

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association



Notes of the Annual General Meeting – 26th July 2017

1. Welcome and introductions and apologies

The Chairman, Paul Sparks opened the meeting and welcomed everyone (47 people were present).

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Belinda da Silva
- Cllr Peter Waldock
- Dorothy Sparks
- Maureen Macve
- Mike Hadaway
- Phil Paton
- Ric Mears
- Sally Major
- Tom Crellin

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. There were no matters arising

3. Report from the Chairman of the Association

The Chairman, Paul Sparks, provided a verbal report focussing on the new defibrillator outside Tesco Express, which the Association equal funded with the Uckfield Lions Club and the Town Council, and the Walk and Talk campaign, which will continue into 2018.

Paul took questions from the floor, the questions and responses are summarised below:

- Will the Association approach Tesco to request their staff to litter pick the tunnel under Browns Lane? – the Secretary agreed to do this.
- Is a handrail going to be provided for the steep slope down to Tesco Express? – this will be very costly to install (note: the Committee will investigate grant funding for this project)
- Can nothing be done about the verges that are being cut up by cars parking outside Manor Primary and causing a trip hazard? – we recognise that this is a real problem but ESCC unwilling to act. (note: the Committee will inspect the verges and report any that appear to be a trip hazard to ESCC).
- Is any progress being made with the disrepair of the Twittens? – we are identifying the key routes and we hope to progress the project in 2017/18.
- Is the school crossing patrol outside Manor Primary likely to be replaced – we will explore this further (note: we know that the school have tried hard to replace the lollipop lady but without success).

One member commented on the excellence of the Surgery Car Service and the volunteers that run it.

Finally, Paul thanked all the committee members for their help and support over the past year and gave special thanks to “our hard working Secretary and Treasurer”.

4. Report from the Treasurer

In her absence the Secretary read Sally Major's report:

"Treasurer's Report for Financial Year ended 5 April 2017

We ended the year with a surplus of £356 for the year in question and a bank balance of £1,830.

Income for the year totalled £2,756 including £710 in subscriptions and £197 in advertising revenue from companies and individuals advertising in our newsletter, this is less than last year as we have only had one newsletter falling in the financial year in question. We received £193 from our Surgery Car Service. Also included is a grant of £200 from Active Sussex in support of expenses for the Big Lunch 2016 and a grant of £1,193 from Wealden District Council to support our Walk n Talk initiative.

Expenses this year totalled £2,400 and include expenditure on Insurance, Newsletter production, Venue Hire, Web Hosting. Expenses for the Car Service amounted to £174 resulting in a surplus for this service of £19. So far we have spent £372 on advertising our Walk n Talk initiative. Other notable expenditure this year was £420 on the new bench outside the shops and £402 being our contribution to the installation of a Defibrillator at the Tesco stores.

Our social events, gave us a net cost of £156 after allowing for the grant received from Active Sussex for the Big Lunch."

5. Report from the Secretary

Peter Griggs' reported:

Membership

The Association's membership continues to represent over one in ten of the 1400 households on Manor Park and Hempstead Fields with 154 member households - probably over 400 residents.

With such a healthy membership I am pleased to tell you that we will be keeping the subscription to just £5 per calendar year.

Another reason that we can keep the subscription at this very reasonable level is because we have been successful drawing in funding through grants from other organisations, such as the Safer Wealden Partnership, and also through the sponsorship provided by generous local businesses. For example those that advertise in our newsletter which means that it is cost neutral to produce and those that defray the full cost, or provide their services free, at The Big Lunch.

The committee and volunteers continue to provide their services without payment.

Communications

In addition to our paid membership, we continue to have a very healthy following on Twitter and our Facebook page. We know that the majority of our paid members are aged 55 and over but our Twitter and Facebook accounts attract a younger following.

Our Facebook page goes from strength to strength and now has 444 followers, which is 55 more than this time last year and our Twitter account now has 259 followers, which is an increase of 31 over last year.

We also have our website of course, where you can find copies of our committee minutes, constitution and other Association documentation.

The Association's Newsletter continues to be published twice a year and is now in full colour on all four pages. We would like to thank the small band of volunteers that pound the streets in all kinds of weather to deliver the newsletter to nearly 1400 homes, ably supervised by Dorothy Sparks.

Surgery Car Service

This valuable service goes from strength to strength and we have recently been in talks with the Church Coombe Community Association about extending the service to include the residents there. The car service's expenditure is covered by the income it generates.

Walk and Talk campaign

In the Spring together with Manor Primary, Twiglets Nursery and UCTC we introduced the Walk and Talk initiative in an attempt to address the congestion and road safety issues that occur when parents and carers park to drop, off or collect, children at these three schools. We are encouraging people to avoid parking close to the schools but instead to park considerately and safely elsewhere and then walk the last five or ten minutes. We knew that this would not be an easy task but we are persevering.

Some other items of news

We partnered with Uckfield Lions and the Town Council to install a life-saving Defibrillator outside of Tesco Express. We thank Tesco for installing this free of charge and the landlord for allowing us to fit it on the structure. The same landlord also permitted us to install the park bench on the green outside the Browns Lane shops.

The Committee

Finally, this year we say goodbye and thank you to Committee member Tom Crellin

6. Election of Officers

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were proposed, seconded and voted into office unanimously:

- Chair – Paul Sparks
- Treasurer – Sally Major
- Secretary – Peter Griggs

7. Election of the Committee

The following were proposed, seconded and voted into office unanimously:

- Andy Clews
- Belinda Da Silva
- Dorothy Sparks
- Jane Shepherd
- Jerry Miller
- Julia Brown
- Ric Mears

8. Any other business.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at approximately 7.45pm.