

BERKHAMSTED CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14th MAY 2015 AT 8PM AT ASHLYNS LODGE, CHESHAM ROAD, BERKHAMSTED

Present: Susan Johnson (Chairman)
Miranda Cummins (Hon. Secretary)
Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby (Hon. Membership Secretary)
Paul Crosland
Rita Jones
Tony Statham

Elaine Mercer was welcomed and co-opted on to the Committee.

Apologies for absence were received from Gordon Bluck (Vice Chairman), Christine Manning (Hon. Treasurer) and Jude Egan. Tony was thanked for his hospitality.

Beryl Edwards is now a Northchurch Parish Councillor so is no longer eligible to be on the Town Amenities Sub-Committee. She had been invited to join the main Committee but had declined.

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st April 2015 were agreed and signed.

2. Matters arising not appearing under an agenda item

ANTAS: Susan and Paul had attended its spring meeting, where Paul had given a report. Most other societies were worried that their borough plans had not yet been adopted (Dacorum's has been completed). Civic Voice – an umbrella and lobby group – would like us to join them, but the membership fee would be £500 p.a. We would receive a lot of information but felt it would not be of sufficient benefit to the Association and so decided not to join. We could instead pay to go individual courses. The ANTAS committee is still considering the results of its questionnaire. No-one has come forward to be Chairman. It could continue as a virtual organisation with an AGM.

3. Chairman's Report

Susan said that it had been a very busy time for the Association, with the talk, hustings, lunch, etc. – all successful events – and thanked everyone for their help. She had attended the Mayor's Reception.

Jude has said that she will not be standing for the Committee after the next AGM.

Porters restaurant has opened.

There had been no report in the Gazette of the town council election results. There is a new Town Clerk: Karen Jones, starting on 1st June so she will overlap with Gary Cox for a short time. The Annual Council Meeting is on Monday 18th May and, in Susan's absence, Elaine will try to attend to congratulate the new Mayor, Tom Richie, on behalf of the BCA. It was noted that both David and Elaine Collins are on the Finance and Policy Committee.

The AGM draft minutes have been circulated to the Committee. Members are asked to comment and then the minutes can be put on the website.

4. Map: Bill wants ten copies and Tony will give them to him next week. Christine will talk to him about his royalties; the balance has not been paid yet. Elaine will contact Orvis and Foxes in Amersham, and Waterstones in Chesham, about stocking the maps. (120 maps per box, £1.49 per copy to stockists).
CM/EM

5. Reports from sub-committees

TASC

Minutes of the meetings held on 10th February and 16th March 2015 were adopted and those for the meeting on 15th April had been circulated to the main Committee and TASC members.

Dacorum Conservation Strategy – consultation on draft - on hold until after the election.

The Town Council had investigated receiving delegated powers from DBC concerning flyposting, but has decided against taking them on. This would have required legal expertise and personnel resources which the Town Council does not have. Limit of involvement will be a walk-round every two months or so with DBC Enforcement in order to monitor the situation around the town. The situation concerning A-frames is still under review by HCC.

The planning applications for the Police Station site had been approved at Development Control, but the (linked) affordable housing at the junction of Swing Gate Lane with the High Street was rejected.

The Planning Application for 123 George Street had been withdrawn, while the Application for a fast food outlet at 'Entreat', Gossoms End had been taken to appeal and upheld by the Inspector (limited to 2300 hours opening).

An extension at The Grey House, Kitsbury Road was considered by TASC to be unsympathetic to the remainder of the house and not providing an enhancement to the Conservation Area. An Application for a replacement house at The Pennant, Doctors Commons Road was also considered to be not in keeping with the Conservation Area. Susan had objected on behalf of the BCA to both.

An Application for an extension (at the SW corner) to the office block-to-residential conversion at 263-265 High Street (corner of Park View Road) was discussed but it was felt that this could be left to the planners to decide.

Susan had written to 'express concern' on behalf of the BCA to the Outline Planning Application for development of five family houses at Ashlyns Farm. Paul noted that BRAG and SYBRA had submitted a joint objection to the proposals and BTC had also objected.

