

Curzon Park Residents' Association

Annual General Meeting held at Chester Golf Club on Monday 12th May 2014 at 7.30pm.

DRAFT MINUTES

Present

Peter Bingham
John Bowyer
J R Davey
Elizabeth Downey
B R Fender
Charles Foley
Yvonne Foley
PCSO Christopher Fox
Chris Howard
Alistair Jack
Eileen Jack
John Jones-Pritchard
Derek Lawson
Margaret Lawson

W K Macaulay
Carol Macrae
Duncan Macrae
Liz Neeves
Sian Paul
Catherine Parkes
P M Pawson
Dave Plunkett
Jenny Plunkett
Jeff Reeves
Andrea Segrave
Barbara Shapton
Jim Shapton
Louise Shiu

Edward Shiu
Jim Slater
Jo Slater
Anthony Stevens
Steve Telford
Connie Telford
Maurice Terry
Diane Terry
Susan Thomas
Ellen Walton
Amanda White

1. Apologies

Betty & Len Holland, Jane Mercer, Simon Parrington..

2. Minutes of AGM held 20 May 2013

Agreed. Proposer: John Jones-Pritchard, seconder:.Diane Terry.

3. Report on the Association's activities 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014

(a) Chairman's Introduction

Chairman Jim Shapton welcomed members to the meeting and proposed a vote of thanks to the Chester Golf Club for allowing use of their premises for this meeting, the annual residents' dinner, various coffee mornings throughout the past year and also provision of storage facilities for CPRA owned equipment.

(b) Highways and Open Spaces

Alistair Jack stated that the group covers about 16 topics including highways, leaves, trees, noise from events on the Racecourse, parking etc but won't talk about them all tonight. When he took over as leader of the group the footbridge alongside the railway bridge had just been closed for repair, supposedly for 3 months, but actually took 2 years, however we now have a very smart new footbridge!

The wet winter caused problems with vehicle damage to grass verges, especially near houses that were having building works carried out with resultant parking of large vehicles on the verges or running over them whilst turning. This continues to be a problem but some white posts have recently been installed in Earlsway to discourage vehicles driving on verges.

The local council have recently informed the group that maintenance work will be carried out in Mount Pleasant, Earlsway and Curzon Park North and asked

for 5 other areas that residents would like to nominate for improvement works next year.

(c) Community and Social

Liz Neeves reported on this group's activities as Jane Mercer was unable to attend.

The Social Group has continued to organise events and activities which have proved popular with members this year.

Coffee mornings. Joyce Cook's talk in April 2013 was so well received that we have continued to hold coffee mornings from time to time on a Monday at the Golf Club. The June meeting was purely social, and members enjoyed the opportunity for a good chat, with lunch at the end for those who wished to stay longer. In September Jo Sykes, Chair of Chester Mystery Plays, gave an entertaining talk on the mediaeval cycle and its recent production in the cathedral. Coffee and specially made mince pies were served at the meeting in November, and this was followed by Yvonne and Charles Foley in March this year. They gave a fascinating account of the appalling way in which Chinese seamen in Liverpool were treated after the last war, and included the Foley's own research and first hand experiences from Yvonne's own family history.

Annual Dinner. Another enjoyable dinner was held at the Golf Club on 17 August, this time with an Italian theme. Food, décor, raffle prize and seating arrangements were all arranged to evoke the atmosphere of an Italian restaurant, and the evening was a great success.

Walking groups. The weekend walking group has met every month and been well supported, with walks in North Wales and Cheshire. A new midweek walking group has also had regular outings, exploring both new and familiar routes and places. Members benefit from fresh air and exercise, beautiful views and the opportunity to meet friends old and new and to enjoy a pub lunch before returning home.

Carols on the Green. The rain stopped just in time for our Christmas celebration to go ahead on 23 December. The Green looked very festive, with gazebos well lit by our new generator, and mulled wine and mince pies, hot chocolate and biscuits went down well with adults and children alike. The event was made special by the presence of the Royal Buckley Brass Band, who accompanied the enthusiastic carol singers.

