

EASTCOTE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF 80th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 25th MAY 2011
EASTCOTE COMMUNITY CENTRE- OAK HALL

Present: **Committee Members:**-Chris Groom (Chairman), Elizabeth Beggs (Vice-Chairman), Irene Groom (Minutes), Roger Brown (Treasurer), Ian Murray, Ian Brooks, Linda Laurie, Ian Parkinson, Jackie Redrup, Gawain Cox, Carolyn Derecki, Jean Gibson **Guests:**-Nicolas Hurd MP, Garry Coote of Fraud Dept, (Speaker), Carys Walker – Community Leadership Coordinator (Speaker), Councillor Bruce Baker, Councillor Catherine Dann, Councillor Andrew Retter, Councillor Jonathan Bianco, Councillor Edward Lavery, PC Rob Belson -E&ER SNT, James Cracknell of the local press, representatives of other Residents Association, plus approximately 80 members and guests.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Michael White, Karen Spink (Chief Road Steward), Chris Williams, Alison Akerman, Jess Lee, Councillor Raymond Graham, Lesley Crowcroft,

Speakers:-

- Mr Nick Hurd MP - Minister of Civil Society – He said that he had the pleasure of shaking hands with Barack Obama and hearing The Presidents' speech in Westminster Hall. He went on to say that the Met Line problems would continue for the time being with regular weekend closures as the new signals would not be installed until 2018. He finished up with encouraging everyone to get involved within the community.
- The main speaker was Garry Coote – Hillingdon Corporate Fraud Manager. He gave details of the frauds that he deals with, namely benefit fraud, blue badge fraud, sub letting both council and housing associations, single person discount and many others. He went to say that most of the ones investigated were brought to their attention by people ringing the Hot Line – he asks that if a fraud is suspected that you ring the HOT LINE 0800 389 8313 or email fraud@hillingdon.gov.uk - all reports will be treated in the strictest confidence and can be given anonymously. This was followed by a short question and answer session and he handed out pamphlets to everyone present.
- Carys Walker –Hillingdon - Community Leadership Coordinator – She gave a talk and power-point presentation on “Pride of Place” or “Proud Proud” – this is a way of getting communities to work together for the benefit of the community. Details of the various activities, designed to get everyone working together, will be advertised.

CG gave a vote of thanks to our speakers. We then had a break of 10 minutes.

1. **Minutes of the 2010 AGM:** -Agreed with no amendments. Proposed: Roger Brown, Seconded: Ian Murray - Agreed by show of hands

2. **Matters arising from minutes of 2010 meeting, not on the Agenda:** There were no matters arising.

3. **Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman noted that this was 80th Annual General meeting of Eastcote Residents Association and his fifth year as Chairman.

He explained that the meeting would hear the Treasurers report followed by reports covering Planning which forms a significant part of the work, followed by Police Matters and Safer Neighbourhoods, Transport and Road Safety, and finally the Christmas Festival.

He then reported the following –

The local groups at Eastcote House Gardens, Warrender Park and Highgrove Woods and also at Cavendish and Bessingby Parks are continuing their invaluable work and have achieved significant improvements during the year.

The development of RAF Eastcote is now very well advanced with nearly 50% of the properties occupied. As they now have their own Residents Association ERA have discontinued doing regular update reports but still wish to hear about any problems and will still respond, where it can, to concerns.

There are now two other localised Residents Associations – one covering the Eastcote Park Estate and one covering the small estate adjacent to the Highgrove Leisure Centre and Hale End Close and Campbell Close – people obviously feel that Residents Association have value.

ERA website goes from strength to strength and is the envy of other local Residents Association. If you haven't had a look yet ERA recommend you do. If you don't know the address just type Eastcote Residents Association into Google or other search engine. Remember that if you are a local community group who would like to add details of your events to ERA website, What's-On, just go to the link on the website or give ERA a ring. This also applies if you would like to put advertisements on the ERA notice-boards.

The Chairman thanked everyone who contributed to the latest newsletter ERA News. He thanked Linda Laurie - editor and Karen Spink – senior road steward, for all their hard work in connection with the newsletter including arranging for its distribution by our band of Road Stewards who distribute the newsletter and collect the subs. He thanked all of the Road Stewards. He said that ERA was still short of road stewards in some roads so if you can spare just a very small amount of time please, please volunteer to be a road steward. Please contact Karen Spink after the meeting. He reported that we do get complaints that we do not cover all the streets in Eastcote but sadly this will remain the case if we cannot get enough Road Stewards

He thanked the committee for all their hard work throughout the year and also the Local Councillors for all their help.

He finished with a big thank you to all the members.

4. Treasurers Report (Roger Brown)

The accounts were explained and showed income of £3,415.60 and expenditure of £3361.91 giving a surplus for the year of £53.69. In addition there was a surplus from the Christmas Festival of £1182.12. The accounts were proposed by Ian Brooks and seconded by Ian Murray, after a show of hands the Accounts were approved. There were no questions from the floor.

