

# KINGSWOOD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2010

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in the Village Hall, Waterhouse Lane, Kingswood on TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010, commencing at 8.00 p.m.

## AGENDA

1. Approval of the Minutes of last AGM
2. Chairman's Report
3. Hon. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of Hon. Auditor
5. Election of Chairman, Officers and Committee for 2010-11
6. Open discussion and questions on matters of local interest and advice from our County and Local Councillors
7. Any other business

All Kingswood residents are invited to attend the meeting and join in the discussions, but please note we ask that only members of the Association vote on formal Association business. Notice of any resolution to be moved at the AGM shall be given in writing to the Association Chairman not less than seven days beforehand. Subscriptions may be paid to the Hon. Treasurer or Hon. Membership Secretary prior to or at the meeting.

Nominations for any Officers, or a seat on the Committee, must be in the hands of the Association Chairman not less than seven days before the meeting.

### COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS AT 27<sup>th</sup> February 2010

|  |        |   |                  |
|--|--------|---|------------------|
| <b>President:</b> Mr. Gary Whitney                                       | 830512 | <b>Hon. Treasurer:</b> Mrs. Adrienne Light                                | 832133           |
| <b>Assoc. Chair:</b> Mr. Simon Parnall<br>(simon.parnall@btinternet.com) | 830888 | <b>Hon. Membership Sec:</b> Mrs. Sue Pollock                              | 830351           |
| <b>Planning Sub-Cttee Chair:</b> Mr. John Lang                           | 832105 | <b>Roads &amp; Transport Sub-Cttee Chair:</b> Vacancy                     |                  |
| <b>Communications Secretary:</b> Vacancy                                 |        | <b>Federation representatives:</b> Mr. Gary Whitney<br>and Mr Barry Miles | 830512<br>358189 |
| <b>Hon. Secretary:</b> Vacancy   |        |   |                  |

### Committee/ Road Stewards

|                                   |               |                 |        |                        |                |           |        |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------|
| <b>Birch Grove</b>                | Mrs. Valerie  | Smith           | 833041 | <b>Waterhouse Lane</b> | Mr. Michael    | Sutcliffe | 832532 |
| <b>Copt Hill Lane</b>             | Mr. John      | Phipps<br>Gale- | 359009 | <b>The Glade</b>       | Mrs. Lynne     | Sinclair  | 832762 |
| <b>The Chase</b>                  | Mr. Stephen   | Batten          | 831282 | <b>Furze Hill</b>      | Mr. Guy        | Kingsbury | 373335 |
| <b>Forest Drive</b>               | Mr. Peter     | Skelton         | 832157 | <b>Warren Drive</b>    | Mr John        | Lang      | 832105 |
| <b>St. Monica's Road</b>          | Mrs Mary      | Staples         | 216345 | <b>Hill Lane</b>       | Mr Mike        | Gibson    | 351682 |
| <b>Sandy Lane</b>                 | Mr. Desmond   | Camblin         | 833823 | <b>Doric Drive</b>     | Mr. Barry      | Miles     | 358189 |
| <b>The Warren</b>                 | Mrs. Adrienne | Light           | 832133 | <b>Lilley Drive</b>    | Mr. Dennis     | Cox       | 830860 |
| <b>Warren Lodge Drive</b>         | Mr. Gary      | Whitney         | 830512 | <b>Alcocks Lane</b>    | Mr. David      | Breaden   | 352815 |
| <b>Beech Drive</b>                | Mr. Simon     | Parnall         | 830888 | <b>Woodland Way N</b>  | Mr. Peter      | Allen     | 832123 |
| <b>Hamilton Place</b>             | Mrs. Ruth     | Hirst           | 830144 | <b>Woodland Way S</b>  | Mrs. Sue       | Pollock   | 830351 |
| <b>Copleigh Drive and Oakdene</b> | Mr. David     | Saunders        | 350718 | <b>Eyhurst Close</b>   | Mrs. Christine | Humphreys | 831218 |

The appropriate road steward also represents the roads that branch off the above "primary" roads.

Vacancies exist for Secretary, Communications Secretary, Chair of Roads and Transport sub-committee and Committee Members. Volunteers are urgently needed and should please contact the Association Chairman so that they can be proposed at the meeting.



## ISSUED BY THE KINGSWOOD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the Association is to be held at the Village Hall on **TUESDAY 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010**, commencing at 8.00p.m. The formal notice is posted on the Village Hall Notice Board and the Annual Report is published in this Newsletter. Resolutions to be proposed at the AGM must be given in writing to the Association Chairman not less than 7 days prior to the meeting. The 2009 audited Accounts will be made available at the meeting.

### CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Kingswood Residents' Association (KRA) is a non-political voluntary organisation whose stated objectives are:

"...the promotion of the welfare of the Community through the good government of the district in relation to planning, environment, safety and conservation, so as to preserve and improve the amenities of the village of Kingswood".