Future Events

The next coffee morning will be on 16 June, when officers from Trading Standards will address the meeting on issues which affect us all.

Our Annual Dinner for 2014 will take place on 20 August at the Golf Club, when the theme this year will be French food and culture. We promise that there will be no frogs' legs or snails! Tickets will be on sale shortly.

We have booked the Royal Buckley Brass Band again for 22 December for Carols on the Green.

Regular walks will be publicised in the newsletter and on the web site.

Contact: Roksanna Fennell midweekwalking@cpraonline.org

Or Jenny Plunkett walking@cpraonline.org

Many thanks to Roksanna and Jenny for all the organising they have done over the year. Thanks also to all who have helped to make this programme of events so successful, whether through serving on the Social Group or through helping out on an ad hoc basis. Without a band of willing volunteers, none of this could happen.

Lastly, thanks go to our local councillors Razia Daniels and Neil Sullivan, who have provided financial support from their councillors' budgets, and to MBNA who gave CPRA a generous grant this year.

John Jones-Pritchard reported on membership. There are approximately 600 households in the Curzon Park area and 600 regular members of the Association. A recent delivery of membership forms to 326 houses resulted in 21 new members. Another such membership drive to be done in the near future.

(d) Community Safety

Liz Neeves reported that the past year had been quiet regarding car and household thefts, probably due to extra vigilance for residents as a result of regular reports from PCSO Fox. There has been an increase in scam thefts and incidents of cold calling. Trading Standards will speak at the next coffee morning on 16th June so this will be an opportunity to become wise about the techniques used by scammers and cold callers.

PCSO Fox handed out a summary of the criminal activity in Curzon Park over the past year. There had been some bike thefts and car thefts; a criminal had been caught about the latter and is currently in custody. Cold calling has risen significantly and there were some examples from the floor about youths selling very expensive household cleaning products. PCSO Fox confirmed this was a scam.

(e) Newsletter.

Amanda White reported that production of 600 copies of the newsletter, 4 times a year costs the Association £175 per edition; a total of £700 per year. We were fortunate this year to secure £1,000 from the MBNA Community Grant fund which was set up to celebrate 25 years in business.

The format of the newsletter has been the same for a number of years and Amanda asked members for ideas of a providing it with a new look. She also requested members to send her items of news or photos of notable events involving the community.

Each edition of the newsletter is available on the CPRA website.

Website

Secretary reported on highlights of website statistics which showed 2014 to be fairly quiet for numbers of daily and monthly hits. The highlight of the past few years was the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June 2012 with over 3,000 hits that month and a daily average of 111. December 2013 was popular with just over 2,000 hits no doubt due to Carols on The Green.

4. Presentation of the Accounts of the Association for the 12 months ending 31 March 2014.

Treasurer Edward Shiu read out a summary of the Accounts for the period 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014:

Bank balance at 01-04-2013: £782.66.

Note: £250.00 (Grant from CWaC) banked on 11-04-2013 as part of the £350.00 grant. See entry marked with * below in period ending 31-03-2013.

Bank balance at 2013 AGM: £1,032.66.

Bank balance at 01-04-2014: £1,632.48, an increase of £599.82 from last year.

Income:	31-03-2014	31-03-2013	31-03-2012
Profit from Social events:	£259.48	£598.25	£211.61
Cheshire West & Chester grant:	£275.98	£350.00*	£225.95
Membership donations:	£307.00	£143.40	£387.10
MBNA Community Grant:	£1,000.00#		
Total:	£1,842.46	£1,091.65	£824.66

Expenditure

Newsletters	£700.00	£629.00	£692.00
Insurance	£225.72	£215.68	£215.68
Website	£13.19	£18.58	£18.58
Admin	£0	£8.40	£24.00
Bulb purchase	£0	£0	£331.42
Membership	£15.00	£2.00	£2.00
Gazebo purchase	£0	£0	£225.95
Generator	£275.98		
Presentation flowers	£12.75		
Total:	£1,242.64	£873.66	£1,509.63
(Deficit)/Surplus for year	£599.82	£217.99	(£684.97)

*£350.00 represents two CWaC grants (£100.00 Jubilee funding received May 2012 and £250.00 grant towards printing newsletters received April 2013).

#£1,000.00 MBNA Community grant (£700.00 for 4x £175 newsletter printing costs, £200.00 Carols on the Green event and £100.00 for bulb planting around Curzon Park).

Main item of expenditure is the newsletter but we have been fortunate in securing £1,000.00 from the MBNA Community Grant and also £275.98 from local councillors' funds for purchase of a generator.

The Accounts were unanimously accepted: Proposed: Kenneth Macauley; Seconded: Jeff Reeves.

Chairman pointed out that the surplus includes some very generous donations from individuals for which the Association is very grateful.

Some questions from the floor raised the following points:

- Why no annual subscription? Ans: A lot of bother to chase 600+ members each year to pay subs.
- Can the Association's bank account details be made available for members to set up a direct debit or standing order? This was agreed and details will be in the next newsletter. A member warned about bank charges for S.O but not DD.
- A suggestion for a '100 club' raffle with prize once a year.

5. Election of Management Committee

The following people were elected to the positions shown below:

Position	Name
Chair	Jim Shapton
Secretary	Jo Slater
Treasurer	Edward Shiu
Ordinary Member	Jane Mercer (Socials Group)
Ordinary Member	Dave Plunkett (Membership)
Ordinary Member	Amanda White (Newsletter rep)
Ordinary Member	Alistair Jack (Highways rep)
Ordinary Member	Diane Terry
U39 yrs	Jim Slater

6. Change to the Constitution

That in paragraph 4 of the Constitution ("Equal Opportunities Statement") the word "gender" be substituted for the word "sex".

This change was carried.

7. Proposed Ordinary resolution:

That the Management Committee be (unless and until otherwise determined) authorised at its discretion to oppose on behalf of the Association any planning application for the use of premises within Curzon Park for business activities and to take such steps as it deems appropriate to ensure that no activities for which planning consent is needed are carried on without such consent.

Chairman explained that this proposal would not affect people working from home but was aimed at preventing domestic premises being used for large business activities. Some recent examples have been a proposed extension of the nursing home in CPS and a recent application for a licence to sell alcohol from a residence in Earlsway.

If the Management Committee became aware of a planning application for business use of a residence that could adversely affect the residential character of Curzon Park then they need a mandate to oppose such an application on behalf of CPRA.

There was some concern voiced from members that a decision is made by a small group of people i.e. the Management Committee and generally the deeds of most houses in the area have a covenant restricting business activities.

General opinion is that a vote will be taken and if passed, a review of its effectiveness done at a later date.

Motion proposed by Maurice Terry, seconded by John Jones-Pritchard.

Carried by 24 votes in favour, 5 against.

8. Questions and comments from the floor

Q – Earlsway footpath is very narrow in places and made worse by overgrown bushes from adjacent gardens. Can owners or council be forced to trim the bushes?

A – from Alistair Jack: A request was put in a recent issue of the newsletter asking residents to ensure that boundary shrubbery is kept clear of public spaces. He will repeat the request and highlight problem areas. He will also look at such areas with a local councillor.

End of formal meeting at 8.45pm.

There followed a discussion about the merits of 20MPH Zones. The Management Committee were aware of mixed support for such a scheme.

Peter Bingham started the discussion by highlighting the advantages:

- Discourage a rat-run through Curzon Park South and Earlsway by commuters trying to avoid traffic on Hough Green. 20MPH signs could be located at the borders of Curzon Park making drivers aware of the need to reduce speed in a residential area.
- Safety for pedestrians by slowing the average speed of cars in a residential area.
- On request, the council would carry out a feasibility study.
- No speed bumps just signs at entry points of CP.

Chairman emphasised that this was an informal discussion to check opinions of residents and no decision would be made unless there was strong support for a 20MPH area.

A straw poll revealed divided opinion with 14 YES and 15 NO.

Chairman thanked all members for attending.