

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 3 November 2009  
at Fellowship House at 8.00pm

Present: Janet Elliott, in the Chair

Simon Abbott, Peter Beesley, Douglas Blausten, John Boulter, Carol Boulter, Tony Brand, Terry Brooks, Bridget Cox, Charles Gale, Tony Ghilchik, Rosemary Goldstein (Secretary to the Council), Colin Gregory, Eva Jacobs, Rosalind Josephs, David Lewis, David Littaur, Selwyn Nakan, Max Petersen, Geoffrey Spyer, Ian Tutton, Richard Wakefield, Richard Wiseman

Visitors: Joyce Littaur, Leonie Stephen

Council were pleased to welcome back Tony Ghilchik after his recovery from his recent operation

1	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Alan Brudney, Richard Kemp, Judith Samson, Gary Shaw, Will Sowerbutts, Steve Morris, Alan Walker	
2	<u>Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting – October 2009</u> Approved	
3	<u>Matters Arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda</u> There were none.	
4	<u>Question Time</u> Joyce Littaur asked whether something could be done about the branch protruding at head level outside Fellowship House. This can not be seen in the dark and could be dangerous. Trees and Open Spaces will look into this.	TG
5	<u>Finance</u> Selwyn Nakan and John Boulter had dealt with a further request for information from Kingston Smith who are looking into the RA's taxation position.	

6	<p><u>Graduated Management Charge</u></p> <p>Responses to RA poll: replies received as of 3.11.09: 265 votes in favour of change to a banded system and 218 against.</p> <p>Council discussed the possibility of encouraging more residents to vote whether for or against the proposals. Richard Wakefield suggested a further campaign to those Suburb residents living in flats who paid the management charge.</p> <p>Bridget Cox told Council that she had sent a personal note with the Suburb News which she had delivered to the 90 flat owners in Heathcroft but few had so far responded.</p> <p>The possibility of using the HGS email list to encourage residents to vote was discussed and whether the email addresses of RA members included on the database might be used to encourage voting. Some members favoured the use of email in this way, but others felt that as a matter of principle we should either contact all residents again or none.</p> <p>Richard Wakefield proposed and Richard Wiseman seconded a Motion</p> <p>That, subject to practicality, we use the email addresses included on the RA database to draw attention to the ballot and encourage residents to vote</p> <p>This was defeated by 7 votes in favour and 8 against.</p>	
7	<p><u>Limited Liability</u></p> <p>Peter Beesley referred to the proposal to incorporate the RA as a company limited by guarantee. He and Colin Gregory had given advice and had discussed the question of membership of the new company.</p> <p>Douglas Blausten thought that we should encourage as many residents as possible, but especially younger residents, to become involved with the RA and give them the right to vote and that the RA could have a membership fee for each member, rather than each household.</p> <p>Terry Brooks agreed that we should try to increase the number of members and that the RA should try to find a simple way of establishing a company limited by guarantee as well as trying to widen the RA membership.</p> <p>Colin Gregory considered that the change should involve the minimum number of changes to the RA's current Constitution</p> <p>Eva Jacobs reminded Council that a working party had been formed in 2005 to address this issue but it had foundered on the question of the administration. We must keep residents informed of what we are trying to accomplish.</p>	

	<p>Janet Elliott reminded Council that an increasing number of voluntary organisations are becoming companies limited by guarantee and that, without this extra safeguard, the RA is having difficulty finding members who are prepared to stand for election as Officers. We live in an increasing litigious society and there is concern that should something go wrong the RA's insurance may be insufficient to cover the costs.</p> <p>Douglas Blausten thought that we must deal with this issue and that anyone who lives on the Suburb should be able to be a member.</p> <p>Simon Abbott suggested making the RA's limited liability a phase one exercise and then dealing with the administrative issues as phase two, once the resources are in place.</p> <p>Carol Boulter proposed and Simon Abbott seconded a motion That the RA Council agrees that we should continue to explore conversion to limited liability on the basis of the present Constitution. Separately, a move to individual membership should be explored.</p> <p>This was passed Nem Con.</p>	
8	<p><u>Procedural issues</u></p> <p>Janet Elliott said that, after further discussions by the Executive, and the circulation of further emails by Council members, it is clear that there remains considerable disagreement on whether changes are needed. There was, however, agreement that some changes to the Standing Orders, which under the RA Constitution can be changed by a vote in Council, should be considered.</p> <p>Following the October Executive meeting, she had circulated a paper to the members identifying a small number of possible changes to the Standing orders and seeking their agreement.</p> <p>As the next stage she will circulate a copy of the Standing Orders to Council members, together with a statement indicating the small number of changes on which the Council will be invited to vote.</p>	JE
9	<p><u>Report from Committees and Working Groups</u></p> <p><u>Events</u></p> <p>David Littaur said that Events had approached a professional risk assessor for the fireworks event on New Year's Eve. She will charge approximately £300 for carrying this out. Council agreed to make the sum of up to £400 available for this purpose.</p>	JB

