



ST PHILIP & ST JAMES (LECKHAMPTON) AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting of the Association,

held on Wednesday 8 June 2011 at Church House

1. Welcome and Introduction

About 60 members and guests attended the meeting. Apologies were received from Martin Horwood MP, Ross Nicholl of the Police, Hazel Mace on behalf of the Church, Richard Lyons, Committee member; and a number of members.

John Davidson, as Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He offered a particular welcome to Cllrs Rob Garnham and Antonia Carter Noble.

The proposed Agenda for the meeting was approved.

2. Minutes of the 5th Annual General Meeting

2.1 Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2010 had been circulated and were available on the website (www.spjara.org.uk). It was proposed by John Davidson, and unanimously agreed by the meeting, that the Minutes should be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Matters Arising

Michael Dower reported that since Rev Ian Bussell had left St Philip and St James Church and not so far been replaced, the Church's Open Reach development proposals had been put on hold. SPJARA had raised over £200 towards this fund, which would be kept until it was needed when a new Vicar was appointed.

3. Report on the work of the Association over the last year

Cassandra Phillips, Hon Secretary, reported that:

- Membership was 122 at the end of March (not all of whom had renewed yet), compared with 157 in 2010-11. It was hoped to be able to increase this figure.
- the Committee of 13 members, which had held six meetings during the year, had been reduced to 12 members when John Smith moved to Charlton Kings in December 2010.
- an active programme of social events had been organised, including the Jazz Party in Toni Jones' garden on 25 June; opening of the renovated Norwood Triangle on 3 July; 'Garden' Party at Church House on 10 September; visit to Bletchley Park on 21 October; talk by Maurice Gran on 22 October; Children's Christmas party on 4 December; the *Not Quite* Burns Night Supper on 28 January; talk on Wildlife Gardening (jointly with Cheltenham Connect Go Green group) on 23 March; and visit to Croome Park on 8 May. She expressed the Committee's warm thanks to all who had hosted and organised these events
- five Newsletters and some additional flyers had been produced during the year with the help of Michael Dower, Maurice Gran and Peter Berridge, and delivered to every home in the SPJARA area by a team of deliverers led by Jill Masryszak.
- the website had been maintained with the help of Wendy Ellyatt.

Michael Dower, Committee member, then took up the presentation. He said that this had been a very active year, marked by increasingly close cooperation with the Borough and County Councils and with Cheltenham Connect. He focused first on action taken on priorities stated two years ago by Association members, namely:

- street cleansing, in cooperation with the Borough and County Councils, in eight of the 17 streets in SPJARA's area
- action taken by the County Council to re-surface Brandon Terrace Lane and parts of Andover Walk: this was very welcome, after some years of pressure from SPJARA, supported by Councillor Rob Garnham
- negotiations with the County Council about the infilling of gaps in the historic avenue of trees in Grafton Road, which – with the aid of Councillor Garnham – now offers the prospect of a pilot scheme of cooperation between SPJARA and the Council to achieve that infilling, with shared costs and achievement of economies through possible use of trees from the Cheltenham Tree Group's nursery
- planting by the Association of further shrubs on the verges of Grafton Road
- support to Cheltenham Tree Group in plans for an ambitious Trees Campaign for Cheltenham
- regular monitoring of all new planning applications, including the submission of objections or comments related to proposed new buildings at 54 Painswick Road and 46 Painswick Road, and new dormer windows at 6 Park Place : Michael noted that building work had at last started on the construction of new houses at 14 Gratton Road
- regular monitoring also of applications for work on private trees in the Conservation Area, including successful objection to the felling of a very significant mature sycamore at 90 Painswick Road, and comment on pruning of trees outside 9 Grafton Road and at Denning Court. Proposals to re-pollard lime trees at Exmouth Arms had prompted the allotment holders there to undertake a welcome clean-up of the margins of the backland.

Michael then described the forthcoming public consultation on Street Parking in south Cheltenham, which the County Council is initiating. SPJARA, together with Cheltenham Connect and the Traders Associations, are represented on a Focus Group that is advising the County Council on this process. A questionnaire survey of all residents and all traders is expected to start in July, to seek views on problems of street parking and reaction to possible parking schemes, which may involve parking permits for residents and businesses within defined zones.

Michael ended his report by referring to the completion of work on the renovation of Norwood Triangle; the formal opening on 3 July 2010, timed to coincide with the bicentenary of the opening of the tramroad; the production of the Historic Trail leaflet; the creation of the website www.cheltenhamssouthtown.org; and the more recent work to maintain the site, including the watering of trees and the sweeping of loose grit. He was delighted that the Triangle had been used as the focal point of the Street Party on 29 April, to mark the Royal Wedding; and he recorded that the Association had secured a so-called Sustainability Grant from the Big Lottery, related to the Norwood Triangle project, in order to pursue an Oral History project. These two initiatives were being led by Wendy Ellyatt.

