

PETTS WOOD & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 16th MARCH 2016 IN PETTS WOOD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr John Powell	Chairman	Mr Phil Birch
Mr Chris Harris	Vice-Chairman	Mr Matt Clark
Mrs Susan Radford	Treasurer	Mrs Joanne Cummins
Mrs Janet Guntrip	Secretary	Mr Chris House
		Mr Derek Marrable
		Mr Rane Ranasinghe

GUESTS:

Cllr Doug Auld	Cllr Tony Owen
Insp Toby Noar	Insp Gary Byfield
Dr Bob Hadley (Crofton RA & RA Federation)	Mr Ted Fenwick (Crofton RA)
PC Taj Mahill	Mrs Maureen Johnson (The Chislehurst Society)
Mrs Kay Wilkins (Knoll RA)	Chris House (National Trust & PWDRA committee)
Mr Kieron Jarrold (Petts Wood Business Association)	
Mr Phil Webb (former committee member)	Mr Colin Earl (member and cartoonist)

About 40 other Members were present

APOLOGIES:

Mr Jo Johnson MP	Mr James Cleverly GLA
Cllr Simon Fawthrop	Cllr Stephen Carr (Leader of Bromley Council)
Borough Commander Chris Hafford	Ms Sian Spencer-Little (PRUH Children's Ward)
Representatives from King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	
Ms Helen Farrow (LBB East Area Planning Manager)	Mrs Jenny Hawke (PW Library)
Crofton Place & Sparrow Drive RA	Mr Sam Pettman (National Trust Ranger)
Mr Fred Dale (Auditor)	Mr John Pattenden (former committee member)
Mrs Andrea Stevens (committee member)	Mrs Elizabeth Strachan (committee member)
Mrs Rebecca Dudley (outgoing Gazette Editor)	

* * * * *

The Chairman opened proceedings by welcoming all our guests and members. Apologies had been received from those listed above.

1. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 18th MARCH 2015

The Minutes, copies of which had been available via the website and on the top table before the meeting, were taken as a true and accurate record. Mr Webb proposed that they should be adopted, Mr Gillies seconded the proposition and it was carried by the meeting.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman's Report had been published in the March Gazette and Mr Powell wished to thank those that had left the committee during the year: John Pattenden who covered Traffic and Parking, Phil

Webb who dealt with the Environment and the Gazette Diary, and Rebecca Dudley who edited the Gazette so well for six years. Matt Clark had taken over Membership from Joanne Cummins so that she could concentrate on organising community events; Phil Birch had taken on Environment; and Rane Ranasinghe had volunteered to cover Education after Susan Radford became Treasurer. All would be elected onto the committee tonight and a replacement for Traffic and Parking would be co-opted on after the AGM. Marian Smith had kindly stepped in to become Editor of the Gazette which historically remained a job outside the committee.

Mr Powell commended his Report to the meeting. Mr Styles proposed that the Annual Report should be adopted, Mr Earl seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT & RE-ELECTION OF AUDITOR

The Treasurer, Mrs Susan Radford, was pleased to present the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2015 as published in the March Gazette on page 10. She apologised for the typographical error in the Auditor's Report which referred to a deficit, whereas we had in fact made a small surplus of £2,426. In view of the surplus Mrs Radford saw no reason to increase the subscription this year and she proposed that it should remain at £4 per annum with the postal subscription of £11. There being no questions Mrs Radford commended the accounts to the meeting, Mr Gillies proposed that they should be adopted, Mrs Harris seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

Mr Fred Dale had kindly agreed to continue as Auditor for a further year and Mrs Radford proposed that he should be so elected. Mr Webb seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

4. ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The three nominated committee members, Phil Birch, Matthew Clark and Rane Ranasinghe, had been proposed and seconded as printed in the March Gazette and they were duly elected onto the committee en bloc.

