

BERKHAMSTED CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 14th MAY 2014 AT 8PM AT STONYCROFT, 9 SHRUBLANDS ROAD, BERKHAMSTED

Present: Susan Johnson (Chairman)
Gordon Bluck (Vice Chairman)
Miranda Cummins (Hon. Secretary)
Christine Manning (Hon. Treasurer)
Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby (Hon. Membership Secretary)
Paul Crosland
Tony Statham

Apologies were received from Katy Brookes-Duncan, Jude Egan, Jackie Hicks, Jenny Habib and Rita Jones. Susan was thanked for her hospitality.

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2014 and 1st April were signed. Only signed Committee minutes for the current and previous calendar years will be on display on the website (thus currently 2013 and 2014 to date). Hence a minimum of one and a maximum of two years' minutes will be displayed on the website at any given time. Minutes removed from display at the year end will be maintained in the 'library' on the website (but not displayed).

2. Matters arising not appearing under an agenda item

Community Development Agency for Herts. Paul is investigating the role of the CDA. PC

B-Hive and the Neighbourhood Plan is still being considered.

3. Chairman's Report

Annual Town Meeting on 1st May: Susan & Brian had attended this, along with Christopher, Jude and Katy. There were about 35 people there, including 13 councillors. Susan spoke on the Ashlyns sports hall and the electricity sub-station 'cage' on the station forecourt.

Annual Council Meeting on 19th May: Susan and Paul will try to go. BCA to congratulate Peter Matthews as new Mayor.

Susan and Brian had attended the Mayor's reception on 25th April.

It was noted that Antony Hopkins, distinguished local citizen and musician, had died.

4. Map reprint

This should be ready by the middle of June. The new version will have Tring included but not Hemel Hempstead. Paul distributed the draft cover for the new edition and some changes were suggested. Paul will keep liaising with Bill, will circulate a revised cover for comments, and will then sign it off. Gordon wanted to see the whole map when ready. The map price and other financial arrangements will remain the same. We will continue with our current outlets, i.e. National Trust at the Bridgewater Monument, Waterstones and the Complete Outdoors, but might consider approaching London Midland and Waterstones in Chesham. GB/PC/TS

5. Reports from sub-committees

TASC: Minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2014 had not been circulated for comment as some clarifications were required.

Section 106: Gordon had received a reply to his letter to Alex Chrusciak, Group Manager – Development and Planning at Dacorum Borough Council. TASC felt that this was factually incorrect. Within Section 106 Agreements big developments there is “County money” and “Dacorum” money; and monies should not be used for general maintenance. It was agreed to try to arrange a meeting with DBC Councillors Andrew Williams and Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holders for Planning and Housing respectively. Paul and Gordon will draft it saying the BCA found Mr. Chrusciak’s letter unsatisfactory, and request a meeting. This would be copied to DBC councillors representing Berkhamsted, and Susan would sign it as Chairman.
PC/GB/SJ

TASC is putting together a list of internally illuminated signage in the High Street that it thinks might not have planning permission and will send this to DBC Planning Enforcement.

TASC feels it has done as much as it can on the Ashlyns sports hall. There are still a lot of conditions to be fulfilled, e.g. Secretary of State’s permission on Green Belt issues.

Noticeboard at Swing Gate Lane: Paul will go back to Greenbarnes, the original suppliers he approached. The Committee had set a budget of £1,250 but Paul’s research has found that for £1,350-£1,400 we could get a sign made from “plastic wood”. He will get formal quotations before the next meeting.
PC

DBC will reinstate the damaged noticeboard at Beech Drive/Hilltop Road and reclaim from the car insurance of the person who damaged the sign.

Sparrows Herne Turnpike waymark: It was agreed to accept the quotation of £600, including VAT, from Tim Millard (t/a TM Studios) for the restoration. Permission had been obtained from National Tyres to proceed with the work. The BCA would repay proportionately any underspent grant money.

