

PETTS WOOD & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 22nd MARCH 2017 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	Mr Chris House
Mrs Janet Guntrip	Secretary	Mr Derek Marrable
		Mr Rane Ranasinghe
		Mrs Andrea Stevens

GUESTS:

Cllr Doug Auld	Cllr Tony Owen
Insp Gary Byfield	Dr Bob Hadley (RA Federation & Crofton RA)
PC Taj Mahill	PCSO Colin Bisset
Mr Brian Wilkin (Knoll RA)	Mrs Paula Ferguson (PW Business Association)
Mrs Liz Johnston (PW Business Association)	Chris House (National Trust & PWDRA committee)
Mr Fred Dale (Auditor)	Mrs Marian Smith (Gazette Editor)

About 80 other Members were present

APOLOGIES:

Mr Jo Johnson MP	Mr Gareth Bacon GLA
Cllr Simon Fawthrop	Mr Ted Fenwick (Crofton RA)
Mr Dave Hignett (Network Rail)	Ms Laura Heath (Network Rail)
Ms Sian Spencer-Little (PRUH Children's Ward)	Mr Sam Pettman (National Trust Ranger)
Mrs Jenny Hawke (PW Library)	Mr Kieron Jarrold (advertising manager)
Mrs Joanne Cummins (committee member)	Mrs Elizabeth Strachan (committee member)
Mr Alex Woodman (committee member)	Mrs Christine Kiely (member)

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The Chairman opened proceedings by welcoming all our guests and members and said that our thoughts were with all those caught up in the terrorist incident in Westminster today. Unfortunately our local MP Jo Johnson was involved in the lock-down and committee member, Alex Woodman, who was a policeman, was on duty there. Other 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 Barber proposed that they should be adopted, Mr Stevens 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 reported that Alex Woodman had joined the committee during the year to take over Traffic and Parking. He thanked all the Associates without whom the Association could not function – and especially Mrs Marian Smith who had

done a sterling job in taking on editorship of the Gazette – and he commended his Report to the meeting. Mr Webb proposed that the Annual Report should be adopted, Mr Marrable 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 2016 as published in the March Gazette on page 3. The accounts were in a healthy position and in view of the surplus Mrs Radford saw no reason to increase the subscription this year. She proposed that it should remain at £4 per annum with an increase in the postal subscription to £11.50 in view of the continual increase in the price of postage. There being no questions Mrs Radford commended the accounts to the meeting; Mr Stevens proposed that they should be adopted, Mr Barber 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. Mrs Stevens seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

4. ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chairman stated that under the amended constitution the committee was re-elected every three years and this year the whole committee was up for re-election. Proposers and seconders having been published in the March Gazette on page 2, the officers were re-elected en bloc: John Powell as Chairman, Chris Harris as Vice-Chairman, Susan Radford as Treasurer and Janet Guntrip as Secretary. The rest of the committee, as proposed and seconded in the March Gazette, were then elected en bloc: Phil Birch, Matt Clark, Joanne Cummins, Chris House, Derek Marrable, Rane Ranasinghe, Andrea Stevens, Elizabeth Strachan and Alex Woodman. Mr Powell thanked the committee for their help and support.

5. GUEST SPEAKER

Laura Heath from Network Rail, who was to have spoken about step-free access to the station, had given her apologies, as had Dave Hignett, but Mr Harris had had a meeting with the latter on 2nd March to talk through their proposals. He had been given plans and documents which were posted on the display boards. Funding had been authorised over a year ago and for a time it had been in doubt, but Network Rail was still prepared to press ahead with their plans although they would not be implemented before 2019-20. The intention was to install a lift from the car park area to the footbridge next to the ticket office; originally they had intended to install it in Station Square but there was a high-voltage cable in situ which prevented them from doing so. This would reduce the size of the ticket office area and they would add an accessible toilet on the bridge. There would also be a lift opposite the staircase to platforms 3 & 4 and 1 & 2 with extensions to the platforms.

Mr Venn of Manor Way asked why they could not form an additional platform accessed directly from the car park, thus serving both sides of southbound trains on calling at platform 4. Mr Harris could not answer this other than to say that there were no doubt very good operational reasons not to do so. Members were welcome to view the plans on the display boards.

