

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association



Notes of the Annual General Meeting – 21st July 2016

1. Welcome and introductions and apologies

The Chairman, Paul Sparks opened the meeting and welcomed everyone (31 people were present).

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Anna Elliot
- Ric Mears
- Cllr Peter Waldock
- John and Jill Moar
- Jill Brownsword
- Maureen McVee
- Phil Paton

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

Paul Sparks report:

" The past year has been rather a mixed one for your Resident's Association with several successes and achievements but also with a couple of disappointments. One of the main reasons for establishing the Association was to provide a transport scheme to help residents access the relocated Meads doctor surgery. The Surgery Car Service continues to work well and is greatly appreciated by those using it but those numbers have reduced over the past year or so. We completed a survey with users to try and identify any reasons and as a result some changes have been made to make it easier for residents to use the service.

Also, can I express my thanks to all our drivers and the volunteers handling the telephone calls and appointments.

Our Christmas Quiz was again well supported and our thanks to our excellent quizmaster, Jerry Miller. However, our planned Wine & Cheese Tasting evening had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Also, our main event of the year, our Big Lunch, was hit by bad weather so we had to relocate activities to the rugby clubhouse. This all resulted in far fewer families attending but those that did had a good time.

We also continued our support to the Demelza Childrens Charity and I am delighted that we have been able to boost their funds over several years.

Our year ended on a high with The Dene, after several years of work by us, is now listed as a Community Asset which provides valuable protection as a green open space in the future.

Finally, may I thank all the Committee members for their hard work and support over the past year but I must mention our Secretary, Peter Griggs, and Treasurer, Sally Major, who both do outstanding work for your Association."

Dorothy Sparks added that the Dene is registered with Wealden DC as a community asset but that this lasts for only five years and then a re-application will be required, she has asked the Town Council to diarise this.

The Chairman asked those present to mark on the maps provided which twittens on the estates are considered to be key routes and also those that are in very poor repair. A number of people commented from the floor on various locations including Streele View and Sycamour Rise, which both are used by the schools, and the path across the Dene.

4. Report from the Treasurer

Sally Major's report:

We ended the year with a surplus of £295 for the year in question and a bank balance of £1,474.

Income for the year totalled £1,737 including £775 in subscriptions and £507 in advertising revenue from companies and individuals advertising in our newsletter. We received £140 from our Surgery Car Service. Also included is a grant of £200 from Active Sussex in support of expenses for the Big Lunch 2015.

Expenses this year totalled £1,442 and include expenditure on Insurance, Newsletter production, Venue Hire, Web Hosting. Expenses for the Car Service amounted to £207 resulting in a deficit for this service of £67 due to the bulk purchase of new receipt books towards the end of the financial year.

Our social events, namely the Big Lunch and the Quiz night gave us a net cost of £119 after allowing for the grant received from Active Sussex.

I should be happy to answer any questions you may have about the accounts.

5. Report from the Secretary

Peter Griggs' report:

Membership

I am pleased to report that the Association's membership continues to represent over one in ten of the households on Manor Park and Hempstead Fields and I am also pleased to tell you that we plan to continue to keep the subscription at just £5 per calendar year.

We are able to keep the subscription at this reasonable level because we have been successful drawing in funding through grants from other organisations and also through sponsorship from generous local businesses, for example those that advertise in our newsletter. In case you wondered, the committee and volunteers all 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 (over 50% in their teens, twenties, thirties and forties).

Our Facebook page goes from strength to strength and now has 382 followers, which is 54 (16%) more than last year and our Twitter account now has 228 followers, which is an increase of 20% over last year. We also have a website of course, where you can find copies of our committee minutes, constitution and other Association documentation.

The Association's Newsletter will continue to be published twice a year. We hope you find the content interesting and useful but we are always open for suggestions on how it might be improved. We mustn't forget to thank the band of volunteers that pound the streets in all kinds of weather to deliver the newsletter to nearly 1400 homes.

Shoppers Discount Scheme

During the year the Association's Shoppers Discount Scheme recruited more businesses where members can get a discount on a range of purchases and services, including a visit to a local solicitor, financial advice, driving lessons, a jewellers or getting your car cleaned or repaired.

Surgery Car Service

We have now introduced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS checks) for all of our volunteer drivers.

Looking ahead

Looking ahead we are optimistic that we will win grant funding to support an initiative to address the congestion that occurs when parents and carers park to drop, off or collect, children at the three schools in Downsview Crescent. We will be encouraging people to avoid parking close to the schools but instead to park considerably elsewhere and then walk the last five or ten minutes.

We have also started work on a condition survey of the many un-adopted twittens with a view to obtaining funding to bring the key routes, to and from the schools, up to a safe and adoptable standard – this will be a major project which will require major funding and project management.

We are investigating whether we can find some funding to install a life-saving Defibrillator somewhere on the parade of shops in Browns Lane.

In future people moving onto Manor Park and Hempstead Fields will receive a welcome pack from the Association. This will include a greetings card and useful information about Uckfield and the Association's work, such as the Surgery Car Service – as well as a membership application form of course!

The Committee

Finally, this year we say goodbye and thank you to Committee member Anna Elliot and we are pleased to welcome Belinda Da Silva to the committee. We currently have one vacancy on the committee.

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 Committee members proposed, seconded and voted into office unanimously:

- Belinda Da Silva
- Dorothy Sparks
- Jane Shepherd
- Jerry Miller
- Ric Mears
- Tom Crellin

8. Any other business.

Peter Griggs proposed an amendment to the constitution to confirm that the Association will comply with current data protection legislation. This was agreed.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 7.45pm.