The KRA should not be confused with the Kingswood Village Community Association (KVCA) and individual road Frontagers Associations which do other important work and complement the work of the KRA.

The KRA works closely with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council (RBBC) through our local Councillors to consult and influence good planning practices. The KRA also works with our County Councillor on Surrey County Council matters. The support of our local Councillors is invaluable and is key to the work of the Association.

The KRA works for this community as a whole and all Kingswood Residents are welcome to come to our Annual General Meeting and join our discussions. If you aren't already a member then you are still most welcome to attend and we hope that you might consider joining the Association to give us your support.

This year, in my report, I'd like to draw attention to three related issues – the nature of development in our area, the state of our roads & verges, and what it means to be a community.

John Lang, in his planning report later in this newsletter, says that the recession appears to have had little influence on the number of planning applications being made. There are applications for ever larger houses, inevitably secured by electric gates and reaching higher and nearer to the edges of plots - totally out of character with the existing Arcadian (spacious and tree dominated) surroundings. Use the timeline feature of Google Earth and you will see how trees have been felled – often illegally – to create room for these properties which set new precedents for the area.

New building work has taken a huge toll on our roads, and once-neat verges are often dented and damaged by careless driving and parking. Once the verge is untidy the odd beer bottle cast aside by one of our youngsters doesn't look amiss and so things continue to degenerate. Considerate contractors help a lot, but it's all too easy to feel a victim and retreat behind our doors. The Council is encouraging all in the borough to "Love where you live" – and is, this April, making available bags, gloves, litter pickers and tools for communities to spring clean their area. If you'd like to borrow these tools for your road, then please call Terry Boardman at the Council (01737 276407) who can also arrange for disposal of the rubbish collected. This is a great opportunity for neighbours and frontagers to work to "seize the day", reclaiming this beautiful area and once again taking pride in where we live.

Finally, the recent difficult winter weather has brought challenges to us all. The County Council and Borough Council had to prioritise roads for gritting, and rubbish collections and other services were disrupted as a result. The KRA is looking at how we can work with frontagers to improve coordination on winter preparation and information flows next year. However, on a very positive note, it's worth saying that the weather also brought out the very best in our community with neighbours helping each other out in a wide range of ways – collecting groceries for the elderly, and working in teams to clear snow from roads and drives etc. Ultimately, it is this spirit of togetherness and care for our neighbour that will keep Kingswood alive and special.

Around 50% of residents are members of the KRA. It only costs £5 per year, but by giving your practical and moral support you help us through our own work and through the work of the Banstead and District Federation of Residents Associations – to continue to work to keep Kingswood a special place to live. However, we need more than money and moral support, we also need people to give relatively small amounts of time, to join us on the committee and to give active support in our work. Right now, we need someone to be the KRA's secretary and someone to help us with publicity. We also need people who can help to bring a KRA presence to your road - we need people who simply care about this community. If you think that you might be able to help in any way, then please do get in contact.

Simon Parnall (01737 830888), [simon.parnall@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.parnall@btinternet.com)

## **PLANNING**

The proposed new planning legislation continues to cascade down from the South East Plan as described in last year's Kingswood Matters. However, revised drafts of the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework, as written by RBBC, have been subject of criticism by the Resident Associations and the Government Inspector. In consequence it has not been finalised and is delayed further. A change of Government would put this process in greater turmoil. In the meantime the Borough Local Plan 2005 remains as the essential local guide on planning.

The recession appears to have had little influence on the number of planning applications being made, but clearly construction of houses in Kingswood is now more attractive than flats. Some developers have gone or sold out. Unfortunately the proposals for some new houses are preposterously large and totally out of character with the existing Arcadian surround. New precedents have been set and the standards of acceptability changed or lowered.

We have previously reported on our concerns for the Green Belt surrounding Kingswood, in particular the Banstead Estate to the north (Canons Farm area). The owners, Whitecote Ltd., have inquired about a Continuing Care Retirement Community on 27 acres (of some 520 acres) and have been advised by the Council that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required. Also an application by Whitecote to build houses on 2 acres of an old allotment site alongside Wellesford Close has been refused by the Council and dismissed at Appeal by the Government Inspector. The situation requires an ongoing watch.

John Lang (01737 832105)

## **THE BANSTEAD AND DISTRICT FEDERATION OF RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS**

The Federation represents thirteen residents' organisations in the Borough north of the M25 and acts as a collective representative body to focus attention on a number of important issues at a strategic level. These can cover planning, roads and transport, health and other topics. As your representatives we have been heavily involved in a number of key issues during 2009.