Mrs Stevens asked for an update on the pedestrian bridge in Little Thrift. Mr Harris explained that they had attempted to replace the bridge between Little Thrift and Jubilee Park which was known as the Salthouse Bridge at the end of February. The work should have been finished by 5th March which was the end of the block possession, but they had run into unexplained problems. The old bridge had been removed, but the new one had not been installed as they had run out of time. Unfortunately block possessions took a long time to organise as rail services had to be diverted and also provision had to be made for rail replacement buses. This would seriously inconvenience the public throughout Kent and the coast. The next block possession was not scheduled until November. Mr Harris had been in contact with Network Rail to see if there was any way they could bring the date forward. They appreciated the public's disappointment and were prepared to look into it, but Mr Harris said that it was unlikely to happen as a relatively small pedestrian bridge would not be regarded by Network Rail as a high priority. Mr Venn said that the new bridge had solid sides and from a security point of view would make people vulnerable as they

could not be easily seen. He suggested that it would not be difficult to replace the solid sides with mesh and could be done while the bridge was not in situ. However, Mr Harris explained that there were regulations in the design of these bridges; he had put this suggestion to them but they had not given him an answer. In Mr Venn's opinion the proposed bridge was 'a backward step', but Mr Harris said that the bridge was already manufactured and any changes were probably unlikely.

6. NOTICES

May Fayre Mrs Paula Ferguson of Petts Wood Business Association stated that the Memorial Hall had been unable to get a committee together this year to organise the May Fayre and PWBA had stepped in. She was pleased to say that the event would go ahead as usual, starting with the parade at 11 o'clock and the crowning of the May Queen at 12 noon, followed by maypole dancing. There would be the usual fairground rides, stalls and activities in the Memorial Hall and she urged members to support the occasion.

Petts Wood Library Jenny Hawke from Petts Wood Library had given her apologies for this evening, but she asked the Association to announce that there was to be a Grand Presentation of a new mural at the Library by the Mayor of Bromley this Saturday, 25th March at 11am. The mural had been created by pupils from Crofton Junior School with the help of illustrator Loretta Schauer and there was a poster on the display boards.

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.

Cllr Doug Auld Our ward councillors had received complaints about cars parked on pavement forecourts in Queensway and Station Square. This had gone on for a long time but the number of cars parked on forecourts by mounting the pavement was becoming unacceptable. The Council had spoken to the shopkeepers about this and had even installed bollards to deter motorists. Failure to clean the streets was another complaint and this was a service that the Council contracted out. The system had failed and weeds and leaves remained in the gutters for weeks on end. The councillors had tackled this problem and it had taken two or three weeks to sort out, but Cllr Auld hoped that they would now maintain the schedules as they had arranged them. Cllr Auld asked members to let him know if there were still any problems.

The Local Development Plan was last updated in 2006 – 11 years ago, and changes were being discussed which would go to central government for approval. The amended UDP should then be up and running by the end of this year or the beginning of next year.

The Council was under constant pressure from central government and from the Mayor of London to build more houses. As a result developments had been allowed which were not the wishes of local residents. The ward councillors resisted as many of these unsuitable developments as they could, but many were overturned by the government-appointed planning inspectors on appeal.

On a wider matter shopkeepers in Bromley Town Centre complained that some market stalls at the pedestrianised end of the high street were obscuring their shops and taking away their trade, but the Council had plans to make Market Square the main focal point for the market.

Cllr Tony Owen Cllr Owen congratulated Andrea Stevens on the excellent job she was doing for the Association on planning matters. She had attended a licensing hearing for the former Best 'N Express, now called Great Grapes, who had applied to extend their hours until 3 or 4 in the morning. This had been refused and they had still attempted to get an extension until midnight, but the Council had refused any extension beyond 11pm. This was in line with other premises in the shopping area, except for Morrisons who were granted an extension to midnight at Christmas time.

The Council was to extend the double yellow lines at the end of Lakeswood Road to ensure better sight lines. It was not clear whether the building work at 182 Petts Wood Road (formerly Saints & Sinners) needed planning permission or not. Some forecourts were owned by the shopkeepers, some were not, and

Highways might give more protection than planning in this case. There was concern about developers' attempts to buy up land, like at 94 Towncourt Lane, to build blocks of flats which are not a feature of Petts Wood. They were seeking pre-application advice from the Council and then using that as a lever to try and get permission for flats. Another ploy was to buy up properties and allow them to go to rack and ruin, in an attempt to get the Council to relax their rules. Our councillors were remaining vigilant and doing their best to thwart these plans.

