

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

PRESENT: Cllrs Carol Melvin, Richard Lewis, Scott Seaman-Digby, Insp Rob Bryan, Sgt Alison Fanton, 3 Police Cadets (speakers), 13 officers and members of the NRA executive committee, approximately 64 residents

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from David Blowers, Sue Boulton, Caroline Field

INTRODUCTION. Tony Ellis, chairman, welcomed everyone to the 50th AGM of the NRA, especially those who had not attended one before, and invited guests.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT. He ran through the main work and achievements of the committee during the last year:

Northwood is to be congratulated. 50 years ago, on the 9th of February 1966, the NRA was founded and by the end of its first year, there were 839 members. Since then, we have moved from strength to strength and have a membership of over 2000 households and around 80 businesses. Down the years we have fought and won many worthwhile campaigns and made Northwood a better place in which to live. A thriving community needs a strong residents' association which in turn needs a steady stream of volunteers to man it. Unfortunately the stream of volunteers seems to be drying up. Rapidly.

Those of you that have read our last newsletter will be aware that tonight I was to propose Fiona Blackwell as my successor. Unfortunately Fiona has resigned for personal reasons. I have agreed to carry on as Chairman for another year – subject to your approval of course. By the next AGM I will have served 8 years and new blood will be well overdue. So, returning to volunteers, I am appealing to you to get involved in the NRA. We have an immediate need for committee members to cover business members and projects. And a new Chairman of course. We also have immediate vacancies for about 25 road stewards. The names of roads where we have vacancies are listed in the foyer. If we don't fill these vacancies, the NRA will be able to do less and Northwood will suffer. The ball is in your court. If you are already a volunteer or unable to be one, do you know if your friends or neighbours would be interested? I'm happy to talk to you after the meeting or by telephone at any other time. Paul Barker will be happy to brief potential road stewards.

We also need a person to keep our website up-to date. The role includes posting new items, updating existing information, ensuring links to other websites are accurate and keeping a general eye on the website. The work comes in peaks and troughs, but will average about an hour a week. Full training will of course be given. Please see Ros Plume after the meeting if you are interested.

Volunteering is rewarding, and sometimes challenging, and most positions don't demand a huge time commitment.

The last year has been as busy as ever. Together with Save our Northwood, we have been heavily involved in the station development consultation. It is the Committee's opinion that the consultations have been full and frank. I know that some members are opposed to the proposals but we do not believe that they represent the views of the majority of members. As the NRA stipulated, all of the businesses were consulted and offered the chance of acquiring places in the development or existing buildings. The Post Office, Steve's the barber, the cobbler and the dry cleaner have been guaranteed continuity of business throughout the development. Unfortunately, quite a few of the business owners took little or no part in the consultation process. Our submission to the Council stated that we were concerned about traffic congestion and the bulk and shape of the building on the bridge but on balance we felt that the development should go ahead. Since this opinion was stated in our last newsletter, I have received over 20 favourable comments and only 1 objection which was made by someone who has been opposed to the development since day 1.

The planning application was to have been heard on 12th April but was postponed by the Council at the last minute. Hopefully our Councillors will have more information in the Question and Answer session.

I mentioned traffic congestion. For some time I have been concerned at the lack of action taken by the Council to tackle traffic congestion in Northwood. Unfortunately, our councillors have been unable to get

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

significant improvements. TfL's planning application included the installation of yet another set of traffic lights at the junction of Green Lane and Maxwell Road to which many residents have taken great exception. Still the Council did not consider taking any steps to improve traffic flow. Last month I wrote to James Rodger, Head of Planning, to object formally to the Council's lack of action and subsequently I was invited to a meeting with him and colleagues to discuss ways of improving our lot. Simple things like banning heavy goods vehicles from Green Lane, reducing on-road parking to a 1 hour limit, introducing 2 hours free-to-all parking in the Green Lane car park to reduce the number of cars using Waitrose as it's free for 2 hours. It was a full and frank meeting and I was promised that some constructive action would be taken. I then met with Councillors Melvin and Lewis and briefed them on the meeting. They undertook to press the Council for action. Watch this space.

