

BOOKINGS MANAGER'S REPORT

Two Brownie packs, Guides, Playgroup, Mother and Toddler Group, WI, Child Health Clinic, Beverley Bridge Club, Computer Club, Fitness Firm (Keep Fit), Karen's Aerobics, Invicta WI Choir, Children's Drama Club, French Club for children, Slimming World, Tai-Chi (Meditation to music) and Vinters Christian Community.

This is a list of the organisations which meet regularly at the Vinters Park Community Centre. In the near future we hope to accommodate two more groups and an osteopath if she can gain enough interest from members of the public.

As you can see from the list we accommodate quite a number of organisations and there is not much space left at the Centre on a regular basis. If your child is having a Birthday party why not book the Centre on a Saturday afternoon or evening.

The cost is very reasonable and you will not have to spend hours cleaning the house afterwards, although we do like the hall to be left in good order.

We can still accommodate people in the main hall on a Wednesday evening (with the exception of the first Wednesday of each month). The small hall will accommodate about 30 people comfortably and is ideal for use as a committee room. If you are interested please give me a ring on the 01622-763110.

If you are interested in joining any of the groups mentioned you can telephone me and I will let you have the contact name and number.

Margaret Stubbins - Bookings Manager.

FINANCE MANAGER'S REPORT

The accounts will be presented formally at the AGM and copies will be available at the meeting.

We started the year with a modest balance of £3,540 and, as I predicted in my report last year, we managed to achieve a surplus, albeit of only £102 for the year. This was because we spent £3,225 on construction of the boundary walls bordering our grassed area, so as to make it a safer place for the playgroup and the toddler group children to play.

Last year I stated that it had been necessary to increase charges by 10%, after having kept them at the same level for some years, and this undoubtedly helped us to cover the cost of the walls.

Our electricity costs were down by about £140 for the year, probably because users had been energy-minded, and we managed to reduce our insurance premiums by nearly £200 without any loss of necessary cover.

Hire income rose slightly because of an increase in certain regular bookings but our fees to the

Performing Rights Society also went up by £40 because we are liable to pay a fee for every dancing, keep-fit and aerobics class as well as for variety shows and public discos.

We hope to maintain our present level of income so that we can continue to carry out improvement and major maintenance works that will become necessary in each year. In the last month or so we have replaced the windows on the Hampton Road side with upvc double-glazed security units and we hope to replace the others in the common room when we have built up sufficient funds again.

I shall be happy to answer any questions on the accounts at the AGM.

John Stubbins - Finance Manager



PARK RANGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
VINTERS PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
SPRING 1995

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All residents of Vinters Park and Woodlands Estates are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Vinters Park Residents' Association, to be held in the Community Centre on Wednesday 24th May 1995, starting at 8.15pm. Refreshments will be served from 8pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM
3. Matters arising therefrom
4. Chairman's Report
5. Presentation of Accounts
6. Election of Officers and Executive Committee members
7. Appointment of Hon. Auditor
8. Consideration of a motion to waive the annual subscription
9. A talk on "Activities for Young People" by Mr. Adam Geerie of the Cultural and Arts Department of Maidstone Borough Council
10. A presentation on "This Year's Policing Methods in Kent" by a Chief Inspector David King of Kent County Constabulary
11. Consideration of the following motion: "That this AGM of the Vinters Park Residents' Association requests the Executive Committee to investigate the Feasibility of inviting a private security firm to patrol the area covered by the Vinters and Woodlands estates with a view to reducing vandalism, and the harassment of people using the Community Centre, so giving greater peace of mind to the residents". Having received this motion, the Executive Committee hopes that members will take the opportunity following its consideration to put forward constructive proposals to help to deal with the problems referred to above.
12. Any Other Business

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The committee have decided that it is worthwhile to avoid lengthy reports at the AGM and in consequence I now present you with the Chairmans report to the Annual General Meeting.

It seems such a short time since my last report, but a whole year has in fact passed. It is a year in which many of us will have felt we are learning about things by the mushroom technique -- "kept in the dark and add a shovel load of manure from time to time."

I would love to feel that our lives have improved but regrettably we are all still subject to the same pressures, only too often with some extra added ones.

Last years AGM was enlivened by an enthusiastic discussion with representatives of the police, discussing "law and order" and "community policing" followed by a presentation from Donal McGroary upon work being done at the Valley Park.

LAW & ORDER

Regrettably the "youth problem" has continued, with complaints from the Snowdon Parade area and the Community Centre. The culmination of this was the attempted destruction of builders equipment at the Community Centre and the destruction by fire of the kitchens at Eastborough school. Both of these events had not been "out of the blue" but part of a series of acts of mindless vandalism that had regrettably been disregarded until the extent of the damage became too great for the police to ignore.

Other incidents of nuisance were also reported throughout the area, events that had rarely occurred in the area before the removal of local community policing.

