

of the month.

On several occasions over the last few months the EC have drawn the attention of the BC to shrubs and trees overhanging and obstructing pathways. In many cases these have been the responsibility of the council it should be noted, however, that we are all responsible for the condition of our own property and if the council are forced to cut back trees belonging to a resident then they may well charge the resident for that service.

### CONCLUSION

My apologies for a longer report this year, but as in previous years it is intended to remove the need for a verbal report at the AGM. All residents will, of course have the opportunity to ask questions about the report and I would particularly draw your attention to the need for "feedback" about the proposals to improve the bus service.

I hope that this report shows that the Association continues to endeavour to represent the views of most people on the estate. It would help greatly if more residents were prepared to serve on the "Executive Committee". Generally it involves about 8 meetings each year attendance is not compulsory but you do have an opportunity to affect the development of the area that you live in!

Finally my thanks to the other committee members and the community centre managers for their work during the past year and for the interest shown by other members of the Association.

Neil Sinclair  
Chairman.

## Finance Report

The audited accounts for the year 1/2/95 to 31/1/96 will be presented formally at the AGM and copies will be available at the meeting.

We closed the year with £3,148.94 cash in the bank. A modest profit for the year of a few hundred pounds is predicted and this will be identified once the accounts have been audited and published for the AGM.

Last year our biggest single expense was £2,074 installing replacement double glazed windows to the Hampton Road elevation of the hall. This obviously depleted our reserves and other maintenance costs were kept to a minimum. We have however identified areas of the premises which are being investigated by the committee for further maintenance, repair or replacement. These are total or partial redecorations, renewal of light fittings, ageing boilers and central heating equipment and replacement of other windows not replaced as noted above.

With this in mind the committee is considering an increase in fees in order to build up our reserves to cover the items deemed necessary to keep our hall in a well maintained state of repair. The level of increase will be decided upon once the estimates and reports on the areas of concern are to hand. We will of course keep any increase to an absolute minimum.

During the year we managed to gain one new regular user with another recently placing a regular booking. The forecast booking incomes for the new year is showing a slightly better level than last year.

I will be happy to discuss any items regarding the accounts at the AGM.

Hugh Redington - Finance Manager

## GROUPS USING THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

|                             |   |                                     |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Woodlands Playgroup         | Monday, Tuesday,<br>Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | 9.00am - 3.30pm<br>9.00am - 12.30pm |
| Toddlers                    | Wednesdays                                      | 1.45pm - 4.00pm                     |
| Karate                      | Mondays   | 4.30pm - 6.00pm                     |
| Guides (Term Time only)     | Mondays   | 7.00pm - 8.30pm                     |
| Brownies (Term Time only)   | Wednesdays, Thursdays                           | 5.15pm - 7.15pm                     |
| Aerobics                    | Mondays   | 8.35pm - 9.35pm                     |
| Fitness Firm                | Tuesdays  | 6.45pm - 9.15pm                     |
| Slimming World              | Tuesdays  | 7.00pm - 9.30pm                     |
| Vinters WI                  | 1st Wednesday of month                          | 7.15pm - 10.00pm                    |
| Child Health Clinic         | Thursdays                                       | 1.30pm - 4.30pm                     |
| Computer Club               | Thursdays                                       | 7.30pm - 10.30pm                    |
| Bridge Club                 | Fridays   | 7.15pm - 11.00pm                    |
| Tai-Chi                     | Fridays   | 8.00pm - 9.30pm                     |
| Drama Group                 | Saturdays                                       | 9.00am - 12.00pm                    |
| Vinters Christian Community | Sundays   | 10.30am - 1.00pm                    |

The Hall has two rooms available for hire (Main Hall and Common Room) and is available for private hire at times other than those listed above. Enquiries: please contact Margaret Stubbins (Bookings Manager) on 01622 201192.

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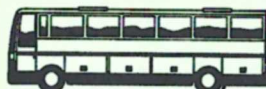


# PARK RANGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
VINTERS PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION  
SPRING 1996

## 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 15th May 1996, 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 presentation on "Developments in Policing Methods in Kent" by a Chief Inspector Harry Dunk of Kent County Constabulary
12. Any Other Business



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I have to admit to mixed feelings when I look ahead to the coming years as a resident of this area. The changes to the roads that surround us, the proposed developments to the land adjacent to the old A249, the Park and Ride, the introduction of a "parish constable" are but a few of the developments occurring in the very near future that will affect residents of the estate.

For example the developments adjacent to the old A249 may reduce the amount of traffic passing through and parking on the estate and provide a fast food facility that many residents would be eager to use, but equally they could subject some residents to a constant barrage of noise from traffic using the park and ride or the "drive-thru" restaurant and be a further source of litter. The Executive Committee (EC) have made their best efforts to represent the inhabitants of the estate on these matters and will seek to make initiatives to improve the local environment where it is judged feasible.