5. LIFE MEMBERS

The Chairman stated that two of our members had given sterling service to the Association over many years and he asked Mr Harris to outline the reasons for their nomination for Life Membership. **Mr Phil Webb** had served on the committee for 12 years dealing with the Environment and had taken on the Gazette Diary in 2006. Over the years he had also been responsible for many informative gardening articles in the Gazette, but he was stepping down now to concentrate on his involvement in fighting Biggin Hill's expansion plans. **Mr Colin Earl** had been producing sketches for the front cover of the Gazette since the beginning of the new millennium and had recently taken on the task of judging the children's entries to our Christmas cover competition.

The committee recommended that their hard work and support should be recognised by offering them Life Membership. Mr Powell asked the meeting to endorse the committee's recommendation and Mrs Gurney proposed that Mr Webb and Mr Earl should be given Life Membership. Mr Gillies seconded the proposition and it was carried by the meeting. To mark the occasion Mr Powell handed Messrs Webb and Earl framed certificates and gift vouchers.

6. GUEST SPEAKER

The Chairman regretted that several attempts to get a guest speaker for the AGM had been declined, but this meant there would be more time for members' questions.

7. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Before throwing the meeting open for our members' questions Mr Powell invited some of our guests to say a few words.

Inspector Toby Noar The Inspector explained that he was imminently stepping down from his current position and Inspector Gary Byfield was to take his place. He said that Petts Wood was a low crime

area with an average of 15 crimes per month, in comparison with 300 to 500 in other areas of the borough. There had been a spate of burglaries recently, so he advised residents to deter burglars from breaking windows by locking their side gates and erecting high trellis fences. Before Christmas a decision had been made to increase the number of officers in a group and this had had mixed success. They were restructuring how they supervised staff who would now report back to Bromley Police Station under Inspector Noar's supervision. There would be 50 officers: 5 sergeants with groups of 10 people under them. PC Taj Mahill and PCSO Colin Bisse would still be policing Petts Wood and other PCSOs were remaining at St Mary Cray headquarters. They would report to Bromley but come back to Petts Wood to work. PC Taj Mahill would be residents' point of contact and Inspector Gary Byfield would be taking over at St Mary Cray.

Inspector Noar invited questions and Cllr Owen asked whether the police considered it a problem that cars drove around the area looking for opportunities to deal drugs. Inspector Noar said that the drug situation was not a priority in Petts Wood as there were more important matters for the police to deal with. They were more concerned with the consequences of people taking drugs than catching the dealers. A member asked how the police hoped to catch burglars with just two officers available and Inspector Noar explained that this was precisely why they were introducing groups of 10 rather than just 2. The number of burglaries was declining in the Petts Wood area and they were aware of who was perpetrating them, so the police should be in control. Mr Earl of Petts Wood Road asked how many burglars were caught, but Inspector Noar did not have the figures. The detection rate was about 5% at the moment which was too low and should be closer to 10%. It was an acknowledged fact that a police officer would on average only catch a burglar once in a 30-year career. Mr Styles of Grosvenor Road said that he was a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and he felt that not enough was made of the fact that the Association was "and District". There were probably more arrest successes in the outskirts of Petts Wood where crime was higher. Inspector Noar stated that criminals tended to be from areas that were not so affluent and there were far greater problems in the Cray Valley areas. Committee member Mrs Cummins of Beaumont Road said that there had been five burglaries in her road recently and she was very grateful for the service that she and her neighbours had received from the PCSOs who had attended the scene. Inspector Noar promised to pass on her comments to PCSO Colin Bisse. He then handed over to Inspector Gary Byfield.

Inspector Gary Byfield The Inspector introduced himself to the meeting. He was a Londoner born, grew up in Sedgefield and worked in Bromley. He joined as a Special in 1984 at the same time as Mr Powell, spent 12 years at Greenwich as an RT driver, moved to the dog section and then was promoted to sergeant, spending 2 years in Beckenham. He still lived in Beckenham and spent 5 years with firearms before volunteering to return to Bromley. He was now Inspector with the Safer Neighbourhood team and he urged residents to look out for each other and become the police's eyes and ears. The community was everything to him and he was anxious to help all residents and listen to their concerns. He reiterated that residents should keep the police informed of what was going on.

