

BERKHAMSTED CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2015 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
Rita Jones
Tony Statham

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

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2015 were agreed and signed.

2. Matters arising not appearing under an agenda item

There was nothing that did not appear under a heading.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman had nothing specific to report. However she wished to express her thanks to all the Committee for their hard work throughout a very busy year.

4. BCA AGM: Susan said she was willing to continue as Chairman for the next year but would resign from the Committee after that. The Committee agreed that she had done an excellent job and had overseen many successful projects. She has set dates for the Activities programme for next year but will not be organising the programme in future. Thanks to her for doing so this year. She will ask at the AGM for someone to carry out this job if the Association wishes to continue having talks.

Nomination forms for Officers and Committee members were completed.

Paul asked for a lectern to be available at the AGM. Susan will arrange. All other arrangements are in hand. **SJ**

A representative from Porters (restaurant moving from Covent Garden to adjacent Costa Coffee/ Marks & Spencer in May) will speak at the AGM.

5. Map: Boxes of the 90th anniversary edition of the Footpath Map have arrived and are in Tony's garage, but he is unable to confirm exact numbers until they have been moved to storage. Each Committee member will be allocated a copy to help publicise the new edition. We will have some copies at the AGM and at the 90th Lunch, and will give a copy to each invited guest. Complete Outdoors already wants some of the new maps. Christine hopes to sell the remainder of the previous edition to a local walking group at a discount.

6. Reports from sub-committees

TASC

Minutes of the meetings held on 16th December 2014 and 20th January 2015 had been approved by TASC and were adopted by the Committee. Minutes of the meeting on 10th February 2015 had been circulated to TASC members.

Noticeboard at Swing Gate Lane: This is now being used.

Palisade at station: had been painted black. Paul will resume his efforts to get Network Rail to carry out some formal planting to act as a screen. PC

High Street trees: Luke Johnson (DBC) has said that the replacement of the trees removed from the High Street needed to be coordinated with the re-paving project planned for 2015. Cllr Ian Reay (HCC for Berkhamsted) has advised that this work (Prince Edward Street to the Almshouses) is expected to be done in the financial year starting April 2015.

Post box at Swing Gate Lane: Paul had sent a letter to the Postal Review Panel. PC

Application by Druglink for hostels at 22-24 Clarence Road and The Gable, Prince Edward Street: DBC had sent a 39-page reply to an 80-page document from local residents. This reply contained misinformation saying that Berkhamsted Town Council had supported the plans. It also mentioned there was dissatisfaction with Druglink's performance. Druglink has now withdrawn its applications.

Planning applications: Objected to NatWest advertising proposal, and also to five houses at Ashlyns Farm (Green Belt, not technically Brownfield, useful agricultural land).

The borough-wide **Conservation Strategy** is about to be adopted. We have two weeks to comment. It was felt we had nothing further to comment on and have said all we needed to. Susan will write a letter of support for the Strategy. [Subsequently, on reading the draft Strategy carefully, the TASC stance changed. Susan wrote a long critique, while still supporting the Strategy's creation and this was submitted under Paul's name, as TASC Chairman.] SJ/PC

The canal towpath upgrade is expected during March.

Buses: There is to be a second HCC consultation on the withdrawal of HCC-supported bus services.

Environment Award: It was proposed that no plaque be awarded this year but that there would be four commendations: the planters in the High Street; 4/4a Park View Road; Whitefields, Shootersway; and the houses at the former Grey House in Kitsbury Road. Gordon has contacted the relevant people, all of whom are coming. Congratulations to Paul and all others on TASC for their work. This proposal was approved.

ACTIVITIES & PUBLICITY

Susan has set up dates for the next year and has contacted the Herts & Middx Bat Group. We will ask for a volunteer at the AGM to arrange the four talks. Dates booked for talks next year are: 8th October, 12th November, New Year's Day 2016 walk, 4th February, 17th March (AGM), 14th April and summer walk on 19th June.