As agreed last year, we have purchased a noticeboard for the High Street. We are waiting for the Council to agree the exact spot where it will be installed – somewhere outside Carters the Chemist. We also continue to press our Councillors to obtain funds to make improvements to the High Street as it is much neglected. I'll raise this again in the Q and A session.

We were given authority at last year's AGM to spend £3500 to mark our 50th anniversary. After much deliberation the committee decided on a plinth clock but have still to agree with the Council where to place it. Also the cost is likely to be nearer £4500 and we need your authority to spend that amount. We would like your approval to the choice of a clock and the extra cost.

This year we will be celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday. Many of you will remember the successful event we held in partnership with Northwood Hills RA to celebrate Her Majesty's diamond jubilee so we have teamed up with Northwood Hills again to hold a music and picnic event in Chestnut Avenue recreation ground. It will be from 2 to 6pm on Sunday 12th June. Unlike the official party where the cost is £150 each, our party is free with a bucket collection for programmes and parking. We have organised bands, choirs and children's entertainment so bring your picnics and enjoy the music. We are very grateful to our councillors for arranging a substantial financial contribution from the Council.

As ever, I want to thank Nick Hurd for his continuing support. He has formed a committee, of which I am a member, to ensure a future for the Northwood and Pinner Hospital site - a future that will benefit the health of local residents. We are grateful to our councillors for their support and work on our behalf.

And ... I would like to thank my fellow committee members who give up their time to ensure that the NRA functions as well as it does.

Planning is our busiest and most contentious subject and our committee representative, David Goodman has done a splendid job. In the last year, and his first, David has examined well over 200 applications, made objections where necessary and advised a considerable number of residents. Not bad for a retired accountant!

Our Police representative, Philip Green, has been instrumental in reviving the Northwood Ward Panel. I have been told that it is the best in Hillingdon but it still needs members so please contact Philip if you would like to know more. Philip has engendered a superb relationship with our local police and is always ready to discuss law and order problems with members. I must mention how much we value the services of Inspector Rob Bryan who has brought professionalism, accountability and approachability to our local policing.

Our environment has been well protected by Fiona Blackwell who has been like a rottweiler with the Council when necessary. Thanks Fiona, we will miss you. Fortunately I have identified a resident who wants to take on the role.

Peter Lansdown has continued to pressure the Council about potholes, parking and traffic in general. With the appalling state of our roads it is a thankless task.

Paul Barker continues to manage our small army of volunteers who serve as Area Road Stewards and Road Stewards. These worthy people are our lifeline to you the members. They deliver newsletters, collect your

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

subs and discuss and pass on problems and any other points to the committee. A deficit of road stewards is a national problem which is causing many residents' associations to wither and die. Please, please don't let that be the case in Northwood. The answer is in your hands.

Frances Meyer continues to maintain our membership details, Mithu Chellaram services our noticeboards, Richard Field keeps us informed on health matters, David Blowers keeps the books straight and our vice chairman Miles Gillman carries on as he has for the last 16 years, producing our publicity material, organising events, reporting on open spaces and Ruislip Woods. Rikin Patel continues to represent business.

Our vice-president Valerie Mellor, in the absence of a committee member, has been looking after our Green Lane and Maxwell Road business members for the last 3 years since she retired from the committee. Thank you Valerie, some retirement.

Members of the Committee will be available to answer your questions after the meeting.

Before we move on to the treasurer's report and the election of officers there are two other ladies who continue to carry out invaluable service to the community.

Tina Williams has maintained the station flower beds for over 7 years. They certainly give the platforms uplift and passengers something good to look at.

Last but not least, Ros Plume must get a special mention. She has been our secretary for the last 8 years and also editor of the newsletter. She keeps us in order and minutes our proceedings. The coloured newsletter was her idea. I think that you will agree with me that the coloured version is a great improvement and the content always interesting. Thank you Ros.

GUEST SPEAKERS. Philip Green introduced himself as NRA Police liaison officer, Chairman of the Local Ward Panel and lay member of the Safer Neighbourhood Board. He encouraged those present to join the NRA police database to receive emails on police matters. He then introduced Volunteer Police Cadets Ben, Marcelo and Phoebe who gave an illustrated talk entitled "Cyber Crime Prevention".

