

Minutes of the 79th Eastcote Park Estate AGM held on 3rd of May 2017

Chairman Gerry Edwards started the meeting at 7:30 by welcoming all those present. He apologised for the small room but it was all that was available – the Stables have a booking every evening.

Apologies were received from Richard Maude, Ash Dir and Nick Dennis.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

Having been circulated on the website and no objections being raised these were accepted without a vote.

Matters Arising

The Council have responded to our complaints about the state of the pavements and are in the process of relaying those in Rodney Gardens. The plan is to do one road per year. Pavement parking is the major cause of the damage and this is an ongoing issue.

One more tree has been planted but there are unlikely to be any more.

The controversy over the garden competition seems to have abated and it will continue under the new format agreed last time. The Christmas lights competition will continue as before.

Chairman's Report

The estate generally is looking good with the Glen roundabout being particularly noteworthy. The main roundabout has also benefited from the bulb planting. The Council sweeper seems especially attentive and his efforts are appreciated. New lamp posts are being installed throughout the estate and these will be fitted with LED lights. Pavement parking is being addressed by the Council if it is reported to them – a call to parking control at 01895 271418 will bring a prompt response.

The overgrown garden that the Council cleared last year is now overgrown again. It seems the owner is living in the US and the house is empty (it has even been broken into). The Council will take action if neighbours who are directly affected report it to them.

The Council are maintaining the Eastcote House Gardens well and, although the removal of the wild laurel has left some empty patches, the overall effect is most satisfactory. The cafe is prospering although they are having difficulty getting and retaining staff.

The archaeological dig is being resumed at the end of June for a month, and on Friday 23rd June at 7:00pm Les Dixon will give a talk on the finds to date.

The Case is Altered is due to reopen after refurbishment on 27th May. The new owners have been prevailed upon not to change the name.

A new pedestrian crossing that has been asked for on Field End Road (near St Thomas Moore) has apparently been approved, though the exact location is not known at the moment.

Social Events

The Easter Egg hunt went well and broke even.

There is sufficient support for a commemorative dinner and so Margaret and Mark will go ahead with arranging it. Work so far on identifying venues has identified The Barn Hotel in Ruislip and the Northwood Hills Golf Club as possibilities. Of these the Barn offers the best choice of dates and willingness to accommodate our requirements so after discussion it was decided that we should proceed accordingly. After further discussion it was decided that a Saturday evening in October would be acceptable to the greatest number of people. The price quoted was £35 per head.

It was further decided that the dinner would replace the quiz for this year.

Treasurer's Report

Starting with welfare donations; £631.85 donations were collected. Excluding the years when we have also raised money at our summer event, the amount we collected is, to the penny, the same as our previous record in 2013. We donated just over £312 to each of our two charities in December (Friends of Grangewood School and The Acorn Youth Club). £11.00 of donations came in at the end of 2016 after payments were made. These donations will be added to the 2017 donations. We had added the £6.00 late donations in 2015 to the 2016 payment.

It is worth noting that we voted at the 2016 AGM to donate all of our welfare collections to the Acorn Youth Club for 2017. We advised the Friends of Grangewood School that they would be losing our donation for 2017. Their reply included the comment, in respect of the Acorn Youth club, that "They do an amazing job". After a short discussion it was agreed that the Association should continue to donate 100% of our welfare collection to the Acorn Youth Club in 2018.

Subscription remained at £3.00. They were raised from £2.50 in 2005. There is no proposal to increase. Membership was 232 (a very high 91% of the 254 homes on the estate). This was again due to hard work by our Road Stewards and residual collections by Chris Head in November/December. This gave an income of £696.00.

The major items of expenditure were:

- Public liability insurance of £246.38. This had been unchanged at £227.15 since 2011). The increase includes an increase in insurance premium tax. The committee could not arrange events without this insurance.
- The road stewards evening supper of £160.66. (2015 £159.84).

It is worth noting again that the road steward's evening supper is a gathering of road stewards and committee members as thanks for the time and the effort they give during the year.

We had a one off purchase of £34.95 for some glasses which were used at the 2016 supper but will be available for other meetings events etc in the future and so have been costed into the sundry line.

We now have 16 road stewards and 10 committee members and two auditors who are invited to the event. If anyone is interested in being a road steward do let a committee member know.

Events showed a loss of £17.72 all in relation to the autumn quiz night. This event was supported by a profit on the raffle of £71.28. It is worth saying that, whilst we try not to lose too much money on events, they are for community benefit not for profit.

Overall 2016 was another good year in financial terms with a surplus for the year of £149.68 and a closing fund of £3,641.54. This provides us with a fund to be able to consider suggested projects for the benefit of the estate.

Thanks were expressed to Audrey Harrington and Arthur Wilson who have audited the accounts again.

Thanks were expressed to Bennett Holmes for sponsoring the newsletter which saves a considerable amount of money.

A proposal was made that we use some of the money we have to produce a new Estate video. It was agreed to discuss this at the next Committee meeting. In the meantime it was agreed that Mark and Peter would investigate transferring the old one from VHS to DVD.

Neighbourhood Watch

Chris reported that there had been break-ins at an empty house in St Lawrence Drive and at a house in Roberts Close where a patio door was smashed in. Car crime and especially van crime is a big and increasing problem.

Chris also warned about ex-cons selling small household items door to door – so called Nottingham Knockers. They are scouting the area looking for potential houses to burgle and should be discouraged. If they turn abusive that is a criminal offence and should be reported to the police.

The Irish woman who comes around every so often offering to sharpen knives has been coming for many years and has never been a problem.

Dawn added that any CCTV footage of suspicious characters should be forwarded to the police as it helps build up a picture and can be used to identify (or eliminate) suspects.

Election of Committee and Auditors

Both Committee and Auditors were re-elected without change – nem con.

Any Other Business

There was some discussion of the problems caused by parking particularly for events in the park. Gerry stated that events held in Eastcote House Gardens are under the control of the Council and it is their responsibility to control parking. If there is an issue it is up to residents to contact parking control at 01895 271418.

Parking at the Entrance to St Lawrence Drive (it is not a “T” junction therefore parking is not prohibited) and Pamela Gardens is a perennial problem. The Council’s only offered solution is yellow lines but these are an abomination to a significant proportion of the residents.

Mark raised the possibility of using the newsletter to publicise minor events. The Committee will consider this.