5. Representatives Reports

Planning: (Jackie Redrup)

Jackie took over from Lesley Crowcroft in October last year (2010). Jackie gave a vote of thanks to Lesley for the huge amount of work she put into dealing with Planning Applications.

She reported that from October 2010 to the week ending 14th May 2011 we have reviewed: 134 applications for the area covered by ERA

Of these:-69 were approved, 34 were dismissed, 2 were withdrawn, 1 was deferred for determination at a later date, 28 are currently awaiting decisions

Of those dismissed, 6 were appealed:- 2 appeals were dismissed, 2 appeals were upheld and 2 appeals are awaited

She noted that it was not an appropriate forum in which to discuss individual planning applications. However, she mentioned a couple of larger developments which really touch all of us:

150 Field End Road - A property in the centre of the Eastcote shopping area – a 60's building and a derelict site –a sensitive redevelopment would enhance our neighbourhood. After a number of applications 2 possibilities currently remain for determination. Hotel – 76 bedrooms, on which Travel Lodge would be likely to take a lease. Flats –various applications and objections, not least from ERA, numbers of units have come down over time, from 70 flats to 42, with an office unit.

216 Field End Road - The derelict land more or less opposite Eastcote Station, previously the garden centre, we can all agree, sympathetically redeveloped would be better than what we have. Planning permission has been put in for what we consider is overdevelopment with 11 flats and a retail unit- ERA have objected. Although this was applied for last year, determination is still awaited.

Police: (Ian Murray)

He reported that it had been a good year for the residents of Hillingdon as crime reduction is concerned. In the twelve months to end March total reported crime had fallen compared to the previous year by 2.6% with just over 23,500 offences which meant that there were some 630 fewer victims of crime.

Burglary offences had reduced by 6.2% to 2,176 incidents. However, although the detection rate has improved, only 13.2% of this category of crime was detected.

Thefts from motor vehicles are also down with a reduction of 18.5% so far this year. Thefts of motor vehicles are running at about the same level as the previous period at a little over 670.

Personal Robbery (Muggings) are considerably increased at just almost 24% but fortunately detection rates are also well up at 22% compared to last year's figure of just over 10% although this still means that almost 80% are not resolved. However, there now seems to be a greater willingness to report on these crimes (which are mostly youth on youth) and to identify the perpetrators.

Overall, serious acquisitive crime is down by 8.2% from 6714 offences to 6164.

Offences of most serious violence are also considerably down with a third fewer offences this year at 152.

Gun crime figures are the same as last year at 72 offences, whilst knife crime is slightly down by 1.5%.

Ward by Ward figures, although requested, have not been made available (the police are too busy catching criminals), but Eastcote and Cavendish wards have always been amongst the safest in the Borough and there is no reason to suppose that this has changed in recent times. Our nearest neighbours in Pinner are in one of the safest wards in Harrow so the whole of this general locality can be regarded as is a reasonably safe place to live.

It remains to be seen how budget restrictions may affect the effectiveness of policing in Eastcote and the surrounding districts and it has already been announced that in Pinner, the two Safer Neighbourhood Teams there will shortly be merged into one. However, in the event of a perceived or actual incident, the Police would rather that you contacted them than not at all so that they can decide what sort of response is needed.

Transport/Road Safety –Ian Brooks

At last year's AGM we set our intention to do 3 things-

Firstly to secure the implementation of existing commitments and this has been focused on-

- The Cheney Street traffic calming scheme, after a four-year campaign, has been implemented. Albeit the actual installation of 20mph signs awaits completion of the traffic management order procedure. There has been a certain amount of controversy surrounding this initiative but there is confidence that these fears will be allayed. If any of the surrounding streets wish to develop this road scheme into an area wide scheme then the ERA would be very willing to support them.
- Bridle Road pedestrian crossing (which involved a 650 petition signature) is almost completed.
- Eastcote Rd near Fore Street road safety measures linked to the RAF Eastcote development – again almost completed.

Secondly to seek solutions to new problems raised by local residents. Issues brought to the include -

- Safety concerns at Black Horse parade crossing – enhanced lighting introduced.
- Metropolitan underground line standards of service –ERA joined FOMLUC (Federation of Met Line Users Committee), an association championing on behalf of Met passengers.

Thirdly to continue to take advantage of opportunities to improve the service-

- The Police SNT have responded positively to requests to include within their work, activity to secure and promote safer roads.
- The ERA along with a number of other stakeholders had input into the adjustments outside Eastcote station. Hopefully a sensible balance has been struck between the needs of public transport users and those travelling by car.
- In order to influence the Council strategically the ERA contributed to the local transport strategy consultation suggesting that they
 - Monitor more closely the effectiveness of School Travel Plans
 - Be more creative with regard to measures to increase cycling
 - Secure more effective traffic law enforcement to challenge unsafe drivers
 - The Council demonstrate leadership by implementing effective measures to manage its own work related road risks and use procurement practices to encourage compliance from Council contractors and sub-contractors.

