

MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Croydon

(Non Party)

(Independent)



NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 1997



MINUTES OF THE 73rd. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MONKS ORCHARD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH ON FRIDAY 14th. MARCH 1997.

Dave Walker (Chairman) welcomed members and guests which included Councillor D. Loughborough, Councillor P. Campbell, P.C. Jonathan Smith and Peter Anderson (Head of Tramlink). He thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their help and support during the year giving a special mention to the work done by Ken Butler (Treasurer) and Owen Whalley (Planning Officer).

Mr Walker mentioned the unfilled vacancies on the Executive Committee. He announced that he would not be standing for re-election. He also confirmed that Mrs. Ross-Smith (Membership Secretary) is not continuing in office. He asked members to actively seek persons willing to join the Executive Committee so that the association could continue to successfully represent those living in the ward into the next millennium. Tributes were made to Mrs. Ross-Smith for the valuable contribution she has made to the work of the association.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Life Member Lord Bernard Weatherill, David Congdon M.P., Owen Whalley (Planning Officer), Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Ann Collet and Mr & Mrs Cogin.

MINUTES OF A.G.M. 1996

These were circulated in the July issue of the newsletter and further copies were available at the meeting. The minutes were agreed by those members present and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of last year's meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Arthur Taylor emphasised the need for more volunteers to represent the interests of those residing in Monks Orchard. He read out a list of members of the Executive Committee who are willing to stand again. There being no other nominations the following were proposed 'en bloc' by Arthur Taylor and seconded by Derek Ritson.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

John Walkington (Vice Chairman), Ken Butler (Treasurer), Arthur Collen (Area Manager), Charles Hutchings (Area Manager & Historian), Alyce Menhinnitt (Area Manager), Derek Ritson (Editor), Arthur Taylor (Area Manager), Owen Whalley (Planning Officer), Bob Akers (Minute Secretary).

TREASURERS' REPORT

Ken Butler (Treasurer) introduced himself and said that he had taken over from the outgoing treasurer in May, 1996. He reported that the records of account had been submitted to the auditors on 14th January. The auditors are unable to proceed with the preparation of the audit because there is no record of four cheque payments totalling approximately £200 made when there was no Treasurer between 26th March and 1st May. There is no money missing but there is no receipt recording details of the expenditure. It will cost a substantial amount for the bank to produce duplicates of the unrecorded cheques. Subsequent to some discussion and further explanation, Mr. Butler asked for a special resolution to be agreed by the members present 'That any monies that are outstanding between 26th March and 1st May should be written off'. If agreeable, this will allow the audit to proceed. Arthur Taylor spoke in favour of the resolution and of not spending additional money in obtaining duplicate

copies. Seconded by Ron Scott the resolution was agreed unanimously. Ken Butler thanked the members present for their help in this matter. He reported that there is approximately £5,000 in the accounts at present. Full details of the accounts will be circulated in the newsletter when the audit has been completed.

Editors Note: At the time of printing the Accounts were with the Auditors, awaiting for some minor items to be cleared from the TSB. In fact no monies will need to be written off as all monies have now been accounted for and a full statement and Auditors Report will be included in the next newsletter.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

Mr. Walker said that the present auditors McKenzie and Company have been most helpful during the year. He proposed that their services be retained for a further year. Seconded by Arthur Taylor this was agreed.

REPORTS

The following report prepared by Owen Whalley (Planning Officer) was circulated at the meeting.

This has been another relatively quiet year on the town planning front and there has not really been many major developments. Nevertheless, planning applications are still being made for proposals. These range from proposed house extensions which form the bulk of development activity in the area to larger housing schemes, which, while less dramatic than some of the larger proposals we have witnessed in the Ward over recent years, are nevertheless important to those neighbours most affected.

Since the last AGM there have been 79 planning applications submitted to the Council in the Monks Orchard Ward, this is some 28% more than the 57 applications made in 1995/96. Of the 73 applications that have been determined since last March, 89% have been approved. This is slightly higher than at the last AGM.

Over the last year only three individual new houses have been given planning permission. Rather more worrying for MORA members, are the current proposals to build new three bedroomed bungalows at the bottom of Mere End using the back gardens of properties fronting Woodmere Avenue; and the larger proposal to demolish the buildings and yard of H.W. West & Sons at 139-141 Shirley Road and redevelop the site to either provide 10 three bedroomed houses

as well as a three storey building comprising offices on the ground floor with 4 two bedroom flats above or 14 three bedroom houses. Members living near this site are very worried about the loss of privacy as well as a possible increase in traffic. The site is next to the entrance and exit of Shirley Oaks village as well as the ambulance station.