Totem pole: TASC is not pursuing restoration and/or listing of this item.

Mint Velvet, 195 High Street: There are still some issues on the external finishes and we will keep an eye on this.

Berkhamsted station: The Town Council has written to Network Rail and DBC about the “cage”, and Paul wrote to Dacorum BC; but neither has received a response from DBC. Network Rail said Dacorum had agreed to the siting. We will still pursue this as we do not believe it is permitted development; and that a better site could have been found. If necessary we will seek answers through a Fol request.

Environment Award plaque: Gordon has been to see Mrs. Lyons of ‘Mariners’. She did not like the colour of the ceramic plaque, but favoured black on brushed aluminium, using the same design. Gordon felt £250 plus VAT was too much and was sanctioned to proceed at £200 or less.
GB

ACTIVITIES & PUBLICITY:

Talks for the 2014-5 season: All talks are now agreed:

2014

9th October – Red Squirrel Brewery

13th November – James Moir, Dacorum Conservation

2015

1st January - New Year's Day walk

5th February - Mark Lewisohn - expert on the Beatles

19th March - AGM

16th April – Beekeeping

21st June – walk.

6. Newsletter

Copy date is Monday 19th May 2014.

7. Publicity and Website

We have received lots of coverage for the 'cage' and Ashlyns sports hall, including a letter in the Gazette and interviews on 3 Counties Radio. Thanks to Elaine Mercer who has uploaded the Newsletters on to the website. Susan will email her. **SJ**

8. **BCA 90th Anniversary Celebrations:** Katy is researching venues and menus for an informal lunch, based on 100 members attending. **KB-D**

9. Reports from representatives on other bodies

ANTAS: Susan prepared a report but could not go as she was unwell. Paul was able to attend. He reported similar experiences as other groups, e.g. lack of enforcement of planning rules across the region. There was a presentation by a representative of Civic Voice. Other groups have higher subscriptions than we do, making ours appear quite low. Raising them would give additional monies for projects so we will keep this under review. Christine suggested that members should pay to receive their newsletters by post.

Berkhamsted Arts Trust: Christopher will be attending the AGM. Rita cannot go.

Berkhamsted Community Partnership: Has offered a small grant to the Friends of St. Peter's.

CARP: The next meeting is on 21st May.

Graham Greene Birthplace Trust: Giles Clark, Chairman of GGBT, had replied to Susan saying they still do not have Trustee Liability insurance, so we still will not send a representative.

Town Hall Trust: Still in negotiation with Berkhamsted Town Council about BTC using the upper floor. Chairman is now Peter Elsworthy.

10. Membership Report

360 member households; 22 of whom had not paid their 2014 subscriptions.

11. Treasurer's Report


Subscription income much as last year. Have been some map sales to the National Trust. There was discussion as to whether the BCA should be a grant-giving organisation if we are to become more active in the town. We used to initiate fund-raising for specific projects. Gordon felt we would have more clout if we could contribute towards other people's projects, e.g. CARP. Could we ask for donations on top of subscriptions? We need to check with Graham Spittle about the interpretation of the relevant clause in the constitution. **SJ**

12. Any other business: On 29th May the steam train Bittern, sister of Mallard, will be going through Berkhamsted and, hopefully, stopping here.

13. Dates of next meetings:

Wednesday 25th June (Tony)
Wednesday 13th August (Tony)

The meeting ended at 10.08 pm.


..... (Chairman)
25/6/2014
..... (Date)

Agenda for next meeting on 25th June 2014 at Ashlyns Lodge, Chesham Road at 8 pm

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2014
2. Matters arising
3. Chairman's report
4. Map reprint
5. Reports from sub-committees
6. Newsletter
7. Publicity and website
8. BCA 90th Anniversary Celebration - report from Katy
9. Reports from reps on other bodies
10. Membership report
11. Treasurer's report
12. Any other business
13. Dates of next meetings