The EC have been much involved, this year, with investigating possible improvements to the local bus services and much good work has been done, especially by John Ashdown and Keith Rogers, in investigating this matter. I would refer you to this section as your contributions could easily make the difference to this proposal.

I would refer you to the other sections of this report to indicate the breadth of issues dealt with this year. It has been obvious, during this year, that the EC needs more members to ensure that all issues are properly dealt with. I would encourage all residents to consider joining (but there is a limit!) as for the sake of 1½ hours a month you too can influence the future of this area!

### LAW & ORDER

I do hope we will be able to have at least one representative from the community policing unit (CPU) present at this years AGM.

Following last years AGM we had an extremely interesting meeting with Sgt. Alan Mayes of the CPU, PC Stuart Morley (a special constable interested in Vinters Park) and PC Pat Miles (a parish constable for Barming and E. Farleigh.). During the course of this meeting the work of the parish constable was explained and also the backup required before one could be put in place.

It would appear that their duty is to deal especially with quality of life issues that are normally given a very low priority by regular police. They are dedicated almost exclusively to one area and might only stray outside this area in the most extreme of circumstances.

They are Special Constables having the same powers as an ordinary PC and therefore require careful selection and training, although, obviously, not to a regulars standard. Ideally 4 would be needed for our sort of area and each one would be expected to provide a minimum of 4 hours of work each week.

They only very rarely return to the local Police Station and instead are usually based at the home of the local "Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator." It is from this base that they would draw their equipment and have access to the Neighbourhood Watches computer bulletin board, thus allowing them to be aware of events elsewhere in the town and to provide similar information for other areas.

Very recently a Community Policeman has in fact been appointed, and, it is hoped, will now be walking our streets. It is hoped you will have an opportunity to discuss matters of Law and Order with him and a senior officer at the AGM. I do find it interesting to note that while vandalism would appear to have declined garage theft etc. would appear to be on the increase, whether this is significant I am not certain but the police advise us that if you actually see a crime occurring then you should dial 999, for most other matters the contact number is Maidstone 690055 and for matters of an "anti-community" nature you should contact the CPU on Maidstone 608067.

Far be it from me to cast doubts on the ability of the police to respond but the only recent occasion I have had to dial 999 (for vandalism) the response took 15 minutes, and on a, presumably, quiet Sunday afternoon.

### YOUTH!

The possibility of organising a competition amongst local schools to decorate the underpasses was considered for a short period. The practical possibilities however limited this venture.

Although no fresh youth initiatives have been started on the estate, developments at Grove Green are being watched with interest by the EC. Cllr Tilley has been working hard to set up a youth group, at the Grove Green Community Centre, in association with Rev. Steven Walker from the church that worships at St. Johns school. They are trying to set up a youth group with a structured program starting with a small core group and building up from there. Rev. Walker has experience with youth groups in London.

### MINIBUS SERVICE?

One of the ECs newest members, John Ashdown, has shown great enthusiasm in investigating this possibility. A proposal was made, last year, that we should investigate and promote possible improvements to the local bus services. Namely ask M&D to introduce a minibus service running more frequently than current services. In principal most of the relevant authorities were very encouraging. It was soon apparent that any such service could not be exclusively for the estate and would have to be part of a larger route. The most likely one would involve Grove Green.

Recent discussions would indicate that M&D are not averse to improving our bus service. They do however require convincing of the amount that it would be used. I hope that the AGM might be a good opportunity to start gauging this support but letters to M&D will be equally valuable. So if you are using taxis or walking when you would rather take a bus then the initiative is now in your hands, come to the AGM and/ or start writing.

### ROADS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The EC have been observing with interest the development of the parking restrictions in the southern part of the estate. It has to be recognised that no system is perfect however in



view of the fact that we have heard very few complaints the current system would appear to be working well. The EC are still concerned about the way these restrictions have encouraged motorists to park on or close to corners endangering other road users. We are also concerned that any further extension to the scheme will force traffic into the northern part of the estate and into the Woodlands. In this context the EC are pleased to see the proposals for a Park and Ride scheme but are also disappointed at the fact that it is lumped together with other applications.

The EC were also glad to see the continuance of the work on the Sittingbourne Road. It is hoped, that the plans for this and the other roads in the area will be completed in full. We are particularly concerned about the inclusion of pedestrian operated crossings at strategic points particularly at the crematorium.

The EC were pleased to hear about the proposed development of a "Park and Ride" scheme adjacent to the old A249. We were alarmed however to hear about the accompanying proposal to develop two restaurants alongside this scheme. It is proposed that one of these should be of the "Drive-thru" type. The majority feeling of the EC was that we should oppose this development if there were objectors from the area most affected by this development. This proved to be the case and indeed I believe that a number of councillors also oppose this development. John Ashdown has however drawn our attention to the fact that a number of Residents might in fact welcome this type of development. It has been decided to oppose the restaurant developments and also the access arrangements for the Park and Ride site, as these in particular are extremely hazardous. It will be of interest to gauge residents opinions, at the AGM, upon this development. Objections were lodged as this was decided upon by the EC without opposing views being aired, at the time.

