



MINUTES OF 82nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 23rd MAY 2013

St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Field End Road, Eastcote.

Present: Committee Members:- Ian Brooks, Irene Groom, Karen Spink, Alison Holtorp, Jackie Redrup, Ian Murray, Elizabeth Beggs, Linda Laurie, Alison Akerman, Carolyn Derecki, Keith Barnard, David Harper, Pamela Jean Marr, **Councillors:** Catherine Dann, Michael White, Edward Lavery. **Guests:** Lesley Crowcroft, Sylvia Ladyman and approximately 40 members of the public.

Apologies for absence: John Randall, Trevor Hyde, Andrea Gohil, Juliet Wolf, Ian Parkinson, Gawain Cox, Chris Groom, Tom Sharkey, David Payne, Andrew Retter.

IB opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 82nd AGM of the Eastcote Residents Association. IB thanked the church for the use of their facilities. He went on to congratulate Councillor Catherine Dann on being made Deputy Mayor for this year. He then went on to introduce to the audience the members of the committee and councillors present.

IB then introduced our speaker for this year Councillor Edward Lavery – who gave us a talk on the rules and regulations the Planning Department have to adhere too in determining the approval or otherwise of planning applications. This was followed by questions from the floor. IB thanked Councillor Lavery for a very interesting and informative talk.

1. **Minutes of the 2012 AGM:** Agreed with no amendments.

2. **Matters arising from minutes of 2012 meeting, not on the Agenda:** There were no matters arising, (several written questions were submitted after the meeting and these were dealt with privately).

3. **Chairman's Report: (Ian Brooks)**

Good evening and thank you all for coming to this our 82nd Annual General meeting of Eastcote Residents Association. As I said my name is Ian Brooks and this is the end of my first year as Chairman.

I will keep my report brief in order to provide time for you to hear more from other members about what is happening; what we have been doing; and what we hope to do in the future.

Looking back over this past year one cannot help feeling a sense of pride in the organisational abilities of London in delivering such an excellent Olympics and Para Olympics games. A number of local residents contributed to the success of the occasion including taking part in the opening ceremony.

At a local level we have continued to contribute to problem solving on a variety of issues related to our 3 priorities endorsed at last years' AGM - planning; policing; and road safety; along with other issues such as health and conservation. This has proved to be frustrating at times but on occasions perseverance has been rewarded. Some of the details are included within the twice yearly ERA News (newsletter). More can be found on our website and if not already subscribed it is worth signing up to our regular email updates.

It is appropriate and my pleasure to express some thanks. The work of voluntary organisations, such as the ERA, is heavily reliant upon individuals giving of their time and skills on a voluntary basis.

A special note of thanks to Karen Spink as she stands down from her role as Senior Road Steward after 9 years in post. Karen has brought a high level of dedication, perseverance and hard work to this role. This role has grown over that time such that we have found it appropriate to split the role going forward. A big thank you Karen.

In mentioning Road Stewards it is important to express our thanks to this valuable team of volunteers, at last count numbering 76, who perform a key role in linking in directly with our members - you. Not only do they distribute this

ERA News twice yearly; collect subscriptions; but they also provide welcome contact with a number of our senior citizens. We are always on the look-out for more volunteers.

Tom Sharkey has now stood down from the Committee and I would also like to thank him for efforts over a number of years – he always gave sound advice and support.

I would also like to take the opportunity of thanking all Committee members for their hard work over this past year. A lot of work goes on `out of sight` responding to members issues and engaging with a variety of local forums and groups. You will get a flavour of their contributions from the reports shortly but this evening proceedings does not, timewise, allow us to cover all the work undertaken.

Thanks also go to our Councillors for their support of the association and its members – very often they provide the key that unlocks an issue.

Thinking of the future and how we can collectively work together contribute to the aims of the ERA. These aims formulated before WW2 have stood the test of time and summarised are:-

- To assist the local Council and other organisations in the preservation of the amenities and in the orderly development of the district by making suggestions - and where necessary pressing for the adoption of such suggestions.
- To consider any complaint by a member that their amenities has been adversely affected and give advice or other assistance
- To assist the maintenance and development of the social life of the district by organising such functions and activities as may be considered desirable.
- To co-operate with any other organisation whose activities support the above 3 aims.

How many of you feel that Eastcote Town Centre could be more appealing and perform the role of being the centre of of the local community better?

You are probably aware that Northwood Hills and Ruislip Manor have secured support to improve the quality of their Town centres. Should we collectively be marshalling our resources to secure improvements for Eastcote Town centre?

