

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 1 November 2005
at Fellowship House at 8.00pm

Present: David B Lewis in the Chair

Simon Abbott, Andrew Botterill, John Boulter (Hon Treasurer), Carol Boulter, Terry Brooks, Alan Brudney, Derek Chandler, Francois Crompton-Roberts, Rosemary Goldstein (Secretary to the Council), Rosalind Josephs, Richard Kemp, David Lewis, (Vice-Chairman), David Littaur, Georgina Malcolm, Steve Morris, Gary Shaw, Douglas Thomas, Richard Wakefield (Hon Secretary), Alan Walker

Visitors: Susie Gregson, Patricia Larsen, Susan Lewis, Joyce Littaur; Jane Blackburn - HGS Trust Manager; Francis Mungai - LB Barnet Street Enforcement Officer; Steven Sharpe and Gerald Anderson - Protecting HGS Ltd; Richard Gentry, Gay Doswell, Christopher Davies - Hampstead Heath Constabulary; PC Peter Pridham - Met. Police; Peter Williams, Edward Thomas, C Rana - London Community Services Ltd; Jane Bailey, David Fulton - Neighbourhood Watch.

1 Apologies for Absence

Arnold Elliott, Jean Barraclough, Denis Baron, Peter Beesley, Douglas Blausten, Colin Gregory, Eva Jacobs, Michael Rowley, Leonie Stephen.

2 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

3 Matters Arising not on the Agenda

Fireworks: David Littaur said that HB School has been approached about the use of the tennis Courts for the fireworks.

Cutting Down Mature Trees at the request of Insurance Companies: Georgina Malcolm said that LB Barnet had not yet reached a decision on the oak tree outside 123 Erskine Hill and it will be discussed at the Finchley Area Forum on 22nd November. She said two signatories to the petition are insured by companies which are taking action against Barnet.

Council Members: Michael Rowley is home and recovering well after his operation.

4 Question Time There were none.

5 Crime Prevention on the Suburb

The Chairman explained that this item was an open discussion to find out what the different organisations do and whether there is any scope for better co-operation between them.

PC Pridham told Council that he is the Community Beat Officer for the Suburb. There had been some 25 burglaries and 21 vehicle crimes on the Suburb this month which was worse than usual. The Safer Neighbourhood Scheme should be introduced on the Suburb next year and each team will comprise one sergeant, two PCs and three Community Support Officers. Although the Community Support Officers have no powers of arrest they can detain suspects for up to 20 minutes and gather intelligence. Local operations are taking place to target-robbery, vehicle crime and drunk drivers.

Richard Gentry is Manager of the Heath Constabulary. He has a team of 12 Constables, including 6 dog handlers, which are divided into three smaller teams of four. Their main purpose is bye-law enforcement and education for the users of the Heath. They patrol the Heath and Golders Hill Park every day of the year and deal with Anti Social behaviour and cyclists who do not use the designated cycle paths and are in continuous contact with the Metropolitan Police. They also carry and are able to use some medical equipment. They deal with the homeless such as Thomas O'Brian and people with medical health issues. They run truancy patrols, and deal with homophobic crimes and liaise with the LGBT Forum and CLASH.

In response to Carol Boulter's Question about dog walkers with packs of dogs, Richard Gentry said that this question is being looked into so that there could be a ruling on how many dogs can be safely walked by one handler. There are at present no specific bye-laws in place

regarding this although Regents Park have a bye-law limiting a handler to four dogs.

Richard Gentry said that action is taken against cyclists not using cycle paths and it had successful prosecutions with fines of £100 to £200 made by magistrates. The constables are trained in first aid and vehicles carry defibrillator machines. The rangers, gardeners and keepers carry out a wide range of work but have no powers. The rangers carry radios so they can call the constabulary when necessary.

Jane Blackburn the Trust manager told the Council the situation regarding the vagrant Thomas O'Brian. She said that with the help of the the Constabulary the Trust had obtained an interim injunction against him forbidding him from entering a defined area, which she will serve on him this week. The Trust will have to return to court to make the order permanent. She appreciated all the help she had received from Jane Bailey and Neighbourhood Watch . The Chairman thanked her and the Trust for all the work they had done to resolve this problem.

