

Walton on the Hill Village Forum.
Minutes of E.G.M. and Meeting 26th June 2018.

Present were: Grant Webster (Chair)

Jane Gandey (Secretary)

Andy Parkinson

R & B Cllr. George Curry

R&B Cllr. Rachel Turner

Mary Haines, Gillian Hein, Philip Truett, Colin Woods, Charles and Edda Harvey, Chris Clark, Peter Walter, Caroline Walter, Eva Hobday, Stella Gritten, Heather Bishop, Jan Collis, Deborah Kol, Dena and Terry Rechtern, Marilyn Ridgewell, Nigel Ellis, David Wats, Lin Ferg, Moira Taylor, Ethel Armstrong, Richard Pavey, and others...

E.G.M.

1. **Welcome and Apologies.**

Grant welcomed all new members, apologies were received by: Robin and Gina Parr-Davies, Clive Osgood, Jean and Martin Saul, Margaret Laing, Lorraine Smith, Ann Liddle, Mary Cole, Roger Lavington, Moira Robinson, Graham Young, Homai French, David Lerner, Sarah Brown, Liz Bishop, Vic Broad.

2. **Treasurer.**

Marilyn Ridgewell has agreed to become our new Treasurer, she was proposed by Grant and seconded by Mary Haines.

3 **A.O.B.**

There was no other business.

GENERAL MEETING.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of the last meeting of 27th February were approved by Charles Harvey and seconded by Ethel Armstrong.

3. **Ken Ohlson.**

A tribute to Ken, the Founder of the Village Forum had been sent to all members prior to the meeting and a minutes silence was held as a mark of respect.

Grant made the point that back in 1998 when the Forum was started by Ken the main topics of conversation had been traffic, parking and Green Belt. Same as today and maybe it was time to change, albeit difficult, instead of looking for reasons not to change we should be more brave and find solutions to these challenges. Alternatively, if we feel they can't be solved we should stop raising them as issues and focus our energy on the things we can change.

From now on the format of the meetings will change. Every meeting is to have a main theme, normal Village issues will continue to be discussed but not repeatedly. We will hold a forum meeting every 4 months. Should we need an extra meeting to discuss a specific issue a date will be circulated. The Forum Committee is considering introducing a website where all information and updates can be viewed. More news on this to follow.

4. Pond Regeneration.

Robert Justices who is leading the Pond Regeneration sub Committee introduced Nigel Ellis acting Countryside officer for Green Spaces at Reigate and Banstead Council and David Watts who is his assistant. Surrey Wildlife Trust have carried out a survey of the pond their report will be forwarded onto us and circulated in due course. In summary, the carp that are in the pond are the main cause of our problem. They eat all the oxygenating plants and the Invertebrates which clean up the pond, thereby causing it to stagnate. Along with the fish, pollution of the water that feeds into the pond from the road and other feed in points means it is heavily polluted.

A work program is to be introduced to find a balance between having a wildlife pond that also looks beautiful and encourages birds and maybe swans to make their home. The cost of removing the carp electronically is in the region of £5000, the willows at the back need to be cut back and small invasive trees and shrubs need to be removed to stop their roots becoming intrusive but the plants around the edge of the pond provide cover for the ducklings and larvae. Swans cannot be introduced, they need to fly in but to encourage them and the platform needs to be planted up. Richard Pavey informed us that the swans that used to be on the pond had their flight feathers removed and were therefore captive!! He also reminded us that it was the Coral Bazaar fish farm who released the carp into the pond when it closed. Barley Straw bales dropped in do help with reducing the blanket weed and will continue to be changed as required.

The water level is extremely low now because there has been no rain and the water table in general is low, it's unlikely that the fire department will be able to assist in topping up the pond as has happened in the past. Nigel suggested that sometimes it's best that nature takes its course however there are things we can do and changes we can make as a community that will have a medium / long-term impact.

Grant and the committee will be meeting with the pond sub-committee in the coming weeks to formulate a plan of action based on their recommendations. The plan will be communicated and if we need a special meeting about the pond before the next Forum in October we will inform the Village.

5. Matters Arising and AOB.

- a. The Kiosk. The kiosk has arrived!! Evidently the e-mail sent to Lin with the ETA as 27th July was a mistake, should have read 26th June!! It looks great and once the Defib is installed training will be given.
- b. Walton May Pageant. There was no report from the Pageant Committee but information will be included with the Minutes.
- c. Forum Funding. Grant explained that the Forum's only means of raising funds was from bequests, Pfizer and Councillors' grants. We do receive small amount from advertising, Kennedy's in the bus shelter for example, but nothing else. We do have to maintain the defibrillator once it's installed. He asked that everyone give some thought to how best funds could be raised to create a steady stream of funding to meet our needs and hopefully by the A.G.M. in February we may have some ideas for fundraising. Gillian suggested we apply for funding with a specific project in mind – the pond for example? Lin Ferg suggested asking the May Pageant Committee to contribute a portion of their profit towards the Village, i.e. the Forum. Other ideas were the Co Op Lottery card? Patricia Brookwick from the TWRA had successfully applied for grants from the Lottery and £2,000 from Tesco for trees in Tadworth. She and Rachel and Vic Broad, amongst others, had been instrumental in raising money for the Jubilee Woodland Project. Grant suggested that a fund raising sub-committee be established to focus specifically on fund-raising and ask that anyone interested in heading up something like this contact himself or someone on the committee.
- d. Howard Close. Jane is to spearhead a campaign along with Mark Anthony from Walton Warriors and Sam Fountain from Howard Close Residents Association to upgrade the playground area in Howard Close and to provide a suitable building with a changing facilities, toilets and kitchen area as well as storage for the users of the playing field. This will be the main topic for the October Meeting.

A.O.B

Janet Collis reminded us of the sun flower project. Some 500 plants have been planted and 1000 seeds given out to all the children's groups in the Village. There will be an exhibition on the 22nd September. Details to follow.

6. Updates.

- a. WHGC Liaison Committee. Grant is chairing this sub-committee, he and Graham Young met with the new Chairman of the golf Club Dr. Alastair Wells and Graham Williams in May. A positive meeting. Grant asked them what the Club does for the Village and suggested to them that they improve their PR so people are aware of the good things they do. A mandate has been given to the WHGC Board to investigate the move across the Dorking Road. New architects have been appointed and Grant is meeting with the TWRA in July/August to discuss options such as a pelican crossing. Dr. Wells is happy to come along to a Forum meeting to answer questions. Grant felt progress would be slow and mentioned that 75% of the membership must be

vote in favour of the move for it to proceed once and if planning permission is granted.

7. Questions for Councillors and TWRA.

- a. Cllr Broad's update arrived after the pack was sent so it will be included with the Minutes.
- b. Lin Ferg informed us the bus route has been changed. Evidently it now goes along the Dorking Road to Pfizer which means the residents are not priority, Rachel will keep the Forum updated with enquiries into what has happened and when / if the regular service can be re-instated.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm

Next meeting is 30th October at 8pm.