Finally ladies and gentlemen I would like to day a big thankyou - to you. By being here you demonstrate you care. Thank you

4. Treasurers Report (Alison Holtorp)

At the Road Stewards Meeting on the 22nd November 2012 questions were raised regarding the due date and period covered by subscriptions.

At the Executive meeting on the 30th January 2013 it was decided that the subscriptions should continue to be collected for the period April to March, as stated on the subscription collection sheet, and that the financial year end should be moved from 30th April to the March 31st in line with this.

INCOME -Subscriptions for this year are still being collected due to the exceptionally inclement weather earlier this year that delayed doorstep collections. In order to partially remedy this I have included receipts collected and banked during April 2013.

The Christmas Stall serving mulled wine was well received and the goodwill generated resulted in donations amounting to £428.53.

EXPENDITURE - As a result of the change to the accounting period the payments due in April, i.e. Community Voice and Website subscriptions, will appear in next year's accounts.

NET PROFIT - After the above adjustments the Association has a net profit of £318.97

BALANCE SHEET - The Association is in a healthy financial position having net assets of £13927.74. Of this, £10,000 is to be kept in reserve in case the need arises for a fighting fund.

There being no question from the floor – the Treasurers Report was adopted by a show of hands.

5. Representatives Reports

Senior Road Steward : (Karen Spink).

As our treasurer has already mentioned, the dreadful weather so far this year has meant that a number of subs have not come in at the usual time. However, taking these into account, I think the membership is on a par with last year's figure of just over 1900. Still short of my target of 2000, this represents about a quarter of the households in Eastcote. We have over 70 Road Stewards who cover over a hundred roads, but there are still gaps and roads not covered. Also, a few Road Stewards have recently resigned and my thanks go to them. So, I urge you please, to look at the map showing the missing roads, and if you think you can help, or know someone who could be

persuaded, we would be very pleased to hear from you. As you are probably aware, I have decided to step down as Senior Road Steward. I am in my 10th year, so it seems appropriate to hand over to fresh blood and new approaches. That said, I should point out that we have made some organisational changes, so I hope you will bear with us while these get underway. I hasten to add, I am not disappearing, I shall continue to be a road steward but now I will just be one of you. That just leaves me to say a huge thank you for all the support I have had from Road Stewards, Area Road Stewards, the Chairman and members over the years and I hope that (in the recent words of Sir Alec Ferguson) you will continue to give that terrific support to my successor.

Planning: (Jackie Redrup)

I have in previous years collated the full year's applications and given you some overall statistics for total numbers of applications and how they have been determined, ie approved, refused etc.

Due work and personal commitments, I am not able to take the time do this this year. However, I would remind you that you can see each month's applications in a planning report on the ERA website.

I would remind you that it is not appropriate for me to comment publically on individual residential applications – if you have any queries in this regard, please do talk to me privately at this meeting or feel free to contact me at any other time.

The other part of my report has been to give a brief update a few of the larger applications that affect the whole community. Updates this year are as follows:-

RAF Eastcote

Largely completed and indeed occupied.

However, a number of issues have come to light over the last year and much work has been done on this by some of the residents affected and by ERA in support of them.

This is a very brief overview – starting from around June last year various residents with properties adjacent to the site have commented on properties on site that were apparently not being built to the agreed plans. These are as follows:-

- Type B & P houses that affect Azalea Walk –
- Apartment blocks C, D & W

The planning dept approached Wimpey's and they put in retrospective applications for the above.

Residents and ERA wrote in to object and petitions were raised ensuring that the applications had to be heard before the North Planning Committee.

The committee approved the retrospective changes to D & W. They refused the Type B & P changes and deferred a decision on block C as the drawings in the application did not match the photos of the building actually constructed. In the last week or so, Wimpey's have appealed the decision on the B&P houses – the clock started ticking on 15th May from which there is 6 weeks to complain – we shall write a further letter asking for refusal. Realistically, it is quite likely that the appeal will be allowed. However, if it is not, the Council then have to consider what enforcement action, if any they will take.

Also with a commencement date of 15th May, Wimpey's have also chosen to appeal against a previous decision by the Council to refuse that alteration of the Live/Work unit blocks into apartments.

Finally, we pointed out to the Council that the houses backing onto properties in Flag Walk also seem to have been built with velux room windows that were not on the approved drawings. I received a call from the new Enforcement Office saying that he has been asked to take enforcement action – I know no more on this as he did not give any further information but we shall try to follow this up.

