

# WHITEHALL PARK AREA

## RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

### Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting Thursday 3rd April 2014, 7.30pm at St. Andrew's Church

(Draft minutes 27/4/14)

#### Present from the Committee

Gloria Chandra, Michael Heath, Heather Eggins, Dorothy Leng, Tony Wylam, Sean Madigan, Carl Quilliam, Kay Clarke.

About 30 members attended the meeting, and several members sent their apologies.

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair, Dorothy Leng, welcomed members and guests to the meeting and invited the Committee and those attending to introduce themselves.

#### 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the 2013 AGM, held on 18/4/13, were presented and approved.

#### 3. Election of the Committee

David Seton was proposed and seconded for re-election to the Committee and the nomination of the Committee was taken en bloc. Gloria Chandra, Kay Clarke, Heather Eggins, Dorothy Leng, Sean Madigan, Michael Heath, Carl Quilliam, David Seton and Tony Wylam were elected to the Committee *nemine contradicente*.

#### 4. Chair's Report

Dorothy Leng presented annual and financial reports (Appendices A and B) and gave a short verbal summary. She highlighted the range of activities, prompted by the wishes of the membership, that WHPARA had organised and financed through the year.

In answer to a question about 'playing out' she replied that the Council had changed its policy on the matter and the closure of streets for playdays should in the future be simpler to organise. WHPARA would look into the matter and report via the website.

She offered some observations on the purpose of WHPARA and how we can help members by offering resources such as the website, mailing list and possibly funding. She distributed some forms on which members could provide ideas for projects.

Michael Heath spoke about website and other developments, mainly the recent complete revision of the website, which was applauded as a step forward in form and function.

## **5. Any Other Business**

The projected transformation of Archway Park was briefly discussed and attention was drawn to the petition to save the slide therein. Mention was made of some broken paving, which had been repaired that afternoon as a result of action taken by WHPARA and followed up by Greg Foxsmith. One member enquired whether Whitehall Park would be repaved in the near future.

AGM business was brought to a close at 8.00pm and Dorothy introduced Greg Foxsmith, soon-to-retire Independent Councillor for Hillrise Ward, who had kindly offered to address the meeting.

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Greg commended the Committee and Association for their work over the last year. Rather than address the meeting on local issues as he'd intended he decided to talk about his experiences as a Councillor. He shared anecdotes from his journey from "apolitical but socially-minded barrister" to Lib-Dem, then Independent, Councillor over the last eight years, offering many insightful and amusing observations along the way. He stressed the importance of living in the ward you represent and urged members to bear this in mind in the forthcoming local election. He spoke on the new Air Quality report from Islington, which he considered to be inadequate, as well as the London-wide failure to address the issue. He was passionate on the subject of secret courts, the reason he left the Lib-Dems, and mentoring programmes for offenders, in which he is involved. A short and sharp diatribe on the prison book ban and Grayling in general rounded up his often witty and uplifting address.

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The chair brought the meeting to a close at 9.15pm, but many stayed for drinks and informal discussion until 10pm.

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## Appendix A – Annual Report

The committee was delighted to welcome Carl Quilliam as a new Committee member in April 2013 and he kindly took on the role of Secretary. The Committee met four times during the year.

### Activities and Events

1. Following on from the 2013 AGM WHPARA organised an exercise to measure and monitor the air quality in the area. Eight WHPARAns met in Mum Made café on a warm summer's morning and were presented with a tube, a map and instructions. After a demo, we all set off to place our tubes on strategically chosen posts. We met up again in early September to take them down and enjoy a cup of coffee. The tubes were carefully packed up (including the spider who'd managed to creep into one of them) and dispatched for analysis. The results were reassuring and under the EU safe limit of  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  for  $\text{NO}_2$  but we cannot be complacent.
2. Two WHPARAns organised an initial get together in Spaghi Restaurant on the Island for members who work at home and who were keen to socialise. Nine women came along and agreed to meet again at a dinner in July. A further outing happened in September when around 10 members met in Côte on Highgate Hill for coffee.
3. WHPARA sponsored the Annual Concert for the Night Shelter on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013, which was held in St. Andrew's, featured music from Il Festino and took £617 in ticket sales.
4. The Chair and Webmaster, in conjunction with Better Archway Forum, have helped set up Plan Archway, a Neighbourhood Forum for Archway (which includes the WHPARA area). This initiative is given legitimacy by the Localism Act (2012) and gives local people more say in developments in their locality. Several meetings have been held, attended by a number of WHPARA members. WHPARA has been invited to several meetings with developers to comment on proposed developments in the Archway area. The Committee approved a loan of up to £200 to enable Plan Archway to develop a website and to help with initial setup costs.
5. WHPARA donated £100 to Sunnyside Gardens after its disastrous fire in spring 2013. Many WHPARAns also supported the auction, hosted by Greg Foxsmith, to raise money for rebuilding the hut.
6. WHPARA has investigated a number of planning concerns raised by members and lodged objections where appropriate.
7. WHPARA has been represented at relevant meetings and organisations such as the Hillrise Ward Partnership.
8. We have met with the Film Officer for Islington in connection with the current film production (March-May 2014) based at the old Ashmount School.
9. We successfully persuaded the council to move the recycling bins in Miranda Road at the entrance to the estate. For some time this had been a site for fly-tipping and general rubbish overspill and was of growing concern to residents.

## Communications and Membership

### Website

This year has seen a complete overhaul of the website, enhancing both its appearance and functionality. The new site uses responsive technology that allows content to be properly displayed on smart phones and tablets as well as large screens. Several new pages and sections have been added and content completely revised on others. There has been very positive feedback from users.

### Membership

Membership is still free and now stands at 203, with 37 having joined since last year's AGM. We've sent out 16 emails or newsletters over the last year, the average probable open rate being around 60%. The chair and webmaster have received and replied to over 1,000 emails over the course of the year.

### Social Media

WHPARA regularly tweets on items of local interest, many of which generate interest and retweets, and there is now a Twitter feed on the website homepage. At present we have 60 followers. The Facebook page is still active, with two members apart from the webmaster posting occasional news items.

## Appendix B – Financial Report 2013/2014

	Outgoings	Receipts	Balance
Balance at AGM 2013			£5,517.07
Meeting room costs	£25.00		
2013 AGM	£205.00		
Stationery	£40.00		
Night Shelter concert costs	£212.00		
Air diffusion tubes/hospitality	£164.61		
Donation to Sunnyside Gardens	£100.00		
Loan to Plan Archway	£200.00		
Web upgrade and hosting	£191.46		
Total Outgoing	(£1,138.07)		
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Balance at 2/4/2014			£4,379.00
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Prepared by Dorothy Leng (Chair) on behalf of WHPARA, April 2014.