Planning changes Mrs Tomlinson of Petts Wood Road said that she felt that the Council's way of advising residents of changes to conservation area rules were strange. Notices had been fixed to trees and lamp posts in the area to advise that alterations to houses could no longer be done under Permitted Development, but required a planning application. Mrs Stevens, in Cllr Fawthrop's absence, explained that the majority of Petts Wood East had in 1994 been designated an Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC), not a conservation area. The intention was to protect the area from undesirable development and to ensure that alterations were in keeping with the surrounding area. The notices that had been seen related to a change within the Petts Wood ASRC. Article 4 Directions were a means to protect the garden suburb quality of an area which was open and spacious. There were too many attempts to remove low boundary walls and replace them with solid brick or railings and entry gates, and to build extensions right up to the side boundaries. These changes would be publicised in the Gazette later this year. Mrs Stevens was passionate about keeping the garden suburb feel to Petts Wood and she abhorred the tendency to pave over front gardens. She stated that official notices relating to changes in an area were also published in the local newspaper, as well as being available via the Bromley Council website. Mrs Tomlinson reiterated her concern about the way in which the Council had informed residents of these changes.

Paving stones Mr Earl of Petts Wood Road asked what could be done to improve the state of the pavements in Petts Wood. He had recently had a fall outside his house because he had tripped on uneven paving stones. Cllr Auld said that plenty could be done if our ward councillors were advised of any such hazards. He would speak to Mr Earl after the meeting and set the wheels in motion. Cllr Owen suggested going online to www.fixmystreet.com and making a report which would be logged and acknowledged. The Council would then ensure that the problem was fixed and he assured the meeting that this was the quickest way to get something done. He had tried to impress upon the Council that it would be cheaper to fix the problem than to pay out compensation which amounted to £250,000 last year. Mrs Radford said that she had reported a broken paving stone outside her house and it had been fixed within a couple of days.

Contractors As the Council contracted out so much of the work that needed doing in the borough, Mrs Secular of Hollingworth Road wanted to know who was responsible when things went wrong. Cllr Owen said that the contractor was working on behalf of the Council so both were to blame, but it was up to the Council to ensure that the contractors were carrying out their obligations. However, they still needed residents to let them know when things went wrong so that they could do something about it. The Council was a commissioning authority and everything was being market-tested. Cllr Owen urged residents to use the website rather than the telephone to report problems and demand answers.

Policing Inspector Byfield said that he took pride in heading up his Safer Neighbourhood team. Each ward had one PC and one PCSO but the Mayor of London who was in charge of policing was hoping that there would be two police officers and a PCSO in each ward by December 2017. Their job was to be seen out and about in the area and to communicate with the public in order to find out what was going on. They would also give advice on how residents should protect themselves and provide support when they fell victim to scams. Insp Byfield assured the meeting that most crime was perpetrated by a minority of people and the police often knew these people and would do their best to protect the public from them. The team was making changes to help the public and would use every resource to deal with the matters which affected them: graffiti, littering, domestic problems, aggressive dogs, etc. He urged people to get involved and to look out for each other. Residents complained of anti-social behaviour involving motor cycles which was totally illegal. The police were not allowed to chase them in case of accidents, but the public must still let them know about such incidents as they were getting away with it. One power the police had was to tackle the families and confiscate the bikes. Inspector Byfield invited questions.

Mr Venn wanted to know what the police could do about dog fouling, but this was for the Council to deal with as there were no receptacles to dispose of the waste and people dropped it wherever they happened to be. A gentleman asked whether the police still dealt with lost property. PC Taj Mahill said that if the property was something of real value like a passport, then they would deal with it but in general it was no longer a priority. A resident of Franks Wood Avenue was concerned about speeding and suggested there should be more speed traps. Insp Byfield said that the police took courses on speed gun training, but they were used mainly on roads where there had been deaths or serious accidents. Speed calming measures were another way to tackle the problem, but they were the responsibility of the Council and were not universally popular.

Music in Hospitals Sian Spencer-Little, Specialised Play and Activity Practitioner in Paediatrics at the PRUH, had given her apologies for tonight but had sent a short statement which the Chairman read out. She very much wanted to thank the committee and members for supporting Music in Hospitals for so many years. Over the last year they had welcomed a range of musicians and groups to the Children's Ward at the PRUH: a 3-piece string group, a solo singer who brought Disney to life, a classical guitarist who softly played for a 4-week-old baby and a group called City Bells who brought Christmas to the ward in fancy dress. The impact of music and rhythm could be measured by the way children, young people and their families reacted, as well as the doctors and nurses, and had a marked effect on their emotional well-being and mental health as well as their recovery.

Sports column Mr Powell said that he had started a sport column in the Gazette during the last year and he thanked those that had contributed items to that. He would like to hear some success stories of individual sports people or groups who have achieved something in their sport and would be grateful if members would send such stories to the Gazette.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked guests and members for attending the meeting and said he was very grateful to everyone for coming along in spite of the events of the day. He mentioned that copies of *A History of Petts Wood* were available for sale and invited everyone to enjoy a glass of wine and the refreshments which had been supplied by Jean Wood and Richenda Tadman. The formal business of the meeting closed at 9.20 pm.