

Notes of Alexandra Residents Association AGM held at Holy Trinity on Thursday 18th June 2015

Please see attached Attendance list for Attendees

Welcome by Acting Chairperson

The meeting was opened by Andy Peake who was acting chairperson for the evening.

Andy thanked Lucy Smith for her excellent tenure as chairperson and all her efforts to support ARA during the past 2.5years. This has included achievements such as getting the Alex pub listed as a Community Asset, Negotiating with local Councillors, Council Officers and MP regarding Heritage Lighting for the estate, representing ARA in a number of local forums including the Bromley Federation of Residents Associations. Lucy has also supported a number of successful social events,including the Arts Craft and Music Festival in Sept.2014 that was enjoyed by so many residents.

Andy confirmed his own views that he sees ARA at something of a turning point, having historically been involved in fairly small local events, its role this year has included negotiating and fundraising for heritage lighting on the estate, and also considering the implications of ARA being trustees of the land that the shed sits on now increasing in value and perhaps needing consideration of its future use. If issues and fundraising such as these

are to be addressed consideration may need to be given to ARA present legal status and whether it should apply to become charity,co-operative, or non profit making company of any sort.

Andy thanked present members of the committee for their work and support during the past year in dealing with some challenging issues. A special vote of thanks was also given to Franco for his continued maintenance and updating of the ARA web site which remains an excellent site to both give and receive information. The site also now has a copy of the Architectural Handbook produced by Neil Coe, which guides present and future residents in any planned renovations to their cottages within the conservation guidelines and recommendations.

Minutes of 2014 AGM

These were approved and accepted.(Matters arising within todays agenda)

Chairperson's Report

Lucy Smith gave a verbal Chairpersons Report.

Lucy confirmed that there has been the need for considerable engagement with our local council during the past year. Bromley like most other LA is having to consult regularly with residents regarding its services and future cuts to its grants from central government. Andy has already mentioned some of the issues that

have brought us in contact with councillors and MP with ARA having to make local representations regarding planning and service areas. Lucy confirmed the major social event this year was the Arts/Craft and Music Festival in September 2014 which took more than 6 months of planning, but was deemed a great success and enjoyed by all participants and residents. Other events have included a 'Meet the Neighbours' event held at Alexandra Nurseries where there is the opportunity for new and old residents to meet informally for a glass of wine and chat. There was also an Easter Egg hunt for the children in April.

Ideas for small events are always welcome and can be communicated to committee members by any resident via any of the social media sites or via their road rep. Upcoming events include the Open Garden Event in July (further info. later in agenda) and the return of the ARA Pantomime in January 2016.

The 'Over 60's' Alexandra Group continues to meet on a monthly basis. Linda confirmed that this group has also involved itself recently in supporting the community gardening on the estate, and were thanked for their ongoing endeavours with this. It is particularly welcome as Anna who was the Community Gardening Co-ordinator had to step back from this role this year due to the birth of her second child. No one else has come

forward to fill this role. Adrian kindly replanted planters in the lane and residents in both Princes Road and Victor Road are kindly watering them.

Lucy confirmed that either herself or other committee members have tried to attend the bi-monthly meetings of BFRA of which ARA is a member. Most of this years meetings have focused on issues particularly affecting other parts of the borough such as Planned Developments at Biggin Hill Airport, and Town Centre Developments around Bromley North etc.

Lucy thanked other members of committee for their support especially Shirley Homewood who stood down as Treasurer and Newsletter producer after many active years in that role, and to Helen Millar for taking on the role of Treasurer and Tricia for doing the Newsletters. Thanks also to Jane for secretarial support, and to John at Alexandra Nurseries for his very welcome support to ARA by offering his upstairs room at the nurseries as a venue for this past years committee meetings.

Thanks also went to Brian Braddon who stood down from the committee but was willing to remain involved with ARA as Shed Co-ordinator.

Financial Report 2014/15

Helen Millar presented a written report (see attached) of this years accounts. General funds available at 31st

May2015 £1584.69 with £22.44 restricted for Alexandra Group funding. Membership has dropped slightly with an estate of 189 cottages membership previous year was 145 and dropped to 136 during past year. This may be due to considerable movement across the estate during a period of escalating house prices, but it will be an issue to note/consider when present sub collections are completed.

The shed income was £70 this year. Cost of annual insurance(public liability) remained the same, but maybe a better deal could be explored when premium next due. Printing costs have reduced this year,probably due to more use of electronic systems, no longer having production of Porcupine Post, and individual members of the committee and other residents covering costs of printing newsletters etc.

The financial statements for year 2014/15 have been reviewed by Diane Fuller(19) and Kay Fuller(20) who were nominated and accepted as Independent Examiners for coming 2yrs and accepted as accurate record of accounts.

Election of New Committee Members

A number of committee members are standing down this year. Helen also apologised that owing to some of her own health issues she also would like someone else to take over as Treasurer, but willing to support during

the transition of a new committee. Those willing to stand again are as follows:-

Andy Peake

Tim Walby

(Tricia Monk and Helen Millar to remain on during transition to support new members.)