There is also continuing speculation that the land at the rear of Elstan Way is also to be developed for more housing although no formal planning application has been submitted.

Back garden developments continue to cause the greatest concern for MORA members. The Council's Unitary Development plan which was adopted at the end of January this year has a number of policies designed to safeguard environmental standards, but MORA remains concerned that development is still being permitted which adversely affects residents amenity and privacy.

Other interesting developments in the Ward include the planning permission to build a small cattery in the long back garden of a house in Woodmere Avenue and also the proposal to convert an old Council depot on the Longheath Estate into a community and church centre.

The Council is still deciding what to do about the closure or extension of the pedestrian link between Burrell Close and Greenview Avenue. Historically the Croydon's Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee has rejected a proposal to close the link. Affected property owners have been approached by the Council to determine appropriate compensation in the event that the path is created and a firm date is now awaited for the Sub-Committee to consider the latest report by officers. MORA members have raised concerns about security and vandalism on the one hand, and improved access between parts of the Monks Orchard area on the other. The MORA Executive Committee has written to the Council indicating that on balance, the link should be provided, but that its design should have regard to security and safety for users, and those living nearby.

If MORA members have any problems concerning planning or development matters, please contact me by telephone on [REDACTED] or by writing to me at [REDACTED].

The Chairman welcomed and introduced the new Home Beat Officer P.C. Jonathan Smith to the Monks Orchard Area. He took the opportunity to thank the outgoing Home Beat Officer P.C. Jonathan Scott who has served the area for five years.

Councillor Derek Loughborough referred to the problem posed by fast moving traffic near schools. He reported that a school safety zone project is being implemented at Monks Orchard Primary School. The plan is to introduce a speed table at the Junction of The Glade and Mardell Road to encourage better driver behaviour. A zig-zag no parking area is also being installed. He regretted that, despite every effort, a solution had not been found for the two schools in Orchard Way. A proposal to narrow the width of the road outside the school had been opposed by the schools and the local residents. However, flashing lights to warn traffic have been installed.

Councillor Peter Campbell mentioned the ward surgeries held on the third Saturday morning in every month at the Coffee Shop in Shrublands. Residents in Monks Orchard could also attend these. He agreed that it is rather a long distance away, however, when the Longheath Gardens Community Centre is completed, it may be possible to use this for local surgeries.

The Chairman commented that no one has provided an explanation as to why no form of traffic calming measure have been installed in Orchard Way and Orchard Avenue especially when they have been installed in many other roads. In response Councillor Loughborough said the Council has a criteria based on the number of accidents reported. Other areas probably have more accidents.

TRAMLINK

Mr. Peter Anderson (Head of Tramlink) began by saying a few words about himself. He resides in Croydon and has worked for the Council since leaving school a total of 33 years. He was previously project manager of the Library and Museum Clocktower complex. He explained that it has taken considerable time and effort to develop Tramlink as a workable concept. An initial traffic study was carried out by the London Transport and the British Rail in 1986. Now, as then, there are good rail links in the north and south of the borough, but public transport links are reliant on buses and there is no rail link to New Addington which has a population of approximately 25,000. The original plan was to overcome traffic congestion by widening the roads but there was widespread opposition from residents. Tramlink first emerged as an environmentally friendly solution to Croydon's mounting traffic problem in 1990. A public survey took place between February and October 1991. It was found that 80% of those canvassed supported the project. Subsequent to further consultative meetings a private bill was entered in Parliament in 1991. It spent

16 days in the House of Commons and 22 days in the House of Lords before receiving the Royal Assent in July 1994.

There followed a European wide competition to invest in the Tramlink design. 14 companies applied from which three were chosen, Tarmac Construction, A.E.G./Mercedes Benz and Transdev. They became responsible for the design until it could be formally offered to tender. A specification was developed to see if a privately financed scheme would be viable. Croydon with a third of a million people and more office space than Sheffield or Manchester could be regarded as a major city in its own right. The largest commercial centre in the South-East outside London is not matched by its infrastructure. Nowadays with modern forms of communication commercial firms have greater choice and flexibility and can locate almost anywhere. Croydon benefits greatly from commercial investment, the staff and shopping force could depart if suitable and efficient transport was not available.

