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

## Minutes of the 8th Annual General Meeting of the Association,

**held on Wednesday 22 May 2013 at Church House**

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

The meeting was chaired by Clair Chilvers (Chairman). She welcomed everyone to the meeting.

About 45 members and guests attended the meeting. A particular welcome was offered to Martin Horwood MP, Cllr Tim Harmon (CBC Councilllor for Park Ward and newly elected County Councillor) and Cllr Rob Garnham.

Apologies were received from Rev. Nick Davies (Vicar of St Philip and St James), Chris Riley (Local Highway Manager for Cheltenham, Gloucestershire Highways) and a number of members.

The proposed Agenda for the meeting was approved.

**2. Minutes of the 7th Annual General Meeting**

**2.1 Approval of the Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2012 had been circulated and were available on the website ([www.spjara.org.uk](http://www.spjara.org.uk)) . It was unanimously agreed by the meeting, that the Minutes should be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**2.2 Matters Arising**

No matters arising that were not on the agenda were raised.

**3. Chairman’s Report on the work of the Association over the last year**

She first paid special tribute to the previous Chairman John Davidson, who died shortly after the last AGM. He had played a crucial part in the work of the Association since it started and is much missed. The Association is intending to plant a tree in his honour and is working to find the right site for it.

She reported on:

* **Membership:** 136 Members paid up for 2012 (compared to 145 the year before). Subscriptions due for 2013 can now be paid for by standing order.
* **The Committee** had 11 members, and had met five times during the year:

 Adrian Phillips was co-opted during the year and Anne McWilliam resigned. Michael Dower moved away in August to Dorset. He was the founding Chairman of SPJARA and his energy was legendary (indeed that energy has been transferred to Beaminster where he seems to be single-handedly restoring a forest). The SPJARA tree watering equipment is named after him.

* **Social events:**

An active programme of social events had again been organised, including: the July 2012 Jazz Party in Roger and Marie Owen’s garden (50 attendees raised £149 for the Tree Fund);

wine tasting organised in Church House by Maurice Gran (Ranulf Middleton presented the wines, and 24 attendees raised £90 for the Tree Fund); a special group visit to see the snowdrops at Colesbourne on February 18th organised by Maurice and Carol Gran (23 attendees much enjoyed the visit on a very cold but sunny day); Dyrham Park (National Trust) private tour on May 2nd organised by Adrian Phillips (attended by 17 members and guests, a very enjoyable and informative visit). In addition, a Christmas Party organised by Agnes Hanson for all age groups had unfortunately had to be cancelled for lack of support.

Thanks were due to all of the organisers, particularly Jill Maryszczak, Phil Farmer, Maurice and Carol Gran. For next year it was hoped to have an **Events Sub-Committee** for which volunteers were needed. Plans included the Summer Jazz Garden Party on July 12th and a Literary Wine Tasting on Nov 1st.  Ideas for events for next year were being considered, such as a Quiz night, and events that would be attractive to younger members.

* **Five Newsletters** had been produced during the year with the help of Sandy Phillips and Maurice Gran and the copying done by Jonathan Moffitt. These had been distributed to every house in the SPJARA area, not just members, by a team led by Jill Maryszczak. More volunteers were needed to deliver to a street or two.
* The **web site** had been transformed and was now regularly updated by Adrian Phillips ([www.spjara.org.uk](http://www.spjara.org.uk))

**Our local environment:**

* **Planning applications:**

Regular monitoring of all new planning applications had been done by Adrian Phillips, following Michael Dower’s departure. On average there had been one every three weeks and most were not contentious. If it was felt comment was needed the procedure was if possible to speak or write to the owner and neighbours and then to agree any comments with the SPJARA Committee. Planning applications commented upon during the year were:

* Cleeveley Garage: not opposed but suggestions made re privacy of the neighbours and incorporating a green roof (this was unfortunately not taken up when planning was granted).
* 6 Park Place: we did not object but commented on the design, again the suggestions were not taken up.
* Ashford Walk Cottage: replacement of a bungalow with a two-storey dwelling. SPJARA had submitted an objection (as did many local residents) and asked that the Planning Committee rather than officers should make the decision (which was still awaited).

It had also come to our attention that **grass verges** were being damaged, especially on the SW corner of Grafton and Painswick Roads, outside 67 Painswick Rd, and 2 Grafton Rd where residents’ cars were driven over the daffodils. SPJARA would try to tackle these with the help of the residents living at these addresses.

* **Street parking public consultation:** As with the County Council’s parking consultation in 2011/12, the Committee agreed that its role was to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage individual residents to respond to the proposals for a possible extension of the parking zone introduced in 2012.
* **Potholes:**  These remained a problem in the area and were particularly dangerous for cyclists (although they do have the merit of slowing the traffic).
* **Street cleansing:** As in previous years, SPJARA had distributed leaflets to ensure the roads were kept clear of cars when annual street cleaning by CBC took place (co-ordinated by Phil Farmer). In addition, Adrian Phillips and Jonathan Moffitt have been doing occasional litter collections and more volunteers needed for this.

**Bath Road Connect streets project:** Chaired by Wendy Ellyatt as Chair of Cheltenham Connect with Adrian Phillips as the SPJARA representative. Much progress has been made in enhancing the southern section of Bath Road (more details are on <http://www.connectmystreet.org/> ). Five trees had been planted in four of the front gardens, with Adrian Phillips leading negotiating with the house owners, the funders and the tree nursery. More were planned for next year.