Derek Chandler told the meeting that after Peter Loyd had resigned from Neighbourhood Watch, no one had volunteered to take over. A steering Committee had been set up and had been running Neighbourhood Watch and he had been acting chairman for the year, but now he and the Treasurer wish to resign and the committee required new members. There is less support on the Suburb than there used to be. It had been effective and the amount of crime had been reduced, although this month's figures are exceptionally high. Generally burglaries are carried out after a forced entry so messages about securing property had been listened to. David Fulton, formerly a member of the steering committee said that there is a greater level of crime in non Neighbourhood Watch Areas. Volunteers are difficult to attract and it may be that Barnet Borough Watch will have to co-ordinate the scheme which will make it less effective.

Steven Sharpe explained that following a spate of aggravated burglaries, he had set up a non-profit organisation called Protecting Hampstead Garden Suburb which appointed USL Ltd to patrol 17 roads on the Suburb using two vans. The patrols start in the early afternoon and ends at 7 am. It has 400 paid subscribers to the scheme but they would like to expand. They wanted to have some signage but the Trust refused.

Edward Thomas is the Managing Director of LCS Ltd which offers a security service throughout the Suburb. At present it has two patrols vehicles every night . They also have a meet and greet service and an emergency repairs service and they would like more subscribers to enable them to reduce the cost/increase patrols. He considered that a physical presence is a good deterrent to criminal activity.

Francis Mungai is a Barnet Street Enforcement Officer. He talked about the removal of graffiti which could be dealt with more effectively under a new law which Barnet is currently considering whether to adopt. This would force organisations like BT, NTL (the cable company) and the Post Office to keep their street furniture clear of graffiti. He said that BT has a fast response when they are notified but NTL are slower. He is also responsible for removing abandoned vehicles and rubbish dumped on the Highway.

Rosalind Josephs said that graffiti is not being dealt with effectively by BT and NTL and she frequently has problems getting Barnet it removed. PC Pridham pointed out that the police now have the power to search for paint cans used for graffiti.

Richard Wakefield raised the question of cars on pavements and PC Pridham said that unless they are causing unlawful obstruction no action will be taken by the police.

PC Pridham said that it is rare to catch a burglar carrying out a burglary but they are mainly caught from DNA and by forensic tests and through retrieving stolen goods.

The Chairman thanked everyone who had attended and he agreed to circulate each organisation with all the telephone numbers and e mail addresses to assist in better communications with each other.

Council was told that Cllrs Marshall and Harper had requested an independent chairman but the unanimous view of Council was that the Chairman of the RA should chair the meeting. Gary Shaw asked Council for ideas on how to maximise the number of residents attending this meeting. He had organised 1,400 leaflets to distribute to residents who would live inside the proposed CPZ. Georgina Malcolm will provide forms for everyone attending to sign and Steve Morris will bring membership forms. David Littaur said that the Events committee will be pleased to help.

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7 Requests to Spend Money

To authorise the cost of £163 for two bound volumes of Suburb News

Richard Wakefield said that there were 88 issues of Suburb News and one of the bound volumes will be kept in the RA Office and one will be given to the Archives. Alan Walker said that he would like to see copies going to the Newspaper Library in Colindale. Carol Boulter wanted information as to where the bound volumes would be kept and how many complete copies there are and Publication Committee will look into this. Richard Wakefield said that the binding is green cloth with gold letters.

Richard Wakefield proposed the motion to authorise the sum of £163 which was seconded by Alan Walker and passed Nem. Con.

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To authorise the Budget for the printing of the Centenary Calendar

This will be discussed at the December Meeting as the figures have not yet been finalised.

8 Any Other Business

Barnet Voluntary Service Council: The Chairman told the Council that Spencer Hudson had agreed to become the RA's representative which Council were pleased to endorse.

Noticeboards: As there are many notices being circulated this month on the Notice Boards, it was agreed that RA notices should have priority. Although it was preferable to have one notice on each board it was agreed that the householder should have some discretion.

Barnet Civic Network: The Chairman asked whether any Council member wished to attend this event on November 9th at 5.00pm. The main theme of the meeting will be Civic Pride.

Opening Ceremony for Street Name Signs: The mayor will be attending this event on November 29th. 177 signs had been changed and Barnet had refurbished some 68. All Council members are invited to attend.

8 To Confirm the Date of the Next Meeting on Tuesday 6th December at 8.00pm at Fellowship House. This was confirmed