which means that it cannot be turned into luxury housing easily. Cllr. Faulks added that Sadiq Khan's review of the station was regarded as a very poor consultation. The council is also against the closure. A judicial review is possible. Victoria Borwick said that the effect of the closure has not been evaluated. Cllr. Freeman said that it was clear that a decision to close the station had been taken before the consultation period.

MR warned of a well-dressed man selling knives in the area; he is known to the police and the public should not buy from him.

11. Traffic and Parking

Inverness Gardens had a missing road sign; BF was able to get a new sign placed very quickly once it was raised with the council. Parking suspensions continue to affect residents. RT said that the unscheduled crane operation on Palace Gardens Terrace today blocked a fire engine trying to get to Bayswater Road. Cllr. Faulks said that there is a new policy for towed cars: they are no longer towed to the pound at Lots Road, but will be placed in an available residents' bay with the car owner being sent a text.

12. Planning Issues

TB outlined various planning issues: Newcombe House has submitted a new plan including affordable housing; a decision is likely before the end of the year. In Lancer Square, digging has begun. TB mentioned public consultation regarding the Ladbroke Grove police station which he is working on as part of the Kensington Society. The main change for local people will be an impact on policing. For each ward, there will be two police officers and one police community service officer; they will have a small hub in the ward and then they walk the ward constantly. Their job is to enhance the community, preventing crime. Police stations function differently from fire stations: the police are in police cars. The reason that so many stations are due to close is cost cutting; the police station is seen as valuable real estate. CP thanked TB for his hard work on planning; he reviews all planning permissions sought in our area.

13. Website

A page about the discount scheme has been added by TB. Cllr. Freeman will send photos of the meeting which TB will post on the website.

14. 2018 Garden Parties

The summer party 2017 was a very sad occasion as it was held the day after the Grenfell Tower. CP praised Rugby Portobello Trust (RPT) for their excellent work and expressed his sadness about the event. Timings for 2018 parties are likely to change slightly with the September drinks being about a week later than this year. The summer party will remain at the same time as this year.

15. AOB

Calling London, a charity which FM helps to run, collects coats to be redistributed to food banks, community groups etc. About 3,500 coats are distributed this way. She appealed for residents' help in donating old coats. Callinglondonuk is the twitter handle.

Alan Jones, who lives on the west side of Kensington Church Street, asked why he may not be a member of CTRAA. CP said that this is because the Campden Hill Residents' Association (CHRA) covers his area. Cllr. Freeman said that local residents' associations are to be encouraged and suggested joining both. He thanked CP and the committee for their excellent work and noted that CTRAA parties are the best in London!

16. Concluding remarks.

CP thanked everyone for coming, invited all to enjoy a glass of wine and refreshments and reminded everyone to collect their membership discount cards.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.