

KINGSWOOD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 11th March 2004

Present: Mr. Roy Willcox Hon. President, Mr. Gary Whitney Hon. Chairman, Mrs. Anne Holden Hon. Secretary, Mr. John Phipps Hon. Treasurer, members of the Committee, members of KRA, local Councillors and invited guests.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr. Crispin Blunt M.P., John Gillan, Colin East, Mr and Mrs Roberts.

MINUTES OF AGM HELD ON 13th MARCH 2003

Approval proposed by Cllr. Joan Spiers, seconded by Peter Hawkins and carried by the meeting.

WAR MEMORIAL APPEAL

The President outlined the history of the joint Tadworth/Kingswood war memorial outside St. Andrew's Church. It is now in urgent need of repair, and new lettering at the base of the memorial which will cost in excess of £5,000. RBBC council have received a quotation of £6251.59 incl. VAT. 3 quotes are required, and RBBC will get two more.

C.Cllr. Diana Bowes has approved a donation of £1,000 from Surrey County Council funds. The deadline for completion of the work is 6 June 2004, the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings. Cllr. Maureen Gates advised that the repairs to the memorial could only take place in suitable weather conditions. A memorial plaque for the Canadian forces stationed in the area who fought alongside British troops will be added close to the Memorial. Kingswood residents have so far raised £815 for this appeal and the KRA Committee have agreed to contribute a further £250 from its funds.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman summarised his annual report to the meeting. Kingswood is under considerable threat from developers and from government's stated intentions to increase housing densities. If the residents of Kingswood wish to keep the character of Kingswood as an area of single houses on spacious plots with a variety of trees and shrubs, which give Kingswood its unique character, then we will have to fight very hard to maintain this environment. The KRA continues to object to inappropriate developments, including back land development, plot splitting, over development on a single plot, and flatted developments within the RASC area.

The Chairman then invited questions and views from the Meeting on planning issues and the following questions and answers were noted.

Q. Where in Kingswood would flatted development be appropriate?

A. Possibly, there may be sites in St. Monica's Road and Furze Hill, where flats already exist, but such developments should be severely limited.

Q. Would not more flats exacerbate the traffic problems in Kingswood?

A. Yes most certainly, but this argument doesn't always succeed in planning hearings/appeals.

Guy Kingsbury advised that one property in Furze Hill has applied 5 times for planning permission, and been refused each time.

Q. A member asked if there is a restrictive covenant on the Harcroft plot in Woodland Way?

A. It is believed that there is a restrictive covenant on Harcroft and the Chairman of the Planning sub-committee, Peter Hawkins, will research this matter to see if it would help the local residents and the KRA in their objections to the flatted development.

The President proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. This was seconded by Anne Holden, and carried by the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Phipps, Hon. Treasurer presented the audited accounts and copies were distributed to members of the meeting. He reported that over 100 new subscriptions had been received as the result of a membership drive. The 2003 balance showed a surplus of £859 that has been added to the accumulated fund. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Cllr. Stan Gates, seconded by John Lang and proposed. A vote of thanks was given to Derek Wall as the new Hon. Auditor. Stan Gates proposed that Derek Wall continue as Hon. Auditor. Seconded by John Lang and carried by the meeting, proposed Auditor.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The officers and committee members available for re-election were as shown in Kingswood Matters, including the post of Vice President and acting Chairman.

The Hon. Secretary, Anne Holden expressed a desire to retire her position as Hon. Sec after a tenure of 4 years, due solely to her other business and personal commitments, and asked if anyone present at the meeting would be willing to take on this position. She confirmed that she would like to continue on the KRA committee as a committee member/road representative. The motion to re-elect the KRA officers and committee members was proposed by Brian Hill, seconded by Mrs. Pearce and carried by the meeting.

Volunteers were requested from the floor for the vacant committee positions but no nominations were received.

