

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association



Notes of the Annual General Meeting Uckfield College – 4th November 2021_{v3}

1. Welcome and introductions and apologies

The Chairman, Paul Sparks opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Andy Clews
- Ann Young
- Belinda Da Silva
- Chiara Vagnarelli (AiRS)
- Gill Cooper
- Jane Shepherd
- Julia Collyer Brown
- Magda Ashby
- Maureen Macve
- Penny Barnes
- Phil Brooks
- Ric Meers
- Sue Fenwick

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 19th July 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Paul referred to item 3 of the minutes and told members that a second bench, this time commemorating VE and VJ day, had been installed in Browns Lane as had been suggested by a member at that meeting.

Also, that a hard surface had been installed in front of the first commemorative bench in Southview Drive as had been requested at that meeting.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Association

The Chairman, Paul Sparks, spoke about the impact of the pandemic and that it had been necessary to suspend the face-to-face services we offered, namely the Surgery Car Service and the Good Neighbour Scheme. However, a telephone based Good Neighbour scheme was developed which served the whole of Uckfield, not just Manor Park and Hempstead Fields. He then went on to thank all the Association's volunteers for their remarkable commitment and continued support.

Paul then spoke about the many compliments received about the planters placed at the entrance to Browns Lane and outside Tesco Express and thanked the volunteers that planted (donating the cost of the plants) and maintained them.

Close contact had been maintained with the Contractor's Project Manager at the Uckfield College, dealing with residents' concerns and arranging for contractors and school staff to park at Streatfeild House to ease the burden on local roads. Paul, who also chairs the Uckfield Dementia Forum, is in discussions with Wealden District Council to see if a sensory garden can be included in the redevelopment of Streatfeild House. Unfortunately, the site has been used by fly tippers and it has now been necessary to erect security fencing.

4. Two reports from Sally Major, the Association's Treasurer:

(1) Report for Financial Year ended 5 April 2020

We ended the year with a deficit of £287 for the year in question and a bank balance of £788.

Income for the year totalled £2,527 including £840 in subscriptions and £265 in advertising. We also received a total of £500 towards the cost of the Memorial Bench on Browns Lane, £250 from Airs and £250 from CPJ Field, and £475 from Uckfield Town Council towards the cost of the bench on Southview Drive.

Airs also gave us a grant of £139 towards the setting up of the Good Neighbours Scheme. The net cost of this scheme to the Association this year was £415.

After costs, the Surgery Car Service yielded a surplus of £33.

Expenses this year totalled £2,814 and include expenditure on Insurance, Newsletter production, Venue Hire, Web Hosting, Admin.

We donated £200 to the Brighter Uckfield Campaign for the construction and installation of the planter at the top of Browns Lane and spent £1,154 on the Memorial bench.

(2) Report for Financial Year ended 5 April 2021

We ended the year with a surplus of £1,389 for the year in question and a bank balance of £2,077 which of course reflects the fact that our activities had all been suspended during the pandemic.

Income for the year totalled £2,458 including £755 in subscriptions, as there were no newsletters produced this year there was no advertising income. We also received £325 towards the cost of the Memorial Bench on Browns Lane from Uckfield Town Council.

Airs awarded us a grant of £540 for the purchase of an ipad for use with the Good Neighbours Scheme, which, due to the pandemic we have yet to purchase but is now in hand. We were also very pleased to receive a grant from Wealden District Council of £462 and a donation from Uckfield Rugby Club of £300 which enabled us to place radio adverts with Uckfield FM promoting our telephone befriending service during the pandemic.

Expenses this year totalled £1,069 and include expenditure on Insurance, Web Hosting, Admin, the Good Neighbour Scheme and a minimal amount maintaining our telephone service for the Surgery Car Service.

5. Report from the Secretary

Peter Griggs, the Association's secretary reported that The Association's membership represents over one in ten of the 1400 households on Manor Park and Hempstead Fields with 152 member-households.

Members were encouraged to let the Association know if new neighbours move in in order that they can receive a welcome pack.

Peter advised that the Association's social media following continues to increase with 803 followers. There is a good spread of age groups ranging from 25 to 65 plus. There are no plans to increase the membership subscription which will remain at only £5 per calendar year.

The Good Neighbour Scheme and the Surgery Car Service were relaunched recently. Organised social events are now more targeted and have included a coach trip to the Imperial War Museum, Woodland Walks and a Photography Walk. These had all been very well received and Dr Martyn Stenning (ecologist) and Judith Stewart (professional photographer) were thanked for kindly agreeing to lead the walks.

Future social events might include other coach trips, more organised walks and celebrating the Queen's Jubilee.

The listing of The Dene as a community asset has been renewed.

6. Amendments to the Constitution

Peter proposed a number of amendments to the Association's constitution the principal amendments being to update it to include Grants Hill Court, Manor House Court and Shaftesbury Court and Streatfeild House within the Association's remit and to increase the number of committee members from seven to eight.

The amendments were agreed.

A copy can be found on the Association's website

7. 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

8. Election of the Committee

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

Andy Clews

Belinda Da Silva

Dominic Tarn

Dorothy Sparks

Jane Shepherd

Jerry Miller

Julia Brown

Ric Mears

Sue Fenwick

9. Any other business

Dorothy referred to the Cherry Trees and plaque that will soon be in place on The Rockery green space as a tribute to Uckfield's the Key Workers. Peter reported that residents had donated £200 towards the cost, that Peter Oliver Homes have agreed to donate £200 and that CPJ Field, Funeral Directors, have offered to supply free of charge an engraved stone plaque. All donors were thanked for their generosity and support.

Another member expressed his concern about the number of planning consents being granted for infill housing. Paul said that the final decision on planning matters rested with Wealden DC but that the Town Council had been successful in making their objections heard in some cases.

Paul mentioned that the Association is supporting the newly formed Uckfield Green Partnership and that the green agenda will rely heavily on properly insulated homes. He noted that Manor Park was developed in the 1960s and that consequently the homes nowhere near meet the desired insulation standards and that even new homes fell short. He also referred to the very significant cost of fully insulating existing homes. Paul thanked all those that had attended the AGM and also Hugh Hennebry who had led members on a tour of the college before the AGM started. Paul closed the meeting at approximately 7.30pm.