Inevitably underpasses have continued to attract the EC's

attention. There was a period of several months when they were adorned with a set of graffiti done in black paint. At the very least if some one is going to do this could they please make it artistic. Loosely connected was the spoof notice saying that an underpass was to be filled in and a statue erected on the site. Personally (and this is personal) I find this much more fun. However, all jokers please note, try to get your facts correct.

During this period the EC looked into the type of paint used by London Underground as we understood this to be extremely effective. Details of this were discovered and the information passed on to MBC's Technical Services Manager. It later turned out that it is considered more effective to come along once or twice a year with a can of emulsion paint than to use more expensive anti-graffiti paints. The overall feeling on the EC was that MBC should send the man with the paint can around every three months rather than wait for complaints and then make everybody wait three months.

It has also been noted that the roof at the end of the underpass would appear to be crumbling and this fact was duly passed on to Geoff Russell at MBC.

Geoff has also, following his success last year, been invited to the AGM to answer your questions and concerns about these and other matters.

### PLAY AREAS

Margaret Dring and Noreen Latham, in particular, have done much good work this year on monitoring the state of the play area at Ashurst Road. The EC have been very concerned about the state of this area following the moves to level some sections and the "refit" carried out recently. MBC's attention has been repeatedly drawn to the presence of lumps of concrete protruding from the ground, damage to play equipment and the fact that the gate securing the play area has been poorly fitted so that it will not close. A site meeting has been held and it is hoped that action will have been taken before you read this.

MBC also intend to refurbish the Upper Fullingpits Wood play area, despite the lack of interest shown by residents in answering the questionnaire sent to each home in the area. This area is one of concern because of possible misuse by older people and its sheltered nature that means criminal or anti-social behaviour cannot be observed.

The provision of adequate play areas is important for this estate as most of us are not blessed with large gardens and as a consequence our children are often seen to be playing around the squares and other areas that are enclosed and away from roads. I do have much sympathy for residents who find this to be a nuisance and indeed have had discussions with residents on this matter, I would suggest however that the prospect of even one child being harmed because it cannot play near its own home should make us all think carefully about moves to ban any such activity. This does not of course mean that destructive or other anti-social activities should not be taken up with the parent or if absolutely necessary the police.

### COMMUNITY CENTRE (CC)

Thankfully the CC has been relatively trouble free this year. There have been the usual spate of minor incidents, of which more later, but after the appointment of Bernard Belchambers as Premises Manager matters have been running smoothly.

The EC have done their best during this year to maintain the condition of the CC. Because of the age of the CC it is of course inevitable that some wear will be starting to show. The windows at the front of the building have now been replaced to everyone's satisfaction (in fact most people have remarked on how warm it can now be).

The overall internal decorative state is now being looked into and when re-decorating occurs it is hoped to protect the lower parts of the wall. Would all users please note however that using selotape on the walls damages them! Please only use blu-tack and then remove that carefully and completely. If you're not sure how to do this then call me. If you wish to stick anything up with drawing pins there are notice boards around and there is a rail running around the whole room.

We've also asked our cleaners to do a few more hours work on Friday afternoons to do some of the jobs they do not normally have time for. If you do see an area accumulating dirt then contact Bernard or Margaret Stubbins who will liaise with the cleaners.

The grassed area by the CC is also attracting some unwelcome attention from animals. As many will know the area is used by the playgroup, during the summer months, but it would appear that the area is being used as a toilet by some dogs and cats. One thing we can't stop is cats wandering around but if you have allowed your dog to use that area as a toilet please STOP. It will save all of us the embarrassment of having to speak to you about it. Pooper scoopers can be obtained from the council or plastic bags are very effective and there are bins around to dump the animals waste in. Unfortunately, as we have pointed out to the playgroup, the only way to prevent a child sitting in the mess is to check the area first, themselves, and remove any offending waste.

We also need someone to cut this grass, a reasonably fit young (or old, we're not ageist) man or woman should be not have to spend much more than an hour a week during the peak growing season and two or 3 hours work each month during the other months.

### OTHER MATTERS

At the request of the Association a post box has been installed at the end of Bargrove Road. Following completion of a questionnaire on waste collection, MBC has introduced new collection services. These include a waste newspaper collection. In consequence the Friends of the Earth ceased their collection from the Community Centre on the first Saturday of the month. In view of the previous success of this service Rumania Connect have taken this over. It is therefore possible to support this charity and be environmentally sound by taking your papers to the CC every first Saturday