5th February - Mark Lewisohn on The Beatles: This was very well attended; 85 people, over half of whom were not members. 38 paid and five joined (10 individuals). The numbers attending (in excess of the permitted seated 70) had put the BCA Committee at risk as the numbers admitted exceeded the legal limit; and thus invalidated its Public Liability Insurance. The Chairman would mention admission to talks at the AGM, and the necessity to stick to fire regulation limits. **SJ**

Hustings: Wednesday 22nd April. Conservative, Labour and UKIP coming so far. Waiting for replies from Liberal Democrats and Green Party. Candidates talk for two minutes each at the beginning, without interruption. Susan will collate questions from those submitted before or on the night and group them into categories, eg. education, the economy, immigration, EU, crime and police, etc. Susan has made all arrangements, including contacting the police. Rita will send reminders of the format of the evening to those taking part. **SJ/RJ**

7. **Newsletter:** Another very good issue. Next issue: June.

8. **Publicity and Website:** Lots in the Gazette recently. As a result of problems they had with not printing the Berkhamsted edition, they subsequently gave extra mentions to our items. Susan now has a contact on the editorial team and she will invite the press to the AGM. **SJ**

The website is up to date. Susan will send the Chairman's report for the website. **SJ**

9. **BCA 90th Anniversary Celebrations**

Sunnyside Church Hall on Saturday 18th April 2015. About 50 people booked so far. We would like 75. Christopher will email a reminder this weekend. **CT-P**

The Committee agreed to invite Colin Gray to this event as thanks for his work on the accounts.

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

Castle Liaison Group: Gordon had attended the annual meeting on 4th February on Susan's behalf, and had circulated the minutes to the BCA committee.

CARP: Next meeting on 3rd March. Gordon will contact James Clifton to find out when the resurfacing of the towpath is starting. **GB**

Festival of Light: Miranda attended the wash-up meeting and passed on our comments about the sound system and our offer to resume co-sponsorship of the publicity leaflets. She will be part of a group which is being formed to discuss sponsorship for the next Festival.

Parish Paths Partnership: There had not been a meeting for nearly two years and so P3 had missed out on £1,000 from HCC for 2014/15. A meeting was held on 2nd February 2015 and there are now plans for 2015/16, with a grant application for a replacement gate by the cricket club. If there is any money left they will do more audio trails. Gordon gave each member of the Partnership a copy of the new BCA footpath map.

11. **Membership Report**

The BCA has the same number of members as this time last year. 62 are currently unpaid. Paul asked if members could pay subscriptions electronically; and Christopher said some people are doing so already. Christine will put a piece on this in the October newsletter. **CM**

12. Treasurer's Report

The second draft of the annual accounts were circulated. The Accounts were approved and signed, and would now be sent to the External Examiner. Thanks to Christine. She would be on holiday at the time of the AGM, so the Chairman would present the Accounts to Christine's script.

13. Any other business

DBC is saying that they will now only empty one green bin per household, despite letting people have more than one bin in the past.

The Berkhamsted Town Clerk has resigned and will be leaving at Easter.


14. Dates of next meetings:

Thursday 19th March – AGM

Wednesday 1st April (Susan)

Thursday 14th May (Tony)

The meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.


..... (Chairman)
1st April 2015
..... (Date)

Agenda for next meeting on Wednesday 1st April 2015 at Stonycroft, 9 Shrublands Road at 8 pm

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2015
2. Matters arising
3. Chairman's report
4. BCA AGM – report
5. Formation of Sub-Committees, groups, responsibilities and subscriptions for 2015/16
6. Map reprint – report from Paul & Tony
7. Reports from TASC and Activities (including the Hustings)
8. Newsletter
9. Publicity and website
10. BCA 90th Anniversary Celebration
11. Reports from representatives on other bodies
12. Membership report
13. Treasurer's report
14. Any other business
15. Dates of future meetings