Their theme was 'Prevention by education' and they covered a variety of types of cyber crime: Identity Theft, Phishing, Mass Market Scam Mail, Fake websites, Fake Anti-virus Software, Romance Scams and Mobile Phone Scams. For each of these they gave tips on how to spot a scam and how to avoid being scammed.

A member of the audience also drew attention to Boiler Room Scams used to sell shares by telephone.

Valerie Mellor proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers to which the audience responded with a round of applause.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS. In the absence of Treasurer David Blowers, President Alan Prue presented the audited accounts for the year ending 31st December 2015. He pointed out that we have a healthy bank balance and asked the members to consider ways in which we could spend some of the funds to benefit the local community. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Sally Wood, seconded by Richard Plume and approved by a show of hands.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. The Treasurer's report stated that as many members pay more than the minimum subscription, the low minimum can be maintained. The proposal to continue with a minimum rate of £2 per household and the Business member rate of £10 was proposed by Pam Williams, seconded by Sandy McCarthy, and approved by a show of hands. The Chairman thanked Chris Rogers for auditing the accounts.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS. President Alan Prue conducted the election of officers. There being no new nominations for the officers' positions, the following were elected for the year by a show of hands: Chairman – Tony Ellis; Vice chairman – Miles Gillman; Treasurer – David Blowers; Auditor – Chris Rogers

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The chairman reported that apart from Fiona Blackwell, all of last year's members wished to stand for re-election, but that there were no new nominations. Those elected for the year by a show of hands are:

David Goodman - planning advisor
Richard Field - health,
Marie-Françoise Meyer - membership,
Paul Barker - chief road steward,
Philip Green - police liaison,
Mithu Chellaram – communications,
Rikin Patel who represents local business and
Peter Lansdown who takes care of Transport and Highways

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT. The chairman proposed that Alan Prue be re-elected as President and Valerie Mellor as Vice President. This was agreed by a show of hands.

AOB.

1. **NRA's 50th Anniversary.** At The AGM in 2015 the chairman stated that the NRA had been formed on 9th February 1966 and that the committee would like to do something to commemorate the 50th anniversary. Suggestions were invited from the floor and the one that the executive committee had decided to pursue was that of installing a clock in the town centre. This meeting needed to agree on the site for the clock. The Chairman (TE) circulated pictures showing the style of pillar clock he had in mind and suggested sites near to the War Memorial and on the corner of Maxwell Road outside Robsons. He then opened the discussion up to all present:
 - 1.1. Sue Mansfield. It would be better in the new development. TE. There could be a long delay.
 - 1.2. Pam Williams. Better to install the clock now rather than later.
 - 1.3. Richard Plume. I support the idea of the new piazza site, the clock would look out of place at the Maxwell Road sites.
 - 1.4. Hazel Paterson. It could go in the flower bed in front of the car park now, then be moved to the piazza when it has been built.
 - 1.5. Cllr Lewis. How would it fit in with the street scene? If it went in the new piazza, we would need permission from TfL.
 - 1.6. Jo Wild. What colour would it be? TE, black.
 - 1.7. There used to be a clock outside Colliver Fishers (Hard 8 premises).
At this point the chairman asked for a show of hands of those who felt that the clock should be installed sooner rather than later. The majority agreed that it should be installed now.
 - 1.8. Adrian Paterson. Outside Barclays Bank where the tree was removed would be a good site.
 - 1.9. Andrew Melvin. The War Memorial could be moved to a quieter, less central place, and the clock installed in its place.
 - 1.10. Howard White. Could the clock be installed on a building? TE. Buildings are generally owned by landlords rather than the occupants and permission could be difficult to obtain.
 - 1.11. Pat Collis. Could it be outside Waitrose?
 - 1.12. Cllr Lewis. Could it be gold colour to represent the NRA's golden anniversary?
 - 1.13. Hilda Greenfield. How will it be powered; will it need winding up? TE. It will be mains powered and being electronic will need no maintenance, similar to the one in Love Lane in Pinner.

The chairman asked for a vote by show of hands in support of three sites.

Car Park flower bed, 8 votes. Outside Barclays Bank, 20 votes. Near to Robsons, 26 votes.