It was noted that soil investigation works associated with the proposed multi-storey car park have been in progress at the Lower Kings Road car park.

It was noted that trials were also underway, using temporary traffic lights, for a signalised junction at the Kings Road/ Kingshill Way/Shootersway junction.

Upgrading of the towpath from Waitrose to Billet Lane was still in progress. Gordon reiterated that he had raised concerns with several bodies concerning boats moored long term near to St. Johns Well Lane. C&RT will enforce the duration for which boats may stay and DBC will ensure that rubbish left on towpath and adjacent land is cleared away. The mooring rings, part paid for by BCA, are being installed as part of the towpath upgrade.

Gordon has photographed the DBC Noticeboard at the junction of Gossoms End and Durrants Lane, which has fallen down as a result of the contractors working on Farm Place having cut through one of the support legs. Paul advised that the Town Council will lobby Dacorum BC to replace the damaged board as the contractor was employed by them.

ACTIVITIES & PUBLICITY

Elaine Mercer has taken over Activities from Susan, for which Susan is very grateful.

16th April: The Environment Award slides were shown and members were treated to drinks and nibbles. About 40 attended.

22nd April - Hustings: Very well attended (too many for the hall and people were turned away). All six candidates attended. Thanks to all, but especially Peter and Christine Manning. Susan had received lots of thanks from people who attended.

Elaine had made enquiries about Ashlyns School hall as an alternative for meetings where large numbers are expected. This can hold 400 people.

21st June: walk to Hawridge.

Future talks:

8th October: Talk from a representative of St. Alban's Abbey confirmed.

12th November: "Computer cut house". Talk by resident of the house in Wigginton, featured on *Grand Designs*, confirmed.

Other ideas include:

A speaker from the BFI. There is a short film of Edward VIII walking around Berkhamsted, presumably in 1936, so 2016 would be a good time to see this and have a talk from the BFI. A talk on trees and nature conservation in the Rectory Lane Cemetery.

Elaine and Rita will liaise on the possibility of a joint talk with the History Society to commemorate the siege of the castle by Louis VIII in 1216. **EM/RJ**

6. **Newsletter:** Next issue in June. Copy date 22nd May.

7. **Publicity and Website:** The hustings was in the Gazette beforehand, and also on Facebook.

8. **BCA 90th Anniversary Celebrations**

A very successful occasion – excellent venue, food, etc. Thanks to all, particularly Christine. There was a surplus of £96.01p. It was agreed to put this into general funds.

9. **Reports from representatives on other bodies**

Berkhamsted Arts Trust: Still no secretary or treasurer. AGM is on 20th May and there will be a recommendation to wind up the Trust. They will continue to produce the 'green sheet' until money runs out. Rita will continue as our representative. It was suggested that they might seek sponsorship for the green sheet.

CARP: Gordon will attend a meeting on 19th May and had asked if there was anything we wanted raised. There was not.

Friends of St. Peter's: Will be part of the Heritage Open Day in September.

10. Membership Report

25 unpaid. 355 member households. Two joined as a result of the hustings. Christopher had produced the new lists of Committee members and responsibilities and newly elected councillors. Elaine to be added to the committee list.

11. Treasurer's Report

Everything is paid to date.

12. Any other business

None.

13. Dates of next meetings:

Thursday 2nd July (Susan)
Wednesday 12th August (Susan) Apologies Jude
Thursday 24th September (Tony) Apologies Rita

The meeting ended at 9.50 p.m.



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(Chairman)

12th August 2015 (Date)
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Agenda for next meeting on Thursday 2nd July at Stonycroft, 9 Shrublands Road, Berkhamsted at 8 pm

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2015
2. Matters arising
3. Chairman's report
4. Map – report
5. Reports from TASC and Activities
6. Newsletter
7. Publicity and website
8. Reports from representatives on other bodies
9. Membership report
10. Treasurer's report
11. Any other business
12. Dates of future meetings