

VINTERS PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION
HELD AT VINTERS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE ON 15 MAY 1996.

At the start of the meeting the Chairman welcomed Councillors Mrs. M. Shaw and P. Sellar, Mr. J.R. Featherstone representing County Councillor Mrs. M. Featherstone, Mrs. M.A. Waight, Head Teacher of the Mid-Kent School for Girls, Mr. G. Russell, Highways Manager of the Highways Management Unit run by the K.C.C. as well as the speaker, Chief Inspector Harry Dunk accompanied by the new Community Policeman, Roger Boorman.

Apologies were received from Andrew Rowe M.P., County Councillor Mrs. M. Featherstone, Mr. J. Weller on behalf of Boxley Parish Council, Mr. M. Spalding of Maidstone and District, Mrs. C. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. M. Dring, Mr. and Mrs. V. Elton, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Stubbins. 41 residents and 8 guests were recorded as being present.

1. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25 May 1995 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to Mrs. M.A. Waight's name being corrected in the second paragraph on page 1 and the word "Board" in line 4 of Minute 1. being amended to read "Howard". The Chairman said that most of the matters arising from the Minutes would come up later in the meeting. He did mention, however, that although some work had been done on investigating the possibility of initiating work with young people, it had been found that the Association simply did not have either the financial or manpower resources which would be required.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

The Chairman drew attention to his Report, which together with the Notice of Meeting and Agenda had been included in the recent issue of "The Park Ranger", which had been delivered to individual properties throughout the estate, a copy of which is inserted in the Minute Book and forms part of these Minutes. Points arising were dealt with under subsequent items.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT.

The Finance Manager referred to the Profit and Loss Account from February 1995 to January 1996 and the Balance Sheet for the year to 31 January 1996, copies of which were circulated at the meeting. The Accounts were currently in the process of being audited, although this was no longer a requirement of the Charity Commissioners.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

The following members were duly elected to the posts indicated:

<u>Chairman</u>	Neil Sinclair
<u>Vice Chairman</u>	Noreen Latham
<u>Honorary Secretary</u>	Keith Rogers
<u>Executive Committee</u>	John Ashdown Alan Britchford Sue Fry Peter Lott

5. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY AUDITOR.

It was RESOLVED that John Stubbins be appointed as Honorary Auditor for the coming year and that an honorarium of £30.00 be paid for his services in this post.

6. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION.

It was RESOLVED, on the proposal of the Finance Manager, that the Annual Subscription be again waived for the coming year.

7. "DEVELOPMENTS IN POLICING METHODS IN KENT."

In introducing this subject Chief Inspector Harry Dunk referred to the limited resources now available to the Police which made it impossible to follow traditional methods in dealing with crime. As a large percentage of crimes were committed by a small number of offenders it made sense to concentrate on them. Different tactics were necessary based on intelligence led policing and gathering information which can be turned into evidence for the Courts. There was much use of informants and often the aim was to arrest people as they attempted to commit crimes.

In an endeavour to find what people wanted from the Police a survey was carried out to establish which crimes were regarded as the most serious and violence had been rated very much higher than burglary or criminal damage. So the plan was to aim at such offences. For nuisances affecting the quality of life arising from kids on the corner as typified in Vinters Park by the difficulties which had been experienced at Snowdon Parade, the aim was to direct the resources available under the new arrangements as required to particular areas.

The Community Policeman had a considerable role to play here. Our Community Policeman, Roger Boorman, had only been here a few weeks and was still learning the job, undergoing a course of tutoring. The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme could also do a lot to help as had been evidenced locally not long before. Chief Inspector King also referred to the attempts made by the Police to work with Youth Workers to find outlets for the youngsters' enthusiasm.

Chief Inspector Dunk reminded the meeting that while Vinters Park had 2½% of the population of the area it had only had 1% of the reported crime.

A number of questions from the floor were raised at this point, including the following which were dealt with as indicated:

The point was strongly made of the loss of local intelligence and links when Ian Gedge was moved to other duties. This was accepted, but the meeting was reminded that Roger Boorman would to an extent be taking over a similar role and Ian had only been able to spend two days a week on the estate under the old system. A lot of the local information across the area would now be coordinated into a network from which the names of repeating offenders could be obtained. One line of action would be to go direct to parents. Also there was a Bulletin Board available to Neighbourhood Watch plus a Vox Box giving information on incidents in the previous 24 hours which anyone can dial on 01622 608190 and quote Area No.31. The Liason Officer (P.C. Wright) for Neighbourhood Watch can be contacted on 01622 608173.

Much concern was expressed about speeding on the estate. There was not a great deal of support for the idea of traffic calming measures, but the cuts on Highways Budget would make any such action unlikely. While the restrictions on parking were generally accepted, it was pointed out that the removal of parked vehicles encouraged speeding. The extended use of speed cameras in the area sounded a better option.

It was suggested that the recent introduction of Closed Circuit Television in the Town Centre had driven crime out into Vinters Park, but Chief Inspector Dunk said that there was no evidence to support this as crime had dropped here in the previous eighteen months.

One complaint highlighted a number of separate incidents in one small area in a short time including breaking into a garage, theft and breaking into two cars. It was felt there was no effective policing on the ground to scare off the criminals.

The difficulties of nuisance being caused on private land was highlighted due to the Police having no authority to act. if it was a problem of noise the Environmental Health Authority might be able to assist.

A number of points were raised about the benefits of fitting an intruder alarm for a house. The Police do not now attend for such an alarm, unless a direct line to the Police is also fitted.

On the question of youngsters playing in a garage area, the Police could be called if damage was being done to property. It was suggested that such problems might be avoided by better design. Other residents commented on how intimidating it could be to be confronted by a group of youngsters, especially at night.

On one incident of a group of youngsters causing a problem to an Aerobics class at the Community Centre the Police were thanked for the way they attended and effectively dealt with the situation.

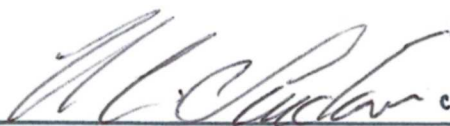
At the end of this debate Mr. Geoffrey Russell answered some questions on traffic/environmental matters and agreed to take up others. The Council was thanked for the way the grass had been cut during the year.

8. SNOWDON PARADE - FISH AND CHIP SHOP.

Concern was expressed about a rumour that permission was to be sought to extend the hours of opening of the Fish and Chip shop on Snowdon Parade. The Chairman agreed that the Executive Committee would investigate the position.

9. CLOSING.

The Chairman, in closing, thanked the speakers and everyone for their attendance at the meeting and the Executive Committee for all they had done for the Association during the past year.

 CHAIRMAN 14.5.97 DATE