150 Field End Road -Hotel application has now been dropped completely.

As you know the property developer went into receivership and Saville's the Receiver asked to consult with the local community last October. They held a small meeting of interested parties and then a public consultation day that was well attended by local residents. They put forward 3 new schemes for the external elevations – all of which were deemed to be an improvement on the outstanding planning application. One scheme stood out as being the most preferred. In tandem with this, Saville's were clear that they would appeal against the Council's refusal of the last submitted application – they did and the appeal was upheld, ie the application was allowed. Saville's have verbally said since that they still do intend still to put in an application reflecting the schemes put up for consultation last year – to date not such application can be seen on the Planning Website.

216 Field End Road – the old garden centre site opposite the station – the Appeal was upheld and the application allowed

Kings College Playing Fields – All weather hockey pitch -Not in our area but an area much used and loved by our residents. A second application was withdrawn. It is expected however that a further application will follow - we shall continue to join with the other residents associations and conservation bodies in asking for any application to be refused.

Police: (Ian Murray)

Ian Murray reported that it would be fair to say that policing organisation in Hillingdon (and indeed the other London Boroughs) is in a state of flux and changes were in hand for Safer Neighbourhood Panels and the Borough based Hillingdon Police and Community Consultative Group (HPCCG) which would be wound up by April 2014. The form and constitution of the replacement body was still being worked on but it was likely that Safer Neighbourhood Boards would be established, one for each borough, which would be much more pro-active and able to exert much more influence on policing policy than the current arrangements. It was unlikely that individual amenity organisations such as ERA would be represented although it was thought that there would be an annual opportunity for local associations to meet with police representative. The situation would be clear by the time of the 2014 ERA AGM. In the meantime the HPCCG continues to function although with fewer meetings and the latest (May) meeting discussed crime statistics for the Borough for the year ended 31 March the highlights of which were –

- Total crime in the borough had reduced by 13.7% compared with the previous year.
- Residential Burglary was down by 18.4% but whilst detection rates had risen this was still only at a level of just over 10%
- Thefts from Motor Vehicles are down by 18.6% and theft of vehicles by 16.8%.
- Personal Robbery (Muggings) are down by almost 15% with detection rates up to 19.6%.
- A significant increase in sexual offences by 23.5% were recorded during the year but this was thought to be consequent upon the Saville inquiry and other recent high profile cases which had encouraged victims of such assaults to come forward; previously a number of incidents of this nature would not have been reported

Safer Neighbourhood Panels have not met for some time but Eastcote and Cavendish Wards remained amongst the safest in the Borough.

Transport/Road Safety: Ian Brooks

ERA activity on Transport and Road Safety has been relatively quiet this last year but not necessarily quiet for all - which will become apparent from this report.

Firstly the 20mph limit and traffic calming scheme implemented in Cuckoo Hill, following a fatality, is certainly reducing traffic speeds. However the `vertical deflection` (road humps) appear to be overly violent for some vehicles travelling at 20 mph. The subsequent increased noise, amongst other issues, is a matter of concern to some. On balance the safety benefits appear to outweigh the disbenefits associated with the additional noise and inconvenience to drivers and nearby residents. A further benefit worth noting is that this scheme compliments the adjoining 20mph scheme in Cheney Street which has not delivered all that was hoped for.

- There are other local roads in need of similar treatment but securing a consensus to do something seems to be dependent upon a tragic event rather than preventative action in advance. The authorities need to do better with regard to improving perceptions of safety if more of us are to be encouraged to reduce some of our car trips by increasing the number of walking and cycling trips – especially with regard to school journeys.

The **second** noise related issue is more problematical. Many Eastcote residents, and others in the rest of this borough, continue to be at exposed to noise disturbance caused by the illegal movement of heavy goods vehicles during the early mornings (before 7am). Having failed to secure a change in Council policy through a petition the ERA, following advice, posed a question at a full Council meeting – but this also failed to secure a change.

- We continue to be surprised and frustrated at the lack of consistency in Council policy across noise issues together with disappointment in the Council's (politician's and officer's) lack of ability to innovate an alternate solution.

In looking forward there are a number of questions emerging that impact on our local quality of life, namely:

- In an issue linked to the theme of excessive noise – is the state of our roads, pot holes etc, acceptable? Would it not be better, and more cost effective, to be resurfacing rather than constantly filling in potholes?
- With around a third of deaths and seriously injured casualties on the road are related to journeys at-work – there is substantial amount of good practice available to manage such risks. Should the council not be doing

more in terms of leading by example and just as importantly using its substantial procurement, and not forgetting planning, clout to promote contractors to adopt such good safety practice?