	<p><u>Laminated Posters</u></p> <p>Simon Abbott had prepared a paper which had been circulated to Council.</p> <p>Council accepted the papers and agreed that in future all posters put on the Council's small notice boards should be laminated.</p> <p><u>Consam</u></p> <p>Geoffrey Spyer said that Consam is undertaking a review of its general strategy as the street clutter programme, which has been a major focus over the last year, is nearly completed.</p> <p>He has also written to the LB of Barnet on behalf of Consam in support of the Trust's policy opposing the demolition of 24 Ingram Avenue and its replacement by two houses.</p> <p><u>Trees and Open Spaces</u></p> <p>Tony Ghilchik said that he had submitted a list of replacement trees to LB Barnet for which the RA will have to make a payment.</p> <p><u>Roads and Traffic</u></p> <p>Ian Tutton reported that he had witnessed an unpleasant altercation in Willifield Way between the drivers of two cars trying to pass each other.</p> <p><u>Membership</u></p> <p>Janet Elliott said that as of 3 November, 1982 households had joined/rejoined the RA for 2009. A further 12 applicants paying by Standing Order were waiting to be processed. At the same date last year there were 2001 members. However, 2009 income is £16 more than at the same time last year and so far there is an increase in the donations to Fellowship House of around £700.</p> <p><u>Community Centre and Museum Working Party</u></p> <p>At the last meeting of the Working Party Derek Epstein resigned as Chairman and Simon Abbott took over. Simon Abbott said that Derek Epstein had agreed to stay on the committee at least until the end of the year. The Council thanked Derek Epstein for his enthusiasm and hard work as Chairman.</p>	GS
10	<p><u>Executive Committee Minutes</u></p> <p>The following issues raised in the minutes were discussed:</p>	

	<p>Colin Gregory said that Derek Epstein had done an enormous amount of work for Consam and the RA and he was greatly saddened by what had happened.</p> <p>Colin Gregory also supported the proposals for consultation, adding that the RA must ascertain what residents are concerned with and if necessary get professional help to assist with this. He had been looking at a report from 1984 when the main cause of residents' concern was road safety and also the de Groot Report where parking, traffic and Market Place shops were the main issues. If the RA asked residents to-day for their concerns they may be similar. The RA should be seen to be listening to residents</p> <p>Bridget Cox suggested an event for young people to encourage their awareness of the role of the RA, eg a mock RA Council meeting similar to the recent 'parliament' held for young people in the House of Commons. Council thought this was a good idea and Bridget Cox and the Events Committee agreed to put forward a proposal on how to progress this.</p> <p>Ian Tutton suggested, that from his experience the most effective way to test this market would be to identify a likely event and advertise it, including preferably by word of mouth. The RA needs to be proactive and decide to offer something, make it available for the age groups and then see whether they supported it. He considered that there is little social interaction by young residents on the Suburb who go to school and largely have their friends and social life outside the area. He offered to make the Free Church Hall available for events for young people.</p> <p>Questions were raised about the reference to an article in the 'Norrice Leader', the Norrice Lea Synagogue's magazine, including comments on the lack of representation from N2 residents on the RA Council. Richard Wakefield will be writing a letter in reply to the article taking up the points raised.</p>	<p>BC</p> <p>RW</p>
11	<p><u>Proms at St Jude's</u></p> <p>Janet Elliott said that she had received a request from the organisers, inviting the RA to continue to be a sponsor of the Proms at St Jude's 2010. She proposed that the RA become a Silver Sponsor as they had done in 2009 and contribute £2750. This includes £1,500 to subsidise the lunchtime concerts where the audience is predominantly local residents, including children, disabled groups and the elderly.</p> <p>A Motion was proposed by Janet Elliott and seconded by Richard Wakefield.</p> <p>That the RA become Silver Sponsors of the Proms at St Jude's for 2010 and contribute £2750.</p> <p>This was passed Nem Con.</p>	

	<p>It was confirmed by Terry Brooks that the Publications Committee is working on a new range of publicity materials including some which will be available to be used at the Proms.</p> <p>Max Petersen proposed that the RA purchases Proms tickets to be used as prizes in a ballot open to residents who agreed to take out a Standing Order to pay for their RA membership for the first time in 2010.</p> <p>The Council agreed that four pairs of tickets be purchased and asked Membership to progress this.</p> <p><u>New Email Group</u></p> <p>Steve Morris has set up the proposed new email group to enable Council members to communicate with each other. Thanks were expressed to Steve for his initiative.</p>	SM
12	<p><u>To note that the next RA Council Meeting will be on Tuesday, 1 December at Fellowship House at 8.00pm.</u></p> <p>Noted.</p>	