Following on from the 2008 campaign a lot of work for the South East Regional Plan consultation process was carried out and the number of new houses for the Reigate and Banstead area was lowered from 11,240 to 10,000 and the risk of forced development in the green belt was considerably reduced. Following the publication of the South East Plan - also called the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) in May 2009 - our local Council had to tackle the difficult job of finalising the local planning framework in the form of a "Core Strategy" which would direct the development in the Borough through to 2026. This had to reflect the objectives set out in the published RSS and has involved the KRA and the Federation in a lot of work to attend briefing sessions and prepare written consultation responses on numerous planning issues. The

Federation established a small special group to undertake much of this work which included Gary Whitney. The draft plan prepared by the Council was formally examined by a government appointed planning inspector throughout December and January for which the Federation team had prepared further written representations as well as attending several of the formal hearings covering important topics. Much support was given by Tadworth and Walton Residents Association who worked closely with the KRA and special thanks are due to Gillian Hein and Trish Canham who have worked so hard to protect our Borough.

The Council when preparing their core strategy broadly took the position that the housing targets of 10,000 homes could be achieved without building on Green Belt land. However this was attacked by developers who sought to open up a wide ranging review of Green Belt land on the basis that the housing numbers could not be readily achieved on the sites identified by the Council. Because the Council had not indicated any clear proposal to identify Green Belt sites, which is in line with the local residents' expressed wishes during the consultation process, developers and the Planning Inspector criticised the Council's planning strategy. The latest news is that the Planning Inspector has indicated that he will rule the Council's planning "Core Strategy" to be unsound. The Core Strategy is now expected to be withdrawn and further work will be required and Green Belt could be placed at risk. Kingswood is particularly vulnerable because of the former L&G land known as the Banstead Estate and several RA's have under the Federation's banner formed a specialist working group to vigorously oppose any attempts to use the Banstead Estate Green Belt land between Kingswood and Banstead for development.

Gary Whitney and Barry Miles  
Joint KRA representatives to the Banstead and District Federation of Residents Associations

## **THE BBC AND KINGSWOOD WARREN**

BBC staff left Kingswood Warren in the last week of February with the sale of the site to Octagon completing on the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

As reported last year, a Liaison Group with Octagon was set up by the KRA, comprising KRA officers, local planning experts and representatives of the relevant frontagers associations. This group worked to establish an acceptable proposal which would meet the Council's planning brief and provide a high-quality conversion of the mansion into luxury apartments, additional low-density housing with an Arcadian character and a range of benefits and assurances to the community. The resultant plan, which also has the support of all our Ward Councillors, was presented to last year's AGM and received unanimous support. It is the very best that Kingswood could ask for and would secure the land in a form that we would wish to see for the foreseeable future.

Sadly, the resultant application was rejected by the Council's planning committee – essentially because the Council officers assumed a particular weighting to the various elements of the planning brief. This decision is being challenged by Octagon by appeal and the KRA – certain that this application represents the very best for this community – will act as what is known as a rule 6.6 party to the appeal, which will take place as a public inquiry from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> May. You may be sure that we will do all we can to ensure that this beautiful and high-quality development is successful.

As a backup, Octagon has also submitted a revised scheme, reorganising the same number of units into a smaller area, which they believe will satisfy the Planning Officers. This is, in our view and theirs, less attractive – significantly less Arcadian in nature - but it is still a development that we would be pleased to see constructed. It is also a development that shares all the benefits to the local community of Octagon's original proposition. We have therefore supported this application, but in doing so have clearly signalled our preference for the original scheme in order to increase the likelihood of the appeal succeeding.

Simon Parnall (01737 830888), [simon.parnall@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.parnall@btinternet.com)

## **A MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR Mrs. JOAN SPIERS**

Well, as I predicted at your last AGM this year has indeed been very difficult. However, despite the difficulties, R&B are not increasing your Council Tax. This is the first time the Council has ever managed this in its history.

Your services will remain at the same level or in some areas improve. The savings have been achieved with a pay freeze for officers and councillors alike and the end of unfair "extras" for some staff. We have aimed to make a level playing field for everyone. Each manager was tasked with budget savings, presenting that work to their director, the portfolio holder, my deputy and me. Each saving was carefully assessed by that panel, and some were rejected, and others added. In all we saved £2m.

I promised that we, the Council, would do all in our power to get Waitrose up and running as soon as possible. We did, working closely with the store and its staff. It opened on time in November to the great relief of other shopkeepers and residents.

We kept our promise to Horley residents. After much effort, we came to an agreement with SCC (mainly thanks to Michael Gosling) and purchased the land to build the leisure centre and pool. The plans are coming along very well, and will soon be ready to go to committee for approval.

At the Christmas Council meeting Nigel Clifford, our Chief Executive, announced his intention to retire after the elections in May. He will be 60 years old then and entitled to retire on a full pension. He has been with the Council for 35 years and held many posts. We are currently advertising for a new Chief Executive, and hope to start interviews within a month. Great care will be taken to make sure that we employ the right person to carry this Council forward on our next phase.