Wendy Ellyatt, Committee member and Chair of Cheltenham Connect, completed the presentation by describing three initiatives :

a. Street Party, 29 April 2011. This was initiated by Cheltenham Connect, together with SPJARA and Bath Road Traders' Association. The Triangle was the focal point, but to close it meant closing parts of 8 streets. This allowed the placing of 60 hired tables, and some others brought out by local residents. Over 350 people joined the party, enlivened by a succession of five bands and an entertainer, with bunting, children's games and face- painting, balloons, and a bar. A great time was had by all. Plans may now be laid to celebrate next year's Diamond Jubilee in high style.

b. Oral History project. Wendy introduced Cecily Etherington, who is working with her on the project. They described the aim, which is to help local schoolchildren to understand

the history of the area and, in particular, how shopping and food production have changed over the last hundred years, and to gather the memories of older people about those changes. All four local primary schools are involved. Each school has had an awareness-raising session; and the plan is to hold recording sessions, at which older people are prompted by the children to offer their memories, which will be recorded. Extracts from these memories and the children's reactions will then appear on a website and be used in other ways. All older residents who felt that they could contribute to the project were invited to let Wendy know.

c. Bath Road Connect Streets project. After a year of discussions with the Borough Council about ways in which the southern section of Bath Road might be enhanced as place to visit and shop, Cheltenham Connect secured a Community Pride grant of £5,000 for a first phase of work. It has set up a working group, on which SPJARA is represented, and has enlisted the voluntary help of Stanley Partnership as landscape architects. The aim of the first phase is to identify a couple of key sites where combined planters/seats could be located along with interpretive signs. The longer-term aim is, however, to develop a design strategy for the whole street that will enable local traders and residents to then sponsor individual elements.

Those present welcomed these reports. In discussion, the following points were made :

- Councillor Garnham said that Park Place highway will soon be re-surfaced. Re-surfacing of Tudor Lodge Road had been requested, but cannot be given priority.
- Wendy Ellyatt expressed concern about clumsy re-surfacing work after relaying of gas mains in Ashford Road.
- Councillor Garnham warmly welcomed SPJARA's initiative in proposing cooperation with the County Council on street tree planting, and confirmed that the Council was happy to co-fund the infilling of the avenue of trees in Grafton Road, subject to identifying viable locations for new trees. On a wider issue raised by the Association, he said that he is pressing his political colleagues to set up a formal mechanism whereby individuals or organisations might contribute to a fund for planting and maintenance of more street trees in Cheltenham. This is being considered in the context of heavy pressure on the County's Highway budget.
- Mrs Burgess asked whether the larger lime trees in the Gratton Road avenue might be thinned, in order to reduce the amount of dropped twigs and leaves : Michael Dower promised to raise this with the County Council Trees Officer
- Peter Berridge asked that Gratton Road be cleaned twice a year, in view of the dropped leaves and twigs : this request will be put to the Borough Council
- Wendy Ellyatt reported that the shopping space at the Robert Young site was about to be taken on a three-year tenancy by a young couple for use on 3 or 4 days a week for farmers' market, antiques and other sales : this was warmly welcomed.
- Paul Vlcek expressed concern about SPJARA's role in monitoring planning applications. In his view, SPJARA should not act as a pressure group, or oppose proposals by local residents. If formal comments were made in the name of the Association, all members should first be consulted. In response, Michael Dower said that the Committee had adopted a formal policy on this issue, whereby formal comment would only be made where a proposal would have damaging affect on general amenity of the area or serious adverse impact on neighbours and both the applicant and the neighbours had been consulted. The Committee has the job to act on behalf of the Association. Reactions to planning applications must be submitted with three weeks, and it would be difficult to consult all members within that period. After a brief further debate on this issue, the Chairman said that the Committee would take a fresh look at the policy in the light of points made.

4. Treasurer's report on the Association's finances for the year ending 31 March 2011

Agnes Hanson, Treasurer, presented accounts as shown attached to these Minutes. She explained the division into three sections – a General account; Norwood Triangle; and the Trees Fund. In the general account, income exceeded expenditure by just over £9. The

Norwood Triangle account was in deficit by £121. The Trees Fund contains £266.28, with no spending while we wait for the Grafton Road pilot project. So the Association ended the year with a balance of £1,182.24 (including the £266.28 in the Trees Fund), compared with £1,027.12 on the General account at the start of the year.

The report was welcomed and approved by those present.

5. The year ahead

The Chairman summarised the items that the Committee envisage will form part of the next year's activity, including :

- sustaining the interest of existing members, and seeking new members
- producing Newsletters, and maintaining the Website
- continuing the annual cleansing of streets and drains
- pursuing the Street Trees pilot project to infill Grafton Road avenue
- contributing to the wider Cheltenham Tree campaign
- checking planning applications, subject to reviewing the policy on this issue
- contributing to the Street Parking consultation
- supporting the Bath Road Connect Streets initiative
- completing, and following through, the Oral history project
- organising events for members, starting with the Garden Party with Jazz on 8 July
- preparing to mark the Queen's Jubilee, June 2012

The chairman invited members to propose events or excursions. He would himself like to visit the Morgan's car factory in Malvern : several members expressed interest in this.