It appears that our roads are more congested today than they were yesterday and it very likely to that they will be more congested tomorrow than today. The solution for some is a modal shift from car to increased levels of walking, cycling and use of public transport – a concept that is not universally accepted. Whilst road casualties continue to decrease there has not been a corresponding improvement in perceptions of safety felt by vulnerable road users. As a consequence many individuals are deterred from making additional journeys by foot and cycle. It is suggested that what is needed is a collective change of heart that leads to a range of measures that make it feel safer for those elect to walk, cycle and use public transport.

It is proposed that the ERA continue as we have this year to tackle local specific issues whilst also seeking to `nudge` the council to provide the pan Borough leadership that currently feels lacking.

Events & Fundraising Report (Ian Parkinson)

Recently a new group was formed– The Festival Team. The Team exists to organise community and charitable events to raise money, putting it back into our local community.

The Team stemmed from the success of the 2010 Christmas light Appeal and the subsequent Christmas Market Fair. We were stunned by the generosity of our local business community, the residents and the Council, who all came behind the appeal; a staggering £24,500 was raised. This enabled us not only to buy the lights but also to organise the Christmas Event, I would like to thank all those that contributed but especially I would like to single out a few for special thanks:

1. To all the businesses that gave especially WLMG Nissan Kia Garage who donated the first £1000.
2. To the generosity of the St Lawrence Players, a local amateur dramatic group based at St Lawrence Church who gave £100 from their own funds.
3. To the residents and members of ERA who gave their time helping and marshalling.
4. To the members of Field End Photographic society for acting as our official press and photographers.

We went on to co-promote the Grangewood Quiz evening in aid of severely disabled children; again you turned out in your droves, 200 attendees at a quiz night and a stunning £3,400 raised. Our thanks to Sponsors Barclays Bank and co promoters the Ickenham Festival Team for their support.

Our next event is a 'Cabaret and supper Evening – called 'Life is a Cabaret'. The evening will feature songs, sketches and medleys from all the popular west end shows, as well a table magic and demonstrations from some very talented local young people that we have discovered. The show will run for a full 2 hours, with chicken and chip supper. All the proceeds will be split between local disabled charities and local good causes. The venue is the Winston Churchill Hall in Ruislip and tickets are just £12 each the date is Friday 21st October. Information will appear in the next few weeks on our website.

We are also planning a Eastcote Christmas Festival which will take place on 4th December. Christmas Festival will aim to bring our entire community together, churches, schools, residents and businesses to celebrate the festive period, raise awareness and money for local community groups. Plans are afoot, for amongst other things; street entertainers, a pantomime, a nativity play and a finale fireworks display. A 2011 Christmas light appeal will also be launched to build upon and expand the New Christmas lights.

Most of all we want it to be your event – so please let me know if you know of someone with talent or if you are involved in a group that would like to perform – perhaps you know a juggler, a gymnastic or dance group – a jazz or brass band. And finally, an appeal for help – we need to build a list of willing volunteers perhaps you can help with marshalling, or have carpentry skills.

6. Election of officers:

The following nominations were read out by the Chairman:-

Existing members who have agreed to re-stand:-

Chairman: Chris Groom, Vice Chairman: Ian Brooks, Treasurer: Roger Brown, Chief Road Steward: Karen Spink, Secretary: Irene Groom, Committee Members: Elizabeth Beggs, Ian Murray, Linda Laurie, Tom Sharkey, Carolyn Derecki, Alison Akerman, Ian Parkinson, Keith Barnard.

New nominations proposed:- Jackie Redrup and Gawain Cox

There were no nominations from the floor. There were no contested position so election by group. Proposed by Roy Cadoux and Seconded by Sylvia Ladyman. The above elected by a show of hands.

7. Any other business:

- Chairman pointed out that there was a sheet at the back of the hall for anyone to add their name, address and e-mail address should they wish to be added to the list of people who receive regular copies of our committee meetings and other information.
- On Saturday 9^h July there is to be “The Eastcote Picnic” in Eastcote House Gardens all welcome, bring along a picnic. There will be stalls/plays/dancing/classic cars, etc.
- Dates and times of future meetings: 29th June, 27th July, no meeting in August, 28th September, 26th October, 30th November, no meeting in December. We meet in the Elsie Fischer Room at St. Lawrence Church, Bridle Road at 7.30pm.
- The Chairman also pointed out that there was a Petition at the back of the hall, for anyone to sign, against the closure of the Children’s Heart Unit at the Brompton Hospital.
- There then followed a question and answer session from the floor. The questions covered were the problems in Cheney, the work being done at Eastcote Station and the realignment of the road at the junction of Elm Avenue/Field End Road also Elm Avenue/Lime Grove/Oak Grove.
- CG then closed the meeting at 9.40pm of the 80th AGM of the Eastcote Residents Association and wished everyone a safe journey home.
- Sylvia Ladyman, from the floor, thanked all of the committee for their hard work throughout the year.

The date of the next ordinary meeting is WEDNESDAY 29TH JUNE 2011 at Elsie Fischer Room, St. Lawrence Church, Bridle Road, at 7.30pm
Apologies to Chris/Irene Groom on Telephone No. 0208 866 0985 (answer phone) or by e-mail.