

Hever Residents Association
Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting
Held on Friday, 27th January, 2006

Present:- Adrian Maurice (Chairman), Jan Ryan (Secretary), Amy Davies (Treasurer), Alan Townsend, John Scott, Andy Barnett, Gill Ford, Katherine Storey, Gerry Ryan and new committee member, Jeanette Fahlbusch.

The meeting was attended by a further 25 members and guests.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO CHIEF INSPECTOR SIMON WILSHAW AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH LIAISON OFFICER LEILA HUGHES.

The Chairman began by welcoming all present, and thanking the two guest speakers for agreeing to attend the meeting and to give a short talk.

C. I. Wilshaw explained how members of the public can help with crime reduction, and stressed the role of Neighbourhood Watch schemes. He also talked about Police Community Support Officers, of whom there are two based in Edenbridge. He spoke mainly about burglaries and theft from cars, which he said were rare in Hever. Gerry Ryan, in his capacity as District Councillor, drew his attention to the more pressing problems of threatening or menacing behaviour and malicious vandalism, aimed at specific persons. The Secretary read out a list of 12 such recent incidents.

C. I. Wilshaw then mentioned the problems associated with Deer's Leap and the length of time it took to resolve them.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Inspector on behalf of all present for his attendance and address. C.I. Wilshaw then left the meeting as he had a further commitment for the evening.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

These had been received from eight Members. All Committee Members were present.

3. MINUTES OF THE 2005 A.G.M.

Copies of these had been distributed in advance of the Meeting, and were accepted without amendment. Proposed, Terry Dell, seconded Ken Seal.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman began by explaining that the year had begun with several new Committee Members, including himself and the Treasurer, and it had taken a while for the reshaped Committee to settle down.

He then went on to mention various items that had been put forward from the floor at the 2005 AGM.

The Chairman spoke first about the suggestion that the Parish Field could be enhanced, and handed over to Gill Ford who had prepared a presentation. Gill had identified sites suitable for further planting, and with the help of photographs in montage, illustrated her views that indigenous trees and shrubs should be utilized, including Alder, Willow and Silver Birch. She estimated that 5 new trees and about 25 shrubs would cost approx. £1,000, with a further £500 for a bench or seat. Ideas put forward for raising Funds included seeking grants, donations, a 'sponsor a tree' scheme etc.

The Chairman then moved on to the idea of erecting road signs warning vehicle drivers of horses being ridden on the road, and asked Pat Carter to report on progress.

Pat had identified 5 sites in the Village as being at high risk, and had also located a Highways acceptable design for the signs. Leila Hughes suggested looking at www.freewaysigns.co.uk who would make up the 10 signs needed for about £20 each. Pat also reported on progress of the TROT (Toll Rides Off-road) scheme. She and Fiona Dent hope to have a result by Easter.

The Chairman then reported on the bus shelter area, saying that although clearing and planting had been done by a HRA work party early in 2005, the weeds had taken over again. Gill said the clematis had survived and is thriving. The Secretary added that despite work done by Kent Highways, the drainage ditch behind the bus shelter is still choked. Remedial work paid for by HRA is planned. Once this is completed, another work party will be convened to restore the site to good order. Terry Dell suggested re-installation of the anti-parking posts, but it was thought KCC would object to this.

Andy Barnett was thanked by the Chairman on behalf of the Association for the excellent web site he had created and continues to maintain and enhance. He asked for any further ideas for inclusion on the site from members present.

The Social Events held during the year had been successful and well attended in the main. The Fireworks Display had been particularly good, and spectator numbers increase year on year. The Summer Event has held to the same format for many years and perhaps needed some new ideas to attract new people. The Chairman concluded by thanking all Members of the Committee for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Copies of the accounts had been distributed at the beginning of the meeting, and the Treasurer clarified a few points. She then explained that the Bank had ceased to pay interest on the account, and she sought authority from members to transfer some funds into a more favourable account, possibly with a different institution. This was agreed by those present.

The Chairman then sought clarification on some areas of intended expenditure. It was generally felt that some proposals were beyond the remit of the Association, and as such should not be funded by income from subscriptions. Terry Dell said that if necessary, separate fund raising could be done locally. Lizzie Whitmarsh said she had joined an Association which was there to protect the Village from injury and injustice, and she would not continue her support if the

aims of the organisation became trivialised. Her statement produced much support from the floor, and a round of applause.

How much financial support, asked the Chairman, would be needed to support the campaign to remove the illegal traveller occupants of the Seven Acre Farm in Edenbridge? Gerry Ryan responded that the Deer's Leap episode had cost a total of £7.5k, and if the 7 acre site were to cost the same, the Association should reserve about £1,000. In response to some questions from the floor, the Chairman asked Gerry to continue with a resumé of the current situation. Gerry then reported that the planning application refusal notices had been served, and enforcement notices will follow shortly. An appeal against these was expected, and once SDC have received the appeal(s), it will be vital that as many letters as possible are sent to the Planning Inspectorate. Committee will notify members on the timing. Gerry also warned that, due to the current backlog, it would be months before the appeal hearing takes place.

Both reports were then adopted, proposed by Sue Jackson and seconded by Sandra Dell.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

During the year, Jeanette Fahlbusch had been co-opted on to the Committee, and at the Chairman's invitation, introduced herself to the Members present. She said that her particular interest was in promoting social cohesion within the Village by facilitating more social activities. To this end she urged those who had not already done so to return the Questionnaire she had originated.

All Officers and Committee Members were willing to stand for re-election. They were voted in en-bloc on a show of hands, proposed by Eric Jackson and seconded by Jane Higgs.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Excessive Aircraft Noise

David Baron had prepared and distributed a report on this growing problem in advance of the meeting. He gave a brief verbal summary of the report, adding that he had had a noise monitor installed in his garden by BAA.

Gill Ford endorsed his comments, saying that intrusive noise over her house often started at 5.30am. David asked that all present who suffer from this blight should make their complaints known.

Planning Matters

This item had already been covered under the Treasurer's Report.

David Baron raised three further items

- a) He requested that minutes of Committee Meetings be put on the web site. Chairman advised that this had been discussed by Committee, who had decided against, due to the public nature of the Internet. The Secretary advised she had copies of all minutes and any member was welcome to visit her to peruse particular items, by prior arrangement.
- b) Could a list of all Members be made freely available? This had also been discussed by Committee and ruled out as it contravenes the Data Protection Act. Also some earlier subscription reminders had included an undertaking on confidentiality.

- c) Could the wine at the social following the AGM be provided 'free'? It was pointed out that donations were requested to cover costs; drinks are not sold at the social. The Chairman added that soft drinks and beer were donated by Committee Members, as was the food.

Eric Jackson thanked Jeanette for organising the Christmas Drinks Party, which he thought, was an extremely enjoyable evening. Thanks also to the Chairman for his personal donation towards the cost of first drinks.

Leila Hughes then gave a brief presentation, describing the benefits of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, and distributed informative literature.

The Secretary requested payment of subscriptions for 2006.

The Chairman then closed the Meeting, urging all to avail themselves of the food and drink on offer at the back of the Hall

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm

Finger foods are provided by Committee Members, each of whom provides a dish. Each year the 'Most Popular Platter' is recorded, and for 2006 that dish was the plate of prunes in bacon.

Congratulations to Alan Townsend.