* **Norwood Triangle Development**

The final stage of this project was the erection of an interpretive plaque on the Norwood Triangle explaining the history of the area. The trees were all now flourishing, and were being monitored by a local resident. SPJARA continued to try to get Gloucestershire Highways to rectify the drainage and the loose surface which had been unsatisfactory from the start. The Chairman emphasised the important point that considerable funds had been raised for the Triangle by the community, including a Lottery grant, and its current state was a disgrace.

* **Trees:** Regular monitoring of applications for work on private trees in the Conservation Area continued (with thanks to Richard Lyons). There had been no objections to tree felling orders this year but the planting of replacement trees was requested at 74 and 67 Painswick Road, 4 Park Place and the back of Gratton Road. Richard Lyons is stepping down from his responsibility for trees and a volunteer to replace him will be sought.
* **Tree maintenance**: The Indian Chestnut trees planted on SPJARA initiative with Borough and County Council help in 2012 in Grafton Rd. were watered throughout the spring and summer months by volunteers. We also maintained the shrub border in Grafton Rd.
* **Cheltenham Civic Society:** Adrian Philips and Richard Lyons represented SPJARA on a new forum of Cheltenham local residents’ associations and traders’ groups set up by Cheltenham Civic Society to discuss issues such as transport and planning. Adrian has agreed to continue to represent SPJARA on this forum.

**The Chairman then thanked the Committee** members for their work in the past year, in particular Agnes Hanson who was standing down as Treasurer but who would continue to be on the Committee. She also thanked the two members of the Committee who were retiring, both of whom had made a huge contribution to SPJARA. Wendy Ellyatt, the founder and Chair of Cheltenham Connect, had worked closely with Michael Dower on the History Project, the Norwood Triangle scheme and liaison with the Bath Road Connect Streets project. Jill Maryszczak had been involved from the beginning and had taken responsibility not only for organising the food and drink at events (doing much of the cooking herself), but also for co-ordinating the Newsletter distribution.

**During the discussion** on the Chairman’s report, the following points were raised:

**Norwood Triangle surface:** Cllr. Tim Harmon reported that Chris Riley of Glos. Highways was planning for the whole area to be resurfaced in summer 2013. He was attending a site meeting on 4th June to which SPJARA should send a representative. Cllr. Rob Garnham explained that the issue had taken so long to resolve because the inefficient original contractor had gone out of business. Cllr Tim Harmon said he would follow up both the pot-holes and the grass verges problems.

**4. Treasurer’s report on the Association’s finances for the year ending 31 March 2013**

Agnes Hanson, Treasurer, presented the accounts as shown attached to these Minutes. In the general account, income exceeded expenditure by £1,370. The Trees Fund contains £587. The Association ended the year with a balance of £1,767 compared with £2,282 at the start of the year. Outstanding liabilities totalled £140.

The report was welcomed and approved by those present.

**5. Election of Honorary Officers and Committee Members**

 The Hon Secretary said that she had received nominations for election of all the officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Hon Secretary) who were willing to serve for a further year. There was no nomination for the Hon Treasurer so this position would be agreed by the Committee. There were nominations for the re-election of all current members of the Committee except for Wendy Ellyatt and Jill Maryszczak who were retiring. Two new Committee Members, Hugh Arthur and John Patterson, were nominated.

 The Chairman sought the meeting’s agreement to election *en bloc* of the following officers and Committee members, which was agreed *nem con*.

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| **Name** | **Position** |  |  |
| Clair Chilvers | Chairman  |  |  |
| Philip Farmer | Vice Chairman |  |  |
| Cassandra Phillips  | Secretary |  |  |
| Agnes Hanson | Committee Member  |  |  |
| Maurice Gran | Committee Member |  |  |
| Hugh Arthur | Committee Member |  |  |
| Richard Lyons | Committee Member |  |  |
| Vanessa Angelo-Thompson | Committee Member |  |  |
| Adrian Phillips | Committee Member |  |  |
| Jonathan Moffitt | Committee Member |  |  |
| John Patterson | Committee Member |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**6. Cllr. Tim Harmon**

Cllr Tim Harmon, SPJARA member, had now been elected as County Councillor for Lansdown and Park Ward, as well as CBC Councillor for Park Ward. He reiterated that he would keep in close touch on issues including the parking consultation, Norwood Triangle and pot-holes.

**7. The year ahead**

- In discussion, members endorsed the Associations’ current schedule of activities being continued in the year ahead. A plea for getting Norwood Road swept was made, as it had not previously been included in the roads swept.

- Suggestions for SPJARA events included:

* More privately guided visits to National Trust or similar houses or gardens
* Talks by well-known speakers of interest to young people
* A quiz evening
* A barbeque, possibly in a pub garden
* The great importance of maintaining the area’s gardens for the benefit of insects, bees, plants, mammals and birds was discussed, following Audrey Stevens’s presentation on the current severe decline in the country’s wildlife. It was suggested that gardening for wildlife could be encouraged through a competition.

**Volunteers needed**

Members were needed to help during the year ahead in particular with:

* Watering the trees and shrubs in Grafton Rd
* Delivering Newsletters
* Occasional street litter collections in the area (equipment was available from CBC)
* Somebody with expertise on trees was needed to replace Richard Lyons in monitoring and coordinating any SPJARA comments on the applications for work on private trees in our Conservation Area.

**8. Conclusion**

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all present for their support.

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 *After the conclusion of the formal AGM, Bronwen Thornton, the Development Director of Walk 21 gave a stimulating talk on Liveable neighbourhoods: local transport ideas and opportunities*

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