

VINTERS PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at the Vinters Park Community Centre on 21st April, 1993.

The meeting was attended by 31 residents. Apologies for absence were received from Nick Butland, Cllr. Sue Dishman, Miss Harris, Noreen Latham, Ernie Mercer, Mr. Newman, Tracey Robinson, Andrew Rowe, M.P., Cllr. Margaret Shaw and Mrs. S. Suter.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

1. After welcoming the members, the Chairman stated that in order to keep residents informed and save time at this meeting, the summons and agenda had been included in The Parkranger which had been delivered to individual properties. The newsletter also contained his own report on the Association's activities during the past year, together with reports from the Bookings Manager, the Finance Manager and the Borough Council's Civic Warden. He said that among the various matters which had been under constant review involving liaison with the County and Borough Councils, several were interrelated; these included the practical effects of the works on Bearsted Road, vehicular traffic using the estate roads, footpaths and road safety.

MINUTES

2. The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were approved as a correct record.

ROAD CHANGES

3. The Chairman spoke about the alterations to the Bearsted Road junctions with Hampton Road and Sittingbourne Road. He stated that the Association's views had been made known at meetings with representatives of the County Council, with particular emphasis on the location of pedestrian crossings, the detailed course of the roads and the likely effect of the changes on through traffic using the estate roads. He detailed the representations made to the County Council and the Maidstone Borough Council, including a request that the gap in the central reservation at the Hampton Road junction should not be closed permanently, but that a suitable system of traffic lights be installed to facilitate exit from the estate and allow pedestrians to cross Bearsted Road in safety. He stated that despite the lack of success in these representations so far, the Association had continued to press the matter.
4. One proposal had been for a pelican crossing for the use of pedestrians. The Association's view had been reiterated on retaining the gap and installing traffic lights to overcome problems of emerging traffic from Hampton Road into the stream of traffic approaching from the right, with which it appeared that buses experienced particular difficulty. The alternative to unwelcome traffic lights would be a roundabout, but it appeared that the County Council was against an additional roundabout in the short length of road between those at the crematorium and the Chiltern Hundreds. After discussion, it was resolved that the proposal for pedestrian-operated lights be opposed, and that the County Council be urged to provide a suitable traffic light system to control vehicular traffic and pedestrians, leaving the gap open in the central reservation.

TRAFFIC CALMING

5. The Chairman referred to the need to curb the speed of traffic using the estate roads in the interests of safety, and enumerated the available options. These included the solution proposed by the Borough Council to close the end of Hampton Road completely, and the more established measures to slow traffic, i.e., the provision of ramps and/or road narrowing. He stated that the relative costs of these measures had been considered, that funding was limited, but that agreement had been reached that Vinters Park should be included in studies of possible areas for traffic calming. A general discussion followed on the relative merits of the different types of traffic calming measures; road narrowing appeared preferable to either ramps or partially closing Hampton Road. Reference was made to the excessive noise of speeding vehicles.
6. David Evans proposed a motion that "This meeting instructs the Executive Committee of this Association to oppose all moves towards so-called 'traffic calming' measures on the roads of the Vinters Park estate, but to encourage pedestrians to use the pathways provided for their greater safety". He stated his reasons for this proposal, which included the likelihood of increased noise from vehicles changing gear to negotiate obstacles and then accelerating away, thus causing increased atmospheric pollution from exhaust emissions. In his view, calming would not yield any particular advantages and would do little to reduce danger to pedestrians using the roads. Comment was made on the disadvantages of traditional calming measures to public service and emergency services vehicles. After discussion, it was resolved that the motion be carried. The Chairman undertook to write to the Borough Council, expressing the wish that funds provisionally set aside for traffic calming measures should be diverted to improving the footpath system.

FOOTPATHS

7. The Chairman reported that the Association had submitted limited proposals to the Borough Council to alleviate some of the present shortcomings in the footpath system, and was awaiting news of the funding available for such purposes. Comment was made about cyclists riding along footpaths; it was accepted that little could be done to prevent this practice unless the culprits could be caught. It was apparent that footpaths do not always link up together, thus causing pedestrians to use the roads at times. Consideration was given to the possibility of signposting footpaths, and the possible publication of a footpath map.