The chosen Tramlink route is planned to be beneficial to Croydon and neighbouring boroughs, attractive to car users, fundable and acceptable in environmental terms. The total length of route is 28 kilometres (18 miles). Two thirds of the route follows former or under-used railway track, the remainder being on streets in central Croydon and adjoining the road leading to New Addington. Largely segregated from other traffic and enjoying priority at road junctions; journey times can be guaranteed. At present during peak times it takes 45 to 60 minutes to travel from New Addington to Croydon; Tramlink can guarantee 21 minutes. The route has five main sections, the central Croydon loop, Croydon to Wimbledon, Croydon to Beckenham Junction, Croydon to Elmers End, Croydon to New Addington. It is anticipated that Tramlink will serve 600,000 people; for those working in Croydon and those travelling to London, shoppers in Croydon, Wimbledon and Beckenham which can interchange with one another.

Modern articulated trams are safe, reliable, comfortable and are able to carry 240 passengers (70 seated and 140 standing). Platforms are at kerb level and there is access for wheel and push chairs. It is expected that 26 million passengers will use the system annually. Most journeys will be for an average two or three miles. Fares have not been decided but are expected to be similar to the present public transport fare structure and existing travel concessions will apply.

When an effective designed system prepared by London Transport and Croydon Council was ready it was offered to tender. The successful concession company

was Tramtrack Croydon Ltd. The original tender from Tramtrack was regarded by the government to be too high which required London Transport, TLC and Croydon Council to look at ways of cutting costs. The Council was required to save three and a half million pounds. To achieve this the tunnel planned for Gravel Hill was abandoned thus saving £2 million by going above ground. Furthermore, the Council agreed to undertake all the landscaping of the route rather than use a private contractor.

Tramlink is being designed, built and operated by a consortium of private companies as a Private Finance Initiative. The Government has contributed £125 million of the total capital cost of around £200 million. The concession company is meeting the rest of the costs and will accept all the financial risks arising from construction and operation.

At present work is in progress to divert the underground services in central Croydon which lie under the route of Tramlink: they have to be moved so that they can be serviced in future without interfering with tram operations. This work is expected to take eighteen months followed by the construction of the tram infrastructure. Testing of the whole system will take place between April and November 1999, and it is planned that the whole system will be up and running in November 1999.



OUTGOING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to record our thanks to both Dave Walker who took over the Chairmanship vacancy and saw us through 1996/7 and Christine Ross-Smith who has been a devoted Social and subsequently Membership Secretary. Christine not only managed the membership records but also co-ordinated the Area Managers and Road Stewards to ensure the newsletters were delivered to members. We will be sorry to lose them from the committee but wish them well for the future.

Ed.



MARGARET'S MARSDEN MEANDER AGAIN!

Saturday 17th May 10am - 1pm Parkfields, Cheston Avenue.

What a super response I am getting to MARGARET'S MARSDEN MEANDER AGAIN everyone is stepping forward to help me arrange the day and hopefully to make it even more successful than 5 years ago when we raised over £14,000 for the Research Fund of the Royal Marsden Hospital.

Fiona Fullerton has very kindly agreed to come along on the day with her family and get the whole proceedings started and then spend the morning with us.

Lots of people have agreed to walk 5 miles with me and to raise sponsorship for the Research Fund. It's not too late to register if you would be willing to walk and try to raise a minimum sponsorship of £10 please do ring me. We had such fun walking last time and it became a real social event.

The fete will have loads of stalls including Cakes, Plants, Crafts, Bric a Brac, Raffles, Tombolas, Books, Old Car Ride, the Police with be Post Coding cycles and Coffee and Scones will be served all morning.

If you have anything else that we could use on any of the stalls, please do get into contact with me.

There will be a grand draw and prizes have very kindly been donated to include dinner at The Selsdon Park Hotel, The Hilton Hotel & Bar Mediterranean, pairs of tickets to the Fairfield Halls, The Churchill Theatre, Odeon Leicester Square, The Warehouse Theatre, a family ticket to Madame Tussauds and a day trip with P&O to Calais for a car and 5 passengers and many more!

The Royal Marsden Hospital do not take nay more for administration, and every penny raised will go to a specific research project so please do support Margaret's Marsden Meander Again! by either walking with me or coming along and supporting the fete on May 17th.

Thank You,
Margaret Preece (Tel. [REDACTED])

CRIME PREVENTION

A resident of The Glade has let it be known me that certain items of garden equipment, furniture and plants have been stolen around the The Glade area. It is at this time of the year, when nights are drawing out and garden furniture and plants are on display that thieves are attracted to this type of crime. There have been recent reports of stolen flower baskets, plants, gnomes and tubs and we warn all residents to be vigilant and protect their