The committee were interested to note that in response to one incident a resident had sent a fax to the Chief Constable, producing a response within a few hours and a personal visit by a senior police officer! This may well be a pointer to the sort of action that residents should be prepared to take to ensure that this area is not ignored, or assessed as having a "low priority"

These events can easily be laid at the feet of "youth" in general, but to the best of my knowledge they are result of a very small number of "kids" setting out to cause trouble. The committee have felt that we should again invite the police to address the meeting but we are also keen to invite youth workers, the social services etc. to attend, to try and develop constructive, positive ideas for solving this problem, rather than the negative and authoritarian views that many of us would be tempted to apply. But at the end of the day the people who will make any of the ideas that may result work are those who live here, not just the parents, but everyone. This after all is about the future and we are all involved in that!

ROADS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

For just a short time, after the M20 link road had been "completed" I felt that things were getting better --

We have all had our year complicated by further work to the Sittingbourne Road and by the changes in parking restrictions. The committee

were very concerned to hear that the work on the Sittingbourne Road had been suspended due to financial restrictions.

All of us were affected by the new parking restrictions on the lower half of the estate, some of us to the extent of several pounds in parking fines. It has to be said that the Committee did support, with some reservations, these plans, however it is obvious that very few of us anticipated the manner in which they would be enforced or their likely effect upon residents. Personally I do not believe that the council were ever going to get it right for everyone and indeed the traffic has just been moved a few yards further up the estate. Somehow I feel that it has escaped the council's attention that the only unrestricted free parking area on this side of Maidstone, close to the M20, is Vinters Park. I do not believe we will ever see an end to this problem until a good "Park and Ride" scheme is provided nearby. However the most suitable site is owned by the Department of Transport and, apparently, they refuse to release it!

Mr Elton has continued, acting as an individual, to pursue matters concerning Rights of Way and footpaths in the surrounding area, and also the replanting of trees to screen the estate from the new roads.

The committee has continued, throughout the year, to badger the council about the condition of the underpasses. These calls have resulted in their being cleaned on several occasions. Unfortunately the graffiti are soon restored. The Committee would be pleased to see local talent painting these underpasses hopefully encouraging a greater sense of pride, in local people, in their surroundings.

The Committee were pleased to note that dog fouling restrictions now apply to all public areas and not just those adjacent to roads. We would be delighted to hear from interested residents concerning the effectiveness of these new restrictions.

The Committee have also drawn to the Council's attention, periodically, the lack of effectiveness of their verge mowing programme and have also drawn their attention to obstruction of footpaths by overhanging trees.

The recent appearance of large piles of soil in the

area of Marston Drive has also been noted and enquiries made. Apparently they are there to level out some of the dips in the play areas. Regrettably they would appear to have started spreading themselves across the surrounding footpaths, to everyone's irritation. It is hoped that they will shortly be removed, the Association have commented on the likely effectiveness of this action.

Play areas have also recently been receiving our attention. We have monitored the improvements and have drawn the councils attention to certain deficiencies in their design. It would appear that the Bedgebury Close play area will shortly possess improved toddlers play equipment and that the Upper Fullingpits Wood area will shortly have all its equipment removed. As this area will almost certainly be used for recreational purposes by local youth the committee would like to see appropriate modifications to the area to ensure it is used safely. As local residents might be concerned at such a development we would appreciate some comments.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

Many of you will be aware of the walls that have recently been constructed at the Community Centre. This is part of our efforts to both improve the Centre and to reduce maintenance costs. I am sure that you will all agree that it has been a worthwhile addition.

Following their damage, probably by airgun pellets, it has been decided to completely replace all the main windows and frames in the Centre. When measured up against the cost of repainting and repair to rotten frames this is an investment that should pay for itself within a few years.

The only other major item of planned expenditure will be the future replacement of light fittings, a matter for the slightly longer term.

One or two users have suggested that the Association should purchase a staging system. This would double as tables and so would not present major storage problems. This would not be a cheap item and therefore we would require support from any groups that may wish to see this facility at the Community Centre. The WI, certainly, would consider carrying out some fund raising activities. We would be very pleased to

hear from anyone who would find this addition valuable and would welcome any promises of support in its purchase.

We have had, at times, some interesting discussions with the council, about the



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Entertainments Licence. We were therefore slightly upset to hear that we require an annual Electrical Certificate for the licence to be renewed. Apparently there is no way for the council to differentiate between buildings forty or fifty years old and those recently built.

This year will see the departure of John Stubbins, as Finance Manager, and Ernie Mercer, as Premises Manager. Both of these gentlemen have provided invaluable service to the Association and their loss will be sorely felt. Fortunately Margaret Stubbins continues as Bookings Manager and the two above mentioned gentlemen will be available to provide advice. We already have a replacement for John but need a Premises Manager. The task normally involves only a few hours work a month and is mainly of a practical nature. The post does attract payment and further details are available from me.

CONCLUSION

Finally I am grateful to the committee for their support during this past year. We do however need some new blood on the Committee and would like nominations from concerned residents. The work is not onerous and will normally only involve your expressing your opinions at our monthly meetings.

I trust that you have found this report of interest and I will be pleased to answer questions on it and related matters at the AGM.

Neil Sinclair
Chairman