The chairman said he would put the proposal to a council officer. He then asked for approval to spend £4,500 which represents £1,000 more than approved in 2015. The majority agreed with 3 votes against.

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

MUSIC & PICNIC IN THE PARK EVENT. Richard Plume expanded on the chairman's reference to this event which NRA is putting on jointly with Northwood Hills Residents' Association to celebrate HM The Queen's 90th birthday. He asked the members present for two things:

- a. *The first is for lots of people to come along and enjoy the music on the day. Please spread the word, follow us on Facebook, tell your friends and neighbours etc.*
- b. *The second is for some more helpers, to help us with setting up in the morning, and taking down again after 6.00pm. Things like taking down gazebos and loading them into a van, taking down the lines of poles that set out the car park, unbolting herras fencing that we use to make a secure backstage area. If you'd like to help with some of this, please have a word with me, Miles, Tony or Ros after the meeting.*

OPEN FORUM. The three Northwood councillors, Carol Melvin (CM), Richard Lewis (RL), and Scott Seaman-Digby (SSD) took their places on the platform and invited questions from the floor.

Q1. Tony Ellis. What is the latest on the TfL development?

SSD. The planning hearing will probably take place in May. LBH approved most of the application, just a few tweaks required.

Philip Newfield. In an email from the Mayor of London's office, it was stated that the application will be referred to the Mayor's office by LBH then returned to LBH who will then have to refer it to the new Mayor and the new GLA. All correspondence has been sent to the Mayor's office.

Q2. John Buxton, The Avenue. Traffic levels are increasing; too much parking is allowed, for example, on Rickmansworth Road.

RL. Less parking would increase traffic flow. We need a holistic approach to the whole of Northwood and a mini conference with TfL.

TE. Can you give a commitment to a time scale? Would a petition work?

SSD. Yes it would. We can pass on your concerns.

Q3. Howard White, Rofant Road. Thank you for resurfacing Rofant Road. How high a priority are pavements? Skip lorries and developers' vehicles damage pavements and they are not reinstated.

SSD. Let us know of such instances. It is the responsibility of the resident who orders the skip to make sure pavements are reinstated. NRA has suggested that developers pay a bond which can be held against possible damage; LBH Legal Services is exploring the idea.

Q4. ? The traffic at school time at the roundabout in Northwood Hills is bad now; what will it be like when the new school opens?

A. We'll refer it to the Northwood Hills councillors.

Q5. Alan Greenglass, Elder Court, Green Lane. Rubbish is left outside Boots in Maxwell Road every week.

CM. Most of this rubbish is put out by shops when they close on Saturday evening because the refuse lorry collects too early on Monday morning. We are trying to arrange a later pick-up on Mondays. Some rubbish may be added by householders.

Valerie Mellor. There is also a lot of rubbish left by the tree in Oaklands Gate and by the telephone exchange.

CM. I have put in a report about those, I will submit another one.

Mary Jo Lindon, Wychwood Way. There is always rubbish outside Pizza Hut at the top of Hallowell Road.

Sue Smeed, Hallowell Road. The rubbish outside Pizza Hut is from the flats and nothing to do with the early collection time.

RL. I will ask an officer to investigate.

Q6. Valerie Mellor. The notices re. dogs on leads have disappeared; there is now one in Moor Park Road but I've seen no others. How do you enforce bye-laws?

Northwood Residents' Association

Minutes of the AGM held on Thursday 14th April 2016 at Northwood Methodist Church

SSD. I will find out if there are plans to post any more notices. If you observe a bye-law being broken, please report it to the council.

Q7. Tony Ellis. How do we know what Street Champions are doing? We don't want to duplicate their efforts.

CM. They report fly-tipping and damage.

SSD. There are no published reports, but I will find out more.

RL. Street Champions is a good scheme.

Peter Lansdown. I'm a Street Champion, but have heard nothing for two years; no-one answers the phone.

Philip Green. I asked for a list of Street Champions, but was told it was data-protected.

There being no further questions, the chairman thanked everyone for coming, and advised that

Inspector Bryan and Sgt Fanton were available for questions at the end.

He closed the meeting at 21.50.