Cllr Doug Auld Cllr Auld assured the meeting that all three ward councillors kept a close eye on planning applications in Petts Wood. They were aware that the cost of housing had gone through the roof and as a result residents were looking to extend their homes rather than move. Some applications were matters between neighbours and residents should give thought to their neighbours when planning an extension, as the results could affect their light or privacy. Our councillors tried to make honest decisions. There were hundreds of applications in Petts Wood and if there was a difficulty then Cllr Auld urged residents to come to them directly and not to wait until it was too late. They would give advice and an honest opinion. Four Council planning sub-committees took place every two weeks and our councillors were involved in some of them. They were at present inundated with requests for telecommunication masts and cabinets all over the borough and the companies wanted them in prominent places. There had been three applications in Franks Wood Avenue on the green and they had all been refused so far. With 4G coming soon masts would be required every 200 yards so the councillors were fighting a constant battle.

Cllr Tony Owen With regard to Biggin Hill's proposals to extend their operating hours Cllr Owen reported that the Council had been served with a Judicial Review to which they were supposed to respond within a week. He was not sure whether this had happened yet, but the Council had still to comply with

many of the conditions which had been set, before the extended hours could be implemented. Christmas and Easter had delayed the Council's response and Cllr Owen did not know what the latest position was, but he was sure that procedures had not been followed properly and transparently.

Parking in Petts Wood Road Cllr Owen reported that the Portfolio Holder had decided to review 18 parking areas in the borough, one of which was Petts Wood Road where it had been decided that the bays which were at present free should become "pay-and-display" (P&D). In addition the bays at the top of West Way opposite Mings were to become P&D to make them available for shoppers, as were those in Fairway. The rest of West Way had free bays so that residents could park their own cars there overnight, making it unnecessary for them to concrete over their front gardens. Cllr Owen was opposed to P&D in some cases because it could affect shops if charges were brought in. He advised residents to be circumspect in their responses to the Council's proposals, as insulting and angry letters tended to be counterproductive and nothing got done. They needed to be persuasive, giving detailed arguments as to why the Portfolio Holder should reconsider. Cllr Owen stated that an extensive and thorough review of parking in Petts Wood had been undertaken a few years ago with public consultation and as far as possible the Council had agreed to residents' preferences and specific decisions had been made. As a result free bays had been installed in Petts Wood Road as part of an integral scheme and it was unreasonable for the Council to propose changes without consultation. He further pointed out that it was possible to park for 5 minutes in the centre of Petts Wood for around 5p and Eric Pickles had introduced a 10-minute leeway which made it possible to park for 15 minutes for that amount.

Mrs Christine Tomlinson of Petts Wood Road was incensed with the way the Council had gone about this proposal. They had only consulted the residents who had free bays outside their houses but they should have taken everybody's views into account. Further they were telling residents that this was what they were going to do, not asking for their views. The viability of the village was at stake as people would shop elsewhere if they could not find free parking anywhere. The free bays for two hours without return benefited both shoppers and the shops. Cllr Owen said that the Council's thinking was that in theory only four cars a day could park in those bays as two hours' free parking was allowed, whereas P&D would mean that far more people used each bay. He suggested that, if it could be proved that some of these bays were occupied by people working in Petts Wood who then moved their car after the two hours' restriction to park on a yellow line, this could be a persuasive argument as it would benefit businesses.

Mrs Tomlinson said that she had started petitions for the residents and the shops and she wondered what else she could do to help the councillors oppose this proposal. Cllr Owen said that he needed more information and proof about residents' habits. If he was right about employees using these bays, then the Portfolio Holder might be swayed by an argument that helped the traders. Mrs Tomlinson understood that one lady had said she would never have bought her house in Petts Wood Road if she had thought that they would change the bays to P&D, and the Council had not given a deadline for replies to the proposal. Another lady from Petts Wood Road said she had been completely unaware of the Council's intention until Mrs Tomlinson told her about it. She was sure that the more letters the Council received the better and it was wrong that the whole road had not been informed directly. Cllr Auld said that the proposal had come as a complete surprise to all three councillors. Cllr Owen said that Paul Nevard, the Council officer dealing with this, was on holiday at the moment and he would be discussing this with Cllr Colin Smith, the Portfolio Holder, some time next week before making a decision.

