



EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

serving the local community

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Minutes of Meeting 15th August 2016 at 141 Peppard Road, Emmer Green.

Present. Annette Fairweather (Chair), Michael Denoon – Slater, Linda Glithro
Bill Harper, Veronica Leeke, Liz Lyke, Doffi Parkinson.

Apologies. None

1. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Association Committee held on 16th May 2016 were agreed.

2. New Member. Annette welcomed Doffi to her first meeting.

3. Membership

3.1 The membership is currently 545 with 3 applications pending.

3.2 "Mailchimp" is to be investigated to assist with bulk emails. Action Doffi

3.3 Paypal will not be introduced as a payment method for members without evidence of significant demand.

3.4 Friend membership is to be offered to the proprietors at The Bite Café, the hardware store and the Post Office. Action Liz.

4. BBC Outing. This had been very successful, and presentations of flowers had been made to the volunteer hostesses. There was sufficient demand to make another visit desirable, but it seems unlikely that this will be possible in view of the uncertainty over the site.

5. Notice Board. The inauguration has gone very well – both as regards the practicality of the board and the building of relationships. Thanks were expressed to the work put in by the volunteers who manage the Board.

6. Wild Flowers.

6.1 The designated area is overgrown with grass and the marker poles are disappearing. A small working party is required for grass cutting, site preparation and seeding. Monday 19th September was agreed as the date. A message will go to members seeking support. Action Veronica and Doffi.

6.2 The aim will be to involve the school when the area is established.

7. Emmer Green Sign

7.1 A quote for cleaning of £384 had been received. This was thought to be high. (NB The discussion under the finance report – 19 below – had confirmed that it would be difficult to fund this amount.)

7.2 Consideration will be given to making an appeal (members and sponsors) for contributions.

Action Michael.

8. Queen's Birthday

There had been no worthwhile response to the suggestion that street signs be cleaned.

9. AGM

9.1 The possibility of getting a speaker to talk about the Caversham Park House site and the BBC will be investigated. Action Liz.

9.2 In view of the difficulty of booking the church hall on a suitable date, the use of the St Barnabas Church itself will be investigated. The suggested date is 29th March. Action Bill

10. Highdown Avenue – Traffic Issues

10.1 Information had been received on the potential hazard arising because of poor sight lines at the junction of Highdown Avenue and Highdown Hill Road. It was agreed that this will be referred to the next NAG meeting, with copies to local councillors. Action Annette.

10.2 It was noted that traffic issues in Rotherfield way had been considered by NAG and were now in the hands of the Council for action.

11. Fireworks Safety Talk. This had been provisionally arranged for Saturday 5th November, but an earlier date might be more appropriate. To be investigated. Action Annette.

12. Recreation Ground Trees.

12.1 There is animal damage to several trees, and EGRA had been approached for support to get a response from the Council. A reply had been received and options identified. Some trees are showing signs of recovery and felling may be premature. Others should be protected.

12.2 The Committee agreed to make a contribution of £100 to protective mesh if other support is forthcoming with any further funds and with expert installation. Action Annette.

13. Allotments. Representation had been made to the Council about the problems with sites being left unused whilst there is a waiting list. The Council had agreed to review its procedures for letting sites. No further EGRA action required.

14. BBC Monitoring Service – Caversham Park House. It appeared that that BBC planned to relocate the Monitoring Service, which left the future of the site uncertain. (Note. This news is in the public domain.) EGRA will approach the Council asking to be kept informed of any consideration of the future of the site, and advocating that the opportunity be taken to provide facilities for public benefit (e.g arts centre). Action Veronica.

15. Lapel Pins. Michael was thanked for his offer to provide a supply of lapel pins. These will be used to help promote EGRA at events and in publicity initiatives.

16. Surley Row Conservation Area. The Council is aiming to improve its information on this area. The assessment exercise involved is potentially time-consuming. EGRA has made a submission to CADRA to support their input into the process.

17. South Oxfordshire Local Plan

A submission will be made in support of South Oxfordshire's draft Local Plan. This does not envisage any development adjacent to the Reading Borough Boundary. It will be pointed out that any such development would have major implications for Reading Borough in terms of impacts on local services.

18. Proposed Development "Land Off Peppard Road"

18.1 The Committee considered an email sent by the Gladman Company to Annette as Chair on 9th August.

18.2 The Company should be informed that the Committee fully supports the approach to the area in question being taken by the South Oxfordshire Council in its draft local plan. Any proposal to undertake substantial development immediately adjacent to the Reading Borough boundary is not acceptable.

18.3 No further consideration will be possible until the further information promised by the Company has been received and can be studied.

18.4 Any response to the Company's proposal will require full consultation with the EGRA membership so that the Committee can be in a position to have a mandate from local people that properly reflects their views.

18.5 When the nature of the local publicity being planned by Gladman's is known, consideration will be given to drawing the attention of EGRA members to what has been issued without making any comment or requesting any reactions at this stage.

18.6 If the proposal does proceed it will need resources beyond those of the Committee to develop EGRA policy and submissions. An appeal could be made to members for people with time and any expertise to form a specialist sub-committee.

18.7 As a general rule EGRA would expect to work with the local public bodies and other local interest groups rather than enter a dialogue with the promoters of any development.

19 Treasurer's Report. A summary of transactions to the beginning of August was presented. Whilst a balance in hand of £1,260 was shown, further costs of £326 for the notice board are to be paid and £100 has been allocated for the trees (12.1 above). This would leave £834 in hand. Given the need to retain a balance in hand for contingencies and that subscription income is running below normal running costs, it would be unwise to agree to any further large expenses. This applies to the cleaning of the village sign (see 7 above).

20. Bank Signatories. Margaret Ormonde and Barry Prior are bank signatories, but have now left the Committee. In view of the administrative effort required to change signatories, and that they are continuing to support the Association, the Committee agreed that both should remain as signatories. However, where two cheque signatures are required one should always be that of the Treasurer.

21. Reports back on Local Meetings

21.1 The notes of the Surgery Patients' Group had been circulated. It was noted that the proposal to install a defibrillator would not be proceeded with. It was agreed that EGRA would publicise future meeting dates. Action Annette and Doffi.

21.2 The notes of the last NAG had been circulated. The Borough Council is making further budget cuts with the result that input to the NAG will be reduced and the local EVA visits will no longer take place.

21.3 Veronica had attended the fifth of a series of six "Mobilising the Community" workshops. The content was potentially useful and attendance at any future series should be considered. It was noted the Reading Voluntary Action web site is a source of information and offers facilities for displaying advertisements and publicity.

23. Rhiannon Fairweather

A letter had been received from Rhiannon thanking EGRA for supporting her in obtaining her Duke of Edinburgh bronze award - received on 4th August. The Committee expressed their appreciation for all that she has done in getting the Facebook page up and running.

24. Next Meeting. To be held on Monday 7th November, 7pm at 22 Marchwood Avenue, RG4 8UN