CAR PARKING

The Chairman summarised the position on car parking in the village as follows:

- Illegal parking by L&G staff appears to have increased
- The station car park is much improved but charges have increased from £1.60 to £2.60 per day
- There is severe congestion along the shopping parade. This is made worse by the time restrictions not being adhered to
- Enforcement should be improved when the council take over from the police
- Shop keepers need both staff parking and customer parking

There are no easy solutions to this ongoing problem.

One suggestion is to take a small strip of the land opposite the shops and introduce “chevron” parking.

Further questions were raised and answers given on this subject:.

Q. Has the Council any information about taking this strip of land?

A. Cllr. Joan Spiers replied that there has been some negotiation with the landowner. Council officers have pointed out that this land is green belt. If Kingswood residents want a very small part of the land, she would investigate further.

Q. Who would pay for such land purchase?

A. Cllr. Joan Spiers answered that it would have to become a community project. It will be difficult, but if there was a will from the community, then funding may be found. She felt that we should also keep in mind the shopkeepers' views.

Q. How much parking space does Mitsubishi take?

A. Not definitely known

Q. Can we prevent Mitsubishi parking serviced cars in the road?

A. Cllr. Joan Spiers replied that if they are taxed, the Council can do nothing

Cllr. Stan Gates felt that we could only have chevron parking if there was one-way traffic, otherwise it would not be safe.

Barry Miles felt that the KRA should not take away green belt – it would set a very dangerous precedent for the future.

Guy Kingsbury asked if it would be possible to widen the road towards the A217.

C.Cllr. Diana Bowes said that if we wanted to pursue this, she would investigate how much of the path/verge was highway property.

The Chairman announcing that the KRA will continue to research the problem concluded the discussion on car parking.

Guy Kingsbury raised the subject of the speed at which vehicles come into the village along Waterhouse Lane, which he believed should be restricted in the interests of better safety.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

As a follow up from the Police Meeting in December, the KRA agreed to act as a focal point to raise awareness of Neighbourhood Watch.

John Hughes gave a short presentation on the history of Neighbourhood Watch in Kingswood in the domain of the Met.

When Surrey Police took over our area in 2000 it soon became apparent that resources were not available due to the number of officers leaving due to pay and lack of housing. These problems are now being addressed and the situation is improving. At a meeting of the Banstead and District Police Partnership Group in September it was noted that the recruitment programme and manning of control centres had improved.

John Hughes then asked the meeting if there were any volunteer NW co-ordinators for the Furze Hill/St. Monica's Road areas.

Q. (from Chair) How many NW co-ordinators would Kingswood need?

A. Usually one per road, but at least 2 for long roads

Peter Allen informed the meeting that he has set up a small Neighbourhood Watch group covering houses at the Waterhouse Lane end of Woodland Way. He reported that they received excellent information from police – monthly report and criminal intelligence. This information is communicated by e-mail to members of the group and is very useful in keeping the group alert to criminal trends and new scams.

C.Cllr Diana Bowes reported that (1) there is now a waiting list for police officer vacancies, (2) a new Surrey wide NW organisation has been formed and is being given a high profile and (3) if there was a need, then a mobile police station could visit Kingswood on a regular basis.

OPEN DISCUSSION

HGV width restriction on Outwood/Waterhouse Lane. C.Cllr Diana Bowes reported that PC Thomas, casualty reduction office, has some new equipment to monitor speeding, and he has been requested to measure the size/speed of vehicles using this road.

Guy Kingsbury complained there are no physical width barriers, which would help reduce HGV's using this route.

Cllr. Stan Gates replied that he has not requested physical barriers as they significantly slow traffic down.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr. Joan Spiers advised that there is now more public access/involvement at certain council meetings. In the planning committee meeting, the public will be able to ask one question per person, which must be lodged 2 days in advance, plus one supplementary question. Additionally, new computer systems will be put in place for planning applications, leading to more efficient handling of applications.

The Chairman announced that the Committee would hold a Planning Meeting, similar to the Police Meeting in December later in 2004 if considered and deemed appropriate.

There being no other business of an urgent nature, the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.