Mrs Lindsay of Petts Wood Road had a problem with cars parking across her drive so that she could not get her car out. She wondered whether there was a set of rules which could be written down so that she could help the authorities deal with this problem. She wondered whether it was a police matter, but Mr Powell said that parking issues were not high on their agenda unless they were causing an obstruction to the highway. Mrs Radford said that there had been debate on the social media forum Streetlife about this very problem and the consensus seemed to be that it is illegal if you park so that you are obstructing cars coming out of a drive, but if the obstruction is to an incoming car that is not illegal and there is nothing you can do about it. Mrs Lindsay said that Petts Wood Road was an especially dangerous road in view of the brow of the hill which obscured one's view of the road as a whole and made getting out of one's driveway particularly difficult. Unfortunately Cllr Owen said that at the time of the parking review there were residents in Petts Wood Road who were very specific about what they wanted and were not prepared

to compromise, as a result of which the Council's proposals were dropped. If you had a particular problem with cars being parked across your driveway, the Council could put a white line across your drive which had no legal power but could be of help.

Biggin Hill Airport Mrs Webb of Greenfield Gardens stated that she was a member of the group known as Flightpath Watch (FPW) which had been contesting the request to increase the hours of operation at Biggin Hill Airport. She picked up on the points which Cllr Owen had made regarding the Judicial Review papers which had been served on the Council and she mentioned the cases referred to the Ombudsman which requested the investigation of the Council's process and conduct in dealing with BHAL's request to extend their operating hours. FPW had been advised that the Judicial Review could not be referred to as such until the courts had decided there was a case to be answered. Until that time they could only say that a legal challenge was being mounted by an individual in Petts Wood. However, the Ombudsman had advised that because these papers had been served, all investigations into the Council had now been closed and could not be reopened. Mrs Webb referred the meeting to the article in the Gazette appealing for donations to FPW which was supporting the Judicial Review. Details of how to make donations were given in the Gazette article.

To emphasise what his wife had said, Mr Webb reported that as members of Flightpath Watch they were still fighting the extension of hours which had been badly handled by the Council and was not yet a *fait accompli*. He wished to thank our three ward councillors who had done everything they could to support the objectors and also Mrs Andrea Stevens, committee member, who had worked tirelessly for Flightpath Watch and the Association gathering information and writing articles in the Gazette. Mr Webb said that members might think that the cause was lost, but FPW was still fighting on behalf of all our members. It was a great shame that Cllr Carr, Leader of the Council, had not accepted the invitation to attend tonight's meeting. Mr Webb reported that Tandridge District Council and some Residents' Associations in the area had registered objections to the planned new route for aircraft into the airport, which would affect them. These objections further reinforced FPW's opposition.

Mr Webb urged members to support FPW and the ward councillors and to make contributions to the fighting fund if they could.

143 Chislehurst Road Mr Styles asked what was happening now that the latest planning application had been turned down. Cllr Auld said that it had gone to appeal but that was all he knew.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked guests and members for attending the meeting and reminded them that copies of *A History of Petts Wood* were available for sale and booking forms for the Summer Ball on 9th July were also available. Mrs Guntrip had late news that the May Fayre was to take place as usual and application forms to book stalls at the event were being sent out this week. Mr Powell was pleased to announce that our Secretary, Mrs Guntrip, had been awarded one of the Mayor of Bromley's 2016 Awards for voluntary service.

Mr Powell invited everyone to enjoy a glass of wine and refreshments which had been supplied by Jean Wood and Richenda Tadman. The formal business of the meeting closed at 9.20 pm.