There were offers from 3 new residents at the AGM to join the committee:-

Ali Lodge 55 Albert Road

Naomi Martin 6 Hardings Lane

Golli Whittaker 7 Princes Road

Jane Ching confirmed that although standing down from the committee she is willing to remain supportive as one of the road reps. for Albert Road.

It was noted that we do not yet have any road reps. for Edward Road to replace Jess and Verena who have stepped down this year. The constitution of the ARA requires a rep. from each road to be represented on the committee if possible.

Conservation Report by Ian Hayton

Ian introduced himself as a resident living in Albert Road who has during the past year represented ARA on the Bromley Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas in the Borough. Ian is also a Professional Architect specialising in Conservation. Ian attends monthly meetings where planning applications from within conservation areas are

considered.

He gave an interesting talk about the functioning of that particular council working group and various planning issues. There are plans for more and more of Bromley's Planning Dept. to be outsourced/privatised, so it is not known at this stage how long this group will exist.

His view is that although the conservation section of the council planning dept. has already been considerably reduced, (only one specialist planning officer left!) Alexandra Cottages continues to make its voice heard.

The issue of the heritage lights did not get approved by the committee as there is no funding available for Bromley to provide these lights. The Alexandra Public House sits outside of the conservation area and was not brought to that particular group. It was also interesting to hear that the Alexandra Estate has some of the most stringent conservation regulations out of all the conservation areas in the borough. Ian took questions from the floor and also spoke to individual residents informally at the end of the meeting.

Heritage Lighting

Tim gave a full account of the history during the past year of actions that the committee have taken on behalf of the ARA to try to get Bromley Borough to consider a more sympathetic approach to replacement street

lighting on the estate, which is part of a borough wide plan to replace present street lighting with more economical modern replacements.

Negotiations and various surveys of residents views have taken place in a number of ways since last October. Bromley Borough have clearly stated they do not have the money to fund heritage style lighting on the estate. The most recent position was recently conveyed to all households on the estate via an updated report by Tim delivered in June. Aprox. one quarter of households have pledged financial support in an effort to try to obtain more appropriate lighting. A total of just over £6000 has been pledged including a donation of £200 from a local Estate Agent (Mann and Co.)

Discussion took place among residents present.

Some expressions that we need to know what other householders feel who have not pledged money ie. indifferent either way or actually not in favour of heritage lighting in whatever form it takes, needs to try to be ascertained. One suggestion was another flyer or visit from road reps asking for simple Yes/No/ Do not care . This may help conclude whether this matter continues to be taken forward or not.

It was asked if photos of any proposed lamps could be made available to assist people in their decision making. Some residents particularly concerned about height of

whichever lights and lights shining into bedroom windows causing undue stress.

Liaison with the council continues, and residents will be kept informed of the ongoing position and outcome choices.

Tim was thanked for the work he has done on this to date.

Open Gardens

Diane Brown updated the meeting on the plans and progress for the next Open Garden Event on the Estate planned for July 12th. Flyers went out to all cottages, and to date 14 households have offered to open their gardens. More entrants for both the children's fancy dress and jam jar posy competition as well as adults Pride of Garden and Pride of Allotment competitions are needed.

There will also be an opportunity to remember the late Jo Smith on the day, who did so much in the past to help with ARA events.

The end of the day will be marked by interested residents gathering at Alexandra Nurseries between 6.30pm-8.30pm for a 'bring and share' light buffet and drinks.

Tickets to attend the event will be sold (£3 per cottage) via road reps leading up to event.

Diane(8) and Adrian(108) both thanked for their planning

of this event and best wishes for a successful and hopefully dry day in which to enjoy it.

Neighbourhood Watch

Andy has been the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator during the past year, and attended relevant meetings with local police/safety officers. In general some crime stats in the area such as burglaries and car thefts have dropped. The recent blip in more 'violent' crime also seems to have abated. Andy encouraged all present to ensure they report either suspicious/concerning behaviour or crimes by dialling 101.

There are also some local campaigns for traffic calming and speed restrictions to 20MPH in some parts of Penge.

Pantomime 2016

Welcome return of ARA Pantomime planned for January 9th. (great for banishing post christmas and winter blues!)

Adrian confirmed that Franco writing script, and now have enough volunteer actors. Will need additional help with refreshments etc. on the day. More information nearer the time.

150th Anniversary of Alexandra Cottages

2016 will be the 150th Anniversary of our estate having been built. It would be great to celebrate it in some way, but no-one coming forward so far with ideas/offers

to plan and organise.

Ideas shared at tonights meeting street party/children's party/invite speakers etc./tea dance. Suggested that if party held, it would be better indoors as weather so unpredictable.

Ideas can only become reality events if residents volunteer to organise them. Any interested residents can contact their road rep. or any of the committee members.

AOB

Issue raised from the floor regarding poor quality of present rubbish collection service on the estate, with so much rubbish being dropped in the street by collectors. Residents reminded of the Council web site where they can directly report concerns such as this and identifying street concerned.

Further issue raised related to recent problems of noise both from a very late ongoing party held on the estate and also ongoing problem related to a flat above the Dry Cleaners in Parish Lane.

There is a number on LBB web site for 'Noise Abatement' officers or can ring through to main switchboard.

Meeting finished at 9.40pm.

Jane Ching.