



EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

serving the local community

www.egra.co.uk

Minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting of the Emmer Green Residents' Association held at the Grace Chapel, Emmer Green, on 10th May 2011.

The meeting commenced at 8pm and was chaired by Mrs Margaret Ormonde. There was a good attendance by members. The Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked the guest speakers and everyone, for coming. The speaker was Chris Aldridge from True Food Community Shop and Vickie Abel from Friends of Caversham Court briefed us on 'Caversham 100 years On'.

1. APOLOGIES

Jane Crutchfield, Pat and Bill Rawlings, Gill and Colin Heaven, Vera Bodman, Susie Downer, Cathi Edwards, Andrea Robinson, Sadie Cooke, Sheila Higginson and Doris Hiscox.

2. THE MINUTES OF THE 26th AGM held on the 28th April, 2010, had been circulated and it was agreed they were an accurate record of the proceedings. They were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Copies of her report had already been circulated to all members and they were also available on the Association's website www.egra.co.uk. The following lists the topics where additional comments were noted:

The Chairman told the meeting that this year had been very fruitful for Emmer Green and EGRA, in spite of the economic downturn. There had been many successful improvements made, including the revamp of the playground and Youth and Community Centre, the tree planting programme, EGRA sponsored new seats by the pond, some new bus shelters and not least, the huge improvement to the green near the school in Grove Road. With the new railings and bulbs planted, it has become a much more attractive and safe area for school and community. The footpath between Russet Glade and Jefferson is now secured as a public right of way, after many years of dispute.

Annual Garden Party at St. Barnabas Church in July, 2010. A stall was manned by Cathi Edwards and Jane Handley. It raised awareness for EGRA and helped to raise money for the church.

Design Completion for Wood Carvings. Members had been invited to submit designs for the wood carvings planned for Clayfield Copse. Six drawings will be selected and the Berkshire and Mid-Thames Woodcarvers will create oak panels, to be set on posts.

EGRA presented the community book awards to pupils for the third year running. Highdown School looks after the EGRA history display boards for use in teaching plans.

Planning and Infrastructure EGRA encourages local democracy within neighbourhoods and can offer guidance and support to those involved. It will itself become involved when wider issues are involved. We also appreciate being able to share information provided by CADRA and RBC. We receive weekly planning lists. Thanks go to our local councillors for the work they put in. The Surestart Children's Centre hopes to offer use for the wider community and may be able to offer daytime basic computer courses if there is enough demand. Contact EGRA if you are interested.

Where graffiti is identified. Please let us know as we cannot always know where this is occurring. This will enable us to remove it.

Outings and forthcoming events

In May 2010 a group of EGRA members toured Caversham Court Gardens. It is hoped to have a tour of the Police Museum in the coming months. (The last was cancelled.)

Reading 50+ have bi-annual meetings at St. Barnabas Hall and there is an Active Retirement Club on Wednesday mornings.

On the 9th November, 2011, EGRA will join forces with CADRA to celebrate Caversham's 100 years in Berkshire.

We are in consultation with other organizations about plans for celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It was suggested that we perhaps have a picnic in the park with a 1953 theme. After a show of hands, people were in general agreement.

Tradesmen's List After many years of compiling the list, Bob Cruickshank has passed the list compiling over to Jane Handley. Any additions or amendments should be passed to Jane, e-mail lukdan@hotmail.co.uk in time for the 2012 list to be prepared.

Membership There are currently around 500 members.

If you do not receive your monthly web updates and two newsletters a year, please contact the membership secretary, egra.memb@ntlworld.com A lot of EGRA information is freely available on the website, and EGRA tackles issues and represents the views of our members. Members present were asked to encourage friends or neighbours to join. There are still some subs outstanding. It is a great help if payments are made on time. If you do not wish to continue as a member, please let us know.

Finally the Chairman announced that Carol Gibson was retiring from her job and moving away, so would no longer be Minutes Secretary. She will be missed, but everyone wished her well. Jane Handley who moved to Emmer Green from Kent, has taken over from Carol, as our Minutes Secretary. Margaret wanted to thank all the committee for their continued dedication. Thanks also to our auditor, Janette Joyce, committee supporters, web manager, newsletter deliverers, notice board carers, graffiti cleaners and tree waterers and our dedicated website manager, Clive Ormonde. Everyone agreed, that without the support of partners and family members of the committee, they could not manage. They received a

warm round of applause.

This year we have had some new members, on and off the committee. It is always welcomed to have "new blood" to give new ideas to the group. We need to build a strong team from all the different areas of our community. We welcome active involvement off the committee, so please let us know if you would like to volunteer.

The Chairman then asked Barry Prior to address the meeting. He said that the Police Museum visit had to be cancelled but it was hoped to arrange it again later, now that the proposed cutbacks had been reduced. We were lent copies of the stops and bus routes proposed. They were displayed at the meeting and found to be very helpful. There will be an exhibition in the Town Hall of the proposed rail changes, on May 20th, 2011.

He told the meeting that as yet there had not been any designs submitted for the Clayfield Copse carvings, so the competition was to be extended until the end of May. The wood is now available and the panels would be 12" x 15". If there were no designs forthcoming, the carvers would be invited to design their own.

The Chairman welcomed the speaker from Friends of Caversham Court, Vickie Abel. She gave an interesting talk about their plans for the Caversham, 100 years. We are sharing an exhibition with them on November 9th, 2011. CADRA plan to have celebrations all year. For information they can be contacted on www.caversham100yearson.org.uk. EGRA and CADRA are united in their commitment to the community and we share a lot of ideas and views.

5. ACCOUNTS AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Harper briefly introduced the accounts for 2010/2011 and they were circulated. He thanked our auditor, Janette Joyce.

Adoption of the accounts.

Proposer: Jim Dunkley

Seconder: Jill Verran

6. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE, OFFICERS AND AUDITOR

All members of the committee and the auditor were prepared to stand again and the three new members proposed, were, Richard Hammond, Andrea Robinson and Doris Hiscox. The "en bloc" vote was unanimous.

Adoption of committee.

Proposer: Bob Cruickshank

Seconder: Diane Hartrup

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concerns were given about the playing field problems. Youths using the equipment roughly and often after dark. Bell Court has had stones thrown at their homes.

Noise until quite late in the evening.

Members are fed up with reporting it and nothing being done. It will be brought up at the next NAG meeting.

8. PRESENTATION BY CHRIS ALDRIDGE OF TRUE FOOD CO-OPERATIVE SHOP

Chris gave a fascinating talk about the history and ethics of True Food. It is local and can bring the best produce to the neighbourhood. Whenever possible they sell local produce but if they must import, they ensure that fair trade operates and a reasonable price is paid. They believe that good food should be accessible to all at a fair price. They stock a wide range of fair-trade, organic and eco

products with minimal packaging. Customers are encouraged to bring their own containers and this way they only have to purchase what they need. The shop is operated entirely by volunteers. They began in a very small way by like-minded people, but the business quickly outgrew their previous premises. Luckily they were offered the property in Grove Road which initially was too small, but the property next door became available, enabling them to have a good storage space.

Chris concluded by offering members the chance to sample some of the products by way of the refreshments.

Margaret thanked Chris.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.15pm after refreshments and an informal gathering.