Jonathan Moffitt, Committee member, proposed that the Association might, in 2012 and in cooperation with Cheltenham Connect, launch an Exhibition or Competition on the theme 'The look of the place' or 'The Spirit of the place', focused on South Cheltenham. This might focus on buildings, trees, public spaces, gardens or wildlife; might include a photographic competition, with help from the Cheltenham Camera Club; and might lead to an exhibition in St Philip and St James church. The schools and the University might be involved. This idea was welcomed by those present. It was suggested that a poetry competition might be included. Councillor Garnham urged prior discussion with Cheltenham in Bloom.

6. Presentation to John and Berenice Smith

The Chairman expressed to John Smith the Association's warm appreciation of his service as a co-founder of SPJARA in 2006, its Secretary for the first two years, and active Committee member until his recent move to Charlton Kings. John's hard work, resourcefulness and skills in organising events had contributed greatly to the success of the Association over these years.

The Chairman presented to John a framed memento of John's activities, created by past Committee member Heather Mansell-Jones. A bouquet was presented to Berenice Jones, with warm thanks for her support as an active member.

John Smith thanked the Association for the time that he had been a member, and for the friendships that he had made since it was formed, so soon after he and Berenice came to live in Cheltenham.

7. Election of Honorary Officers and Committee Members

The Hon Secretary said that she had received nominations for election of officers and re-election of most members of the Committee. Peter Berridge had indicated that he did not wish to serve again. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were all

willing to serve for a further year. The Committee would welcome new blood, particularly young people and residents of streets not now represented on the Committee.

This appeal did not yield any new nominations. Accordingly, the Chairman sought the meeting's agreement to election *en bloc* of the following officers and Committee members, which was agreed *nem con*.

| Name | Position | Proposed | Seconded |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| John Davidson | Chairman | Cassandra Phillips | Michael Dower |
| Philip Farmer | Vice Chairman | Michael Dower | Jonathan Moffit |
| Cassandra Phillips | Secretary | John Davidson | Michael Dower |
| Agnes Hanson | Treasurer | Cassandra Phillips | Michael Dower |
| Maurice Gran | Committee Member | Jonathan Moffit | Michael Dower |
| Michael Dower | Committee Member | Cassandra Phillips | John Davidson |
| Richard Lyons | Committee Member | Cassandra Phillips | Michael Dower |
| Vanessa Angelo-Thompson | Committee Member | Wendy Ellyatt | Jill Maryszczak |
| Wendy Ellyatt | Committee Member | Vanessa Angelo-Thompson | Jill Maryszczak |
| Jonathan Moffitt | Committee Member | Cassandra Phillips | Cynthia Bale |
| Jill Maryszczak | Committee Member | Cassandra Phillips | Michael Dower |

8. Conclusion

The Chairman thanked all the Committee for their effective teamwork during the year, and all present for their support.

St Philip and St James Area Residents' Association

Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2011

| | General a/c | Norwood Triangle | Tree Fund | Summary |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Balance brought forward | 1,027.12 | 3,967.48 | nil | |
| Income | | | | |
| Bank interest | | 0.89 | | |
| Donations | | | | |
| – Cheltenham Civic Society | | 443.39 | | |
| – The Rowlands Trust | | 500.00 | | |
| – Stephen Pimenoff | | | 50.00 | |
| Jazz Party - net income | | | 175.28 | |
| Garden Party | | | | |
| – part of net income | | | 41.00 | |
| – other net income | 56.00 | | | |
| Other social events | 947.03 | | | |
| Subscriptions | <u>527.50</u> | | | |
| Total income (including balance) | 2,557.65 | 4,911.76 | 266.28 | 7,735.69 |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Norwood Triangle costs | | | | |
| – Contribution to main costs | | 3,073.67 | | |
| – Publicity and launch event | | 898.13 | | |
| – Historic Trail leaflets | | 996.00 | | |
| – Organisational costs | | 64.96 | | |
| Gift to church from Garden Party | 52.77** | | | |
| Other social events | 1,130.29 | | | |
| Public Liability Insurance | 193.28 | | | |
| Stationary, Printing etc | <u>144.35</u> | | | |
| Total expenditure | 1,520.69 | 5,032.76 | nil | 6,553.45 |
| Excess of income over expenditure | 1,036.96 | (-121.00) | 266.28 | |
| = Balance at 31 March 2011 | | | | 1,182.24 |
| Outstanding at 31 March 2011 | | | | |
| Gift to Church Open Reach (cheque not yet cashed) | 41.00 | | | |
| Invoice for Website maintenance | <u>105.74</u> | | | |
| Total of outstanding liabilities | 146.74 | | | |

** Not shown in the accounts is a further £107.53 cash gift to the Church Open Reach Fund