PARKING

8. The Chairman referred again to the problem caused by commuters parking during the day, especially on roads in the southern part of the estate. He said it was agreed that neighbourhood parking schemes could alleviate the problem, but commuters still had to park somewhere; in this connection, the Association would support a park and ride scheme based at Notcutts. P.C. Gedge stated that existing park and ride schemes appeared to be well used.
9. The County Council appeared to be generally opposed to residents' parking schemes, although it was believed that the Borough Council would consider limiting parking in Claremont Road, possibly by the introduction of yellow lines; it was acknowledged, however, that measures of this nature could equally inconvenience residents.
10. The Chairman stated that the Association would continue its contacts with the County and Borough Councils on traffic matters generally.

LITTER

11. The Chairman spoke of the prompt action taken by the Borough Council to remove litter when reported. He quoted from the Civic Warden's report, which indicated that the depositing of litter appeared to stem from a lack of self-discipline particularly among the younger members of the community.
12. Comment was made about the amount of litter dropped by children on the shopping area on the estate, and that dropping litter constituted a civil offence. The Chairman undertook to write to the Head of the school concerned.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Subways and Road Signs

13. The Chairman reported that the Borough Council had acted promptly to remedy the deteriorating condition of subways on the estate, and more recently had been asked to replace damaged and missing road signs.

Fences and Hedges

14. The Chairman spoke of action taken with the Education Department of the County Council to ensure the repair and maintenance of the fence and hedge bordering the path from the southern end of the estate to Vinters Boys' School.

Lighting

15. The Chairman stated that the Association had requested an improvement in lighting the footpath from the back of Emsworth Grove to the Stakis Hotel, but that so far little appeared to have happened on this matter.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

16. The following members were elected to the posts indicated:-

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|---------------------|-----------------|
| Chairman | Neil Sinclair |
| Hon. Secretary | Keith Rogers |
| Executive Committee | Alan Britchford |
| | Val Elton |
| | Alec Langford |
| | Noreen Latham |
| | Tracy Robinson |
| | Jackie Young |

APPOINTMENT OF MANAGERS

17. The Chairman reported that at the first meeting of the Executive Committee following last year's Annual General Meeting, the following managers were confirmed in their existing capacities:-

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|------------------|-------------------|
| Finance Manager | David Evans |
| Bookings Manager | Margaret Stubbins |
| Premises Manager | Ernie Mercer |

APPOINTMENT OF HON. AUDITOR

18. It was resolved that John Whibley be retained as Hon. Auditor for the coming year, and that an honorarium of £30.00 be paid for his services in respect thereof.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Statement of Accounts

19. The Finance Manager drew attention to the annual statement of income and expenditure which had been circulated at the meeting, and summarised the report circulated in Parkranger indicating *inter alia* that, during the year under review, income had exceeded expenditure by £2,174.22; he stated that much of that sum would be required to finance the replacement of the front doors and locks at the Community Centre.

Annual Subscription

20. On a motion proposed by the Finance Manager, it was resolved that the annual subscription to the Association should be waived for the coming year.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Additional Post-box

21. A question was raised as to the practicability of installing a post-box on the Woodlands area. The Chairman undertook to raise the matter with the postal authorities.

Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries


22. Keith Rogers drew attention to proposed changes in the boundaries of Parliamentary Constituencies. He stated that one proposal was that Boxley Parish should be included in the Faversham Constituency, but that it might be possible to retain Boxley in the Maidstone Constituency in exchange for other parishes in the eastern part of the area. He stated that the Maidstone Borough Council had objected to the use of the name "Faversham" to denote the proposed Constituency, It was resolved (i) to express concern at the geographical extent of the proposed Faversham Constituency and (ii) to press for the use of the name "Mid Kent and Faversham" for the proposed Faversham Constituency.

Emergency Telephone

23. In reply to a question about the possible provision of a telephone in the Centre for emergency use, the Chairman pointed out that there was a public telephone opposite the Centre; a coin-operated telephone installed for general use in the Centre could be rendered inoperative by vandalism, but the Association would consider sympathetically a request for the installation of apparatus with limited facilities for use in an emergency.

CLOSING

24. In closing the meeting, the Chairman expressed his thanks to the members of the Executive Committee for their support during the past year, and his best wishes for the future.


CHAIRMAN 11.5.92 DATE