- Finally in an issue to linked to the last point – there is HS2. This seems more likely than not to be going ahead and as such we are not that far away from major disruption resulting from the construction phase. This will result in several million tons of spoil, from the tunnelling, coming out and construction materials coming in which will lead to over a 100,000 additional commercial vehicle journeys. Are the lessons associated with building Crossrail going to be applied locally?

Webmaster's Report:- Gawain Cox

I'd like to firstly apologise for not being present to deliver this report myself, and thank the chairman for reading it on my behalf.

The ERA website has now been running for almost 3 years, having originally launched in June 2010. The site very quickly gained popularity and has consistently attracted over 1,000 visits per month.

Visits for the year ending 31st April 2013, at 12,330, is somewhat down on the previous year, of 15,064 (down approx. 18%). However the unique number of visitors to the site has remained largely unchanged, down from 7,727 to a respectable 7,170 (down around 7%).

The reason for the downturn in visits to the site this year is undoubtedly due to the lack of updates and promotion the site has received during the last 12 months, which brings me onto work that has been progressing in the background.

Early in 2012, buoyed by the interest in the Eastcote Christmas event, it was decided that the ERA site would undergo a number of upgrades and changes, building upon the system we have now and delivering a more aesthetically pleasing & modern site. In addition to a new look, the site is planned to eventually encompass a number of additional features including a membership area, community discussion forums & more detailed updates on what the Association does on behalf of the residents of Eastcote (for example more detailed planning reports). To deliver these changes, the site had to be rebuilt from the ground up, taking into consideration changes, which may also be required in future. Over the past 8 months, the site has been designed and the painstaking task of writing the code which is required to build the website has been written, all at no cost to the Association.

Today we can announce our new-look site has been launched, and can be viewed immediately at

www.eastcoterac.co.uk

There remains a number of developments still to be implemented, including some of the new features mentioned previously. But hopefully, when you have a chance to view the site, you'll agree that the new design places our site at the cutting-edge of what's possible with websites today.

The changes to the site will mean that adding new content will be much quicker, easier and efficient, meaning less work for our committee and more updates for our residents.

I'd like to thank our regular visitors to the site who have remained patient while very little new content has been posted, and assure residents that we'll shortly be running much more promotion to encourage residents and visitors to become more involved with the site.

Conservation/Eastcote House Gardens: (Lesley Crowcroft)

The Conservation Panel has expanded to include Warrender, Cavendish and Bessingby Parks – on-going work is continuing in all of them to make them visitor friendly.

Eastcote House Gardens: Work is continuing in both Long Meadow and the Walled Garden. The decision regarding our Lottery Bid should be known at the end of June.

6. Election of officers:

The following nominations were read out by the Chairman:-

OFFICERS:

Chairman - Ian Brooks

Vice Chairman – Vacant

Treasurer – Alison Holtorp

Senior Road Steward – Alison Akerman

Secretary – Irene Groom

GENERAL COMMITTEE;

Planning – Jackie Redrup

Police Matters – Ian Murray

Health Matters and Community Voice – Elizabeth Beggs

Newsletter – Linda Laurie and David Harper

Web Administrator – Gawain Cox

UNASSIGNED COMMITTEE MEMBERS; Keith Barnard, Carolyn Derecki, Karen Spink, Ian Parkinson.

These nominations were proposed by Sylvia Ladyman and seconded by Albert Joslin – and approved by a show of hands.

IB went on to explain that under our Constitution we can appoint a President – he then went on to nominate Chris Groom for that role and this was seconded by Karen Spink – this was approved by a show of hands.

7. Any other business:

- IB explained that at the last AGM in 2012 certain changes were made to our Constitution but it was felt that Rule 12 Meetings of the Executive Committee needed to be made more clear – IB proposed that Rule 12 should read as follows:-
 - The Executive Committee shall meet at least nine times a year. Five Members of the Executive Committee shall form a quorum. If the circumstances warrant, the Executive Committee may declare a Member of the Executive Committee no longer a Member of the Executive Committee.This was seconded by Jackie Redrup and approved by a show hands.
- The Royal British Legion thanked ERA for their help and support in getting a CCTV camera for the Eastcote War Memorial.
- Sylvia Ladyman thanked all the committee for their hard work during the year.
- IB closed the meeting with thanks to LL and CD for doing the refreshments and wished everyone a safe journey home.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm

The date of the next ordinary meeting is WEDNESDAY 26TH JUNE 2013 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.