

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association

Notes of the Committee Meeting at Uckfield Rugby Club

Thursday 26th September 2024 – 7.00 to 8.30pm

1. Present

Paul Sparks (Chair), Peter Griggs (Secretary), Gabriella Paterson-Griggs (Treasurer), Dorothy Sparks, Sue Fenwick, Jerry Miller and Hattie Camsell

2. Apologies

Belinda Da Silva, Jane Shepherd, Phil Paton, Julia Brown

3. Proposal to co-opt Hattie Camsell onto the committee

Agreed

Hattie was welcomed and thanked for joining the committee

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 29th February 2024 and matters arising

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Any matters arising were included on the agenda.

5. Treasurer's report

Gabriella presented her report:

2023/2024 Outturn

The accounts for 2023/24 have been examined and signed off by Roy Thompson. The outturn was a surplus of £2401.

Grants Awarded and Received 2024/25 as at 31st August 2024

A National Lottery grant for £6,700 was successfully applied for to continue Warm Welcome for another two years from November 2024.

Allocated Funds as at 31st August 2024

- Wealden DC - £37.27 for Good Neighbour Scheme
- National Lottery Community Fund - £1393.32 for the continuing Warm Welcome project.
- National Lottery Awards for All - £6,700 for Warm Welcome November 2024-2026
- Walking Car Boot Sale - £15 from pitches to go to Chestnut Tree House Charity

Income received 2024/25 as at 31st August 2024

Income from the following sources has been received this financial year:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Subscriptions | £35 |
| Grants | £6,700 (Warm Welcome) |
| Wealden Community Lottery | £341 (£1211.50 since started) |
| Easy Fund Raising | £67.72 |
| Surgery Car Service | £77.00 |
| Warm Welcome collection tin | £239.82 (£791 since started) |
| Bank Interest | £8.42 |
| Walking Car Boot Sale | £15 (for pitches) |

Payments made 2024/25 as at 31st August 2024

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Good Neighbour Scheme | £31.32 (Phone Service) |
| Car Surgery Scheme | £31.32 (Phone Service) |
| Donation to KSS Air Ambulance | £235 (from Big Lunch 2024 collection) |
| DBS Checks | £47.55 (new car surgery scheme drivers x 3) |
| Big Lunch 2024 | £633.08 (offset by £500 donation received from Midsummer Festival) |
| Subscriptions | £40 (Wealden Volunteering) |
| Warm Welcome | £1276.45 (all grant funded) |
| Miscellaneous | £15 (stand at the Volunteer Fair) |

General MPHFA Funds

The amount of funds available to the Association that are not allocated elsewhere stands at £2717.25 as at 31st August 2024. Note: This excludes the Warm Welcome donations.

Savings Account

As the Association received a large grant it was agreed by the Chairman that an instant access savings account be opened in order to earn interest on the funds. The National Lottery grant was transferred into the account. The Warm Welcome donations and Wealden Community Lottery funds are also transferred into the savings account when received.

Projects for 2024/25

Warm Welcome is ongoing but all costs will be covered by grant funding (until end of October 2026)

Budget 2024/25 – Q1 update

Projected outcome for 2024/25 is +£500.00

We are on target to keep within the budget for the year.

6. Secretary's report

Peter reported as follows:

Social media presence – there has been another upsurge in people following the Association's Facebook page which now has 1086 followers, an increase of around 100 since February. Facebook posts about the Walking Car Boot Sale were instrumental in achieving this increase.

Membership – at the time of the meeting the membership totalled 165 fully paid-up members, this compares to 153 at the end of the last membership year in December.

The most members we have had previously was in 2020 when we had 160 members, so we have exceeded that total.

7. Events

Walking Car Boot Sale – this proved to be a great success with 32 pitches across Manor Park and £200 raised for the Chestnut Tree House Hospice charity. The estate was busy with shoppers walking from pitch to pitch and feedback from them and the pitch holders was very positive. Ye Olde Spud Shoppe was invited to visit us on the day and donated 10% of its takings - £25.

One pitch raised £125 for its own chosen charity.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Jenni who suggested this initiative and helped with organising it.

It was agreed to hold another boot sale in Spring 2025.

Hattie suggested that this should include a Treasure Trail element as this would be popular with young people. It has also been suggested that the list of pitch addresses include an indication of what is being sold at each pitch.

Question Time - members were reminded that the Association's Question Time evening is on Thursday 3rd October.

Volunteer Fair – this is being held at the Civic Centre on Saturday 12th October. Additional volunteers to attend at the Association's display would be welcome.

Big Lunch – whilst this was a success, with money raised for the Kent Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance charity, the numbers attending was not as high as anticipated. It was agreed to consider holding it every two years in the future and to try to involve the school and or college in an activity e.g. a children's choir.

8. Community Identity

Two ideas were put forward to further strengthen the community's identity and its sense of belonging. These were:

Flagpole – a flagpole installed in a prominent location and flying a bespoke flag featuring the Association's logo was proposed and agreed. Currently we are in negotiation with the landlord's agent to position it on the green space in front of the Browns Lane shops.

ACTION Peter

Welcome signs – installing welcome signs to be located at the entrance to the estates (the junctions of London Road with Browns Lane and Southview Drive) was proposed. These would be wooden signs with 'Welcome to Manor Park and Hempstead Fields' etched into them. Locating the Browns Lane sign behind the planter was suggested. Peter will investigate costs and whether licences from ESCC will be required.

ACTION Peter

9. Hedgehog Highway

Gabriella told the committee about a Hedgehogs R Us initiative where that organisation is offering boxes of x50 hedgehog highway surrounds with leaflets etc. Hedgehog Highways are gaps in fences that allow hedgehogs to travel more freely from garden to garden.

It was agreed to purchase a box and to endeavour to recruit Manor Primary in their distribution as part of its wildlife conservation teaching. Possibly asking each pupil to send a photo of the installed surround, with a prize(s) incorporated into the project.

ACTION Peter

10. Updates

Warm Welcome – funding has been won from the National Lottery awards for All scheme to extend the Tuesday Warm Welcome until November 2026. However, it is becoming increasingly popular and the room used at present is now too small. We are currently investigating whether we can find more spacious accommodation.

ACTION Peter and Dorothy

11. Any other business

Jerry advised that he has now moved to the other side of the town and that he felt that it was no longer appropriate to sit on the committee. He will however continue to volunteer for the Warm Welcome.

Jerry was thanked for his past support, which has lasted over several years, and wished well for the future.

It was proposed that in future a calendar of committee meeting dates be fixed at the beginning of each year and that meetings be limited to three per year plus the AGM.

Calendar dates and venues of future meetings to be confirmed.