We are looking at Alternative Delivery for our services. As yet we are just investigating and no decisions have been taken.

We have had a very hard winter, which resulted in some dissatisfaction with service delivery. I am setting up a small working party with your officers to try to ensure that things are better next year.

I give a solemn promise that although we shall do more recycling, as that is what we have been told residents want, we shall NOT change our food waste collection from a weekly service.

Next year brings new challenges: restructuring of the Council, changes in the way we do business, just like the private sector. We shall rise to the changes, and I will endeavour to see that you get better services for your money.

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| <p>Cllr. Mrs Joan Spiers is our member for Kingswood with Burgh Heath and Leader of the Council. She may be contacted by e-mail at <a href="mailto:cllr.spiers@reigate-bansted.gov.uk">cllr.spiers@reigate-bansted.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:Joanspiers@aol.com">Joanspiers@aol.com</a></p> |
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## **A MESSAGE FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR MICHAEL GOSLING**

In the Village Voice recently Simon Parnall raised the matter of the poor condition of the local roads. I am taking the opportunity to reply here because the root cause of the problem is political and I feel that the journal is not the right place. The relationship between taxes paid by Surrey residents, who contribute more per head to the National Exchequer than anywhere else in the country and the receipt by Surrey at the lowest grant per head to any County Council, demonstrates that this Government's priorities are not ours. This makes it extremely difficult for the County to control the level of council tax to supply the services that local residents have a right to expect.

We have set the lowest rise in Council Tax at 2.5% since local needs were met in this manner. With the expected cuts due to the credit crunch we need to restrain expenditure. All departments are subject to budget restraints. This year and for the next four years, all contracts are being reviewed and where necessary re-negotiated.

I would be quite happy to sit down with any local group to explain how we set our priorities and the funding of the budget in detail.

The first fruits of work since last year's election are to be seen in the new lighting contract. Over 70,000 out of 85,000 lamp posts in Surrey will be replaced and will be fitted with new lights. The lights will be better in quality, lower in energy and centrally controlled to lower the electricity usage. For instance, we can choose to dim the lights or turn them off in the middle of the night, all at a lower annual cost. The good news for us is that the Banstead area will be the first for the implementation of this contract so we will see a change before next winter.

The County Council work covers a broad number of areas. Schools - including from April this year the Sixth-Form colleges; Waste Disposal over 560,000 tonnes - we have dropped the incinerator plans in favour of a new eco park; the largest departments are those for Social Care - both adults and children - which take a large percentage of our resources. Adult Care as you know has figured high in the national news of late. The full list is much longer.

Our aim is to work as closely as possible with eleven Boroughs and Districts, the Police and the Voluntary Sector in the County to achieve the best for the Residents of Surrey.

Whilst I appreciate the lobbying by the KRA, I would ask you to remember that I live here too and share the same concerns. I am, therefore, pleased to tell you that the following roads in the Banstead South Division, that includes Kingswood, will be resurfaced in the next financial year. In fact, by the time you read this you may have noticed the pre-patch work that will be undertaken in preparation:

- Merland Rise, Tadworth – full length
- Chequers Lane, Walton – complete road
- Shelveys Way, Tadworth – from the A217 to Ashurst Road
- Tadorne Road, Tadworth – full length
- Waterhouse Lane, Kingswood - from the A217 to the railway bridge, east of Bonsor Drive

Having secured these works I am aware that there are many roads in the area that need similar treatment and I will continue to fight our corner as you would expect.

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| C. Cllr. Michael Gosling is our member for Banstead South and is the Cabinet Member responsible for Adult Social Care in Surrey. He may be contacted by e-mail at <a href="mailto:michael.gosling@surreycc.gov.uk">michael.gosling@surreycc.gov.uk</a> |
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## **POLICING AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME IN KINGSWOOD**

The Police will be holding a meeting for residents of Kingswood on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. This is a great opportunity to meet our local police officers/PCSOs, to get their insight into security and crime and to discuss any issues that you might wish to bring up.

The KRA continues to encourage Neighbourhood Watch schemes and residents are encouraged to participate and help to establish active schemes to cover all of our area. Please continue to let Peter Allen (01737 832123) have your feedback on security and policing matters and he will pass this information along to the Surrey Police.

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## **KRA WEBSITE**

The KRA website [www.kingswoodmatters.co.uk](http://www.kingswoodmatters.co.uk) is now being regularly updated with KRA news. Other local organisations can make use of this site or as a link. Please contact Peter Skelton (01737 832157) for further information.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

We need our membership level of around 50% to rise in order for us to better represent the community. We would ask that those of you that feel the KRA does an important job for Kingswood to please show your support by becoming a member of the Association. The cost is very low, only £5 per year, and the benefit to us all is high. Please contact the Membership Secretary – Sue Pollock (01737 830351).