

Curzon Park Residents' Association

Annual General Meeting held at Chester Golf Club on Monday 18 May 2015 at 7.30pm

MINUTES

Present

Jacky Arrowsmith	Alistair Jack	Adrian Neeves	Anthony Stevens
Peter Bingham	Eileen Jack	Liz Neeves	Steve Telford
John Bowyer	John Jones-Pritchard	Pat Pawson	Connie Telford
Rita Critchley	Derek Lawson	David Pawson	Maurice Terry
Charles Foley	Margaret Lawson	Dave Plunkett	Diane Terry
Yvonne Foley	Bill Macaulay	Jim Shapton	Amanda White
Betty Holland	Jane Mercer	Louise Shiu	
Len Holland	Phil Mole	Edward Shiu	

Jim Shapton, Chairman, welcomed residents to the meeting,

1. Apologies

Geoff & Shirley Brown, Jo and Jim Slater

2. Minutes of AGM held 12 May 2014

Agreed - Proposed: John Bowyer; Seconded: John Jones-Pritchard

3. Report on the Association's activities 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015

(a) Social Events Working Group

Liz Neeves gave a summary of the year's events. Both the weekend and mid-week walking groups had continued with their regular programme of monthly walks. John and Christine Jones-Pritchard had taken over from Jenny Plunkett in organising the weekend walks, and Roksana Fennell and Liz continued to organise the mid-week weeks. Thanks to the Golf Club, the quarterly Coffee Mornings had continued. Visiting speakers during the year had included Trading Standards on door to door traders, and handwriting analyst, Susan Ord, on the Secrets of Handwriting.

In August, the Association's Dinner, based on a French theme, had been held at the Golf Club; and once again the food had been first class. One of the aims of the Dinner was to enable residents to meet and chat with other residents other than their immediate friends and neighbours. Also in August there had been a leisurely summer tour of the local hostelrys in Gresford, Pulford and Rossett organised by John Bowyer and by courtesy of the Arriva No 1 bus.

September saw the first CPRA garden visit, thanks to Jacky Arrowsmith and Christine Hughes. On a beautiful September morning, nearly 40 residents set off for a visit to Wollerton Old Hall and Hodnet Hall Gardens in Shropshire. The photographs on the website could only give a taste of the amazing gardens.

The Carols on the Green were well attended in December, with music provided by the Royal Buckley Town Band. Liz thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the evening, from those who had baked mince pies and served refreshments, the volunteers who had battled the high winds to erect and dismantle the gazebos, CPRA's resident amateur photographer,

Geoff Brown who lead the singing, and the Golf Club's ground staff, for transporting CPRA's equipment to and from The Green from the Golf Club's store.

The current year was already proving very busy: a visit to the BBC Studios in Salford early in May, a canal trip to Llangollen on 27th May, the annual City walk lead by Peter Bingham on the evening of Thursday 4th June, a talk at the June Coffee Morning by members of the Hough Green Local History Group on their publication 'From Bricks to Villas', and a garden visit to Powis Castle on the 24th June. It was also hoped to have an August Bank Holiday event on The Green.

Liz thanked Jenny Plunkett, Rita Shaw and Andrea Segrave who had stepped down from the Social Events Working Group. They had been involved with organising social events since the start of CPRA in 2008, and without their valuable contribution, none of the events or the development of CPRA would have happened.

(b) Highways and Open Spaces Working Group

Alistair Jack, co-ordinator of the group, thanked residents for cutting their hedges thereby enabling easier access, especially on some of the narrow pavements, and for looking after the grass verges outside their homes. He also thanked Janet Walters, Community Engagement Officer for CW&C, who had been of great benefit to CPRA in 'short circuiting' contact with officers at the Council; and the volunteers who had helped plant the numerous bulbs, which had produced a stunning display in the Spring.

There had been a recent meeting with the new Council Ranger who was responsible for the verges and wildlife areas, including the Dingle. Litter continued to be a problem in the Dingle [school children walking home from school were partly responsible]. As a result of the meeting, CPRA was to ask for volunteers to clear litter from the area, say, once a month on a Saturday or Sunday. CW&C would provide litter pickers, bags and gloves and the litter could be left out for the normal household collection.

The Golf Club had recently been given permission to develop the land known as Saltney Acres into a practice range for Club members. They were forming a group interested in wildlife to monitor the area and invited any Curzon Park residents interested in taking part to contact Alistair.

Alistair gave special thanks to Peter Bingham for managing the paperwork relating to the Highways and OS Working Group, and to all those on the group for their valuable contribution.

(c) Newsletter

Amanda referred to the 'new look' newsletter. The old design had been looking somewhat 'tired' and residents had been requested to submit ideas to improve it. Unfortunately, this had not produced anything appropriate, but following some research, and with only a small additional cost, it had been agreed that High5Design would take care of the layout. Amanda and other members of the Management Committee continued to provide the articles, and Amanda proof-read the drafts and worked with the agency to ensure the required edits were made. There has been a lot of positive feedback from residents with regard to the new look, and it would continue to evolve/improve. The newsletter was distributed to over 600 homes in and around CP. Feedback from the recent CPRA survey included comments about how CPRA

should move away from printed copies, but it was felt a printed version was still important, especially for those residents without the internet, and for those who liked to keep a hard copy for reference to events etc. All newsletters were also available to view on the CPRA website.

(d) Membership

Dave Plunkett reported that there were now 283 members of the Association, with 211 of those on email. It was the aim of the Management Committee to continue increasing the membership and, therefore, residents were requested to inform Dave if they knew of any new neighbours. He also requested them to inform him if a resident died.

(e) Website

The Chairman thanked Adrian Neeves for maintaining the CPRA website.

4. Presentation of the Accounts for the 12 months ending 31 March 2015

Treasurer, Edward Shiu gave a summary of the Accounts for the period.

Bank balance at 01/04/14: £1,632.48

Bank balance at 01/04/15: £2,109.39 [an increase of £476.91 from the previous year].

	31/03/2015	31/03/2014	31/03/2013
	£	£	£
Income			
Profit from Social events	311.70	259.48	598.25
Cheshire West & Chester grant	875.00 *	275.98	350.00
Membership donations:	358.13	307.00	143.40
MBNA Community Grant:	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
Total:	1,544.83	1,842.46	1,091.65
Expenditure			
Newsletters	664.00	700.00	629.00
Insurance	225.72	225.72	215.68
Website	92.90 **	13.19	18.58
Admin	10.00	0.00	8.40
Bulb purchase	75.30	0.00	0.00
Membership	0.00	15.00	2.00
Generator	0.00	275.98	0.00
Presentation flowers	0.00	12.75	0.00
Total:	1,067.92	1,242.64	873.66
(Deficit)/Surplus for year	476.91	599.82	217.99

* CW&C grant £775, CW&C/CVA grant £100

** Includes US\$99 for Website upgrade.

The Accounts were unanimously accepted: Proposed: Maurice Terry; Seconded: Bill Macauley.

The Treasurer pointed out that the MBNA grant had been a 'once-off' community grant, and it was not known about the future of Councillors' budgets. Chairman also thanked residents who had made very generous donations to the Association. This had been made easier by enabling residents to pay via BACS.

5. Management of the Roodee

Jim Shapton gave a brief background to the issues surrounding the Roodee. The need for a response to the un-neighbourly conduct of Chester Race Company had been one of the reasons why the Residents' Association had been created. Initially, noise had been the issue, particularly for those living near to the racecourse. While this had largely been resolved (with the exception of polo match commentary,

audible all over Curzon Park), the general management and development of the Roodee had become a bigger and more serious concern, affecting all CP residents. It has been regarded for generations as a public open space, but following a management agreement entered into between the Council and the Race Company in or around 2007, the company had been adding new buildings and structures to the area and generally treating it as its own property, preventing Sunday soccer, reducing walking areas, introducing signs instructing the public not to walk in certain areas etc. Two years ago, Jim and two other CP residents had met with CW&C officers, following the building of the White Horse public house, to discuss residents' concerns but no progress was made. Subsequently, however, Councillor Samantha Dixon, member for the City Ward, had set up a Liaison Group involving various residents' associations including CPRA. The first meeting had been held last August and a second meeting was held in February 2015. While this was an improvement in communications, its impact had been limited. Jim Shapton as official CPRA representative, had got together with other residents' associations to plan to deal with what they agreed as the root problem, the influence exercised over CW&C through the appointment of councillors to sit on the Board of the Race Course Company, creating a serious conflict of interest. Jim had recently met with Cllr Daniels, who had ducked the issues, referring them to Cllr Mike Jones, former Leader of the Council, but his response had been unhelpful. However, with the Council's change of administration, there was some hope of changes being made. The meeting was strongly supportive of continuing to campaign to remove elected councillors from the Race Company's Board, have relations between the Council and the Race Company brought into the open, and bring the Roodee back into the public realm.

It was agreed that the Management Committee should continue working with other residents' associations to these ends. It was also agreed that a section of the website be created to make and keep residents aware of the issues and progress in resolving them. Residents who wish to be kept informed about upcoming meetings and their minutes were invited to register by emailing the usual CPRA address.

6. Election of Management Committee

Chairman	Steve Telford [Proposed: Maurice Terry; Seconded John Jones-Pritchard]
Secretary	John Bowyer [Proposed: Jim Shapton; Seconded: Jane Mercer]
Treasurer	Edward Shiu Proposed: John Bowyer; Seconded: Yvonne Foley
Ordinary Member	Liz Neeves [Social Events WG]
Ordinary Member	Dave Plunkett [Membership]
Ordinary Member	Amanda White [Newsletter Editor]
Ordinary Member	Yvonne Foley
Ordinary Member	Jim Shapton
U39 Member	Phil Mole

7. Questions and comments from the floor

Maurice Terry enquired about CPRA's use of the empowerment given at last year's AGM, relating to planning applications for commercial development within Curzon Park and the immediate area. The Chairman replied that the power had only been used once during the year relating to the planning application to extend Curzon Park Nursing Home, and despite CPRA [and several residents] objecting to the proposals, the amended plans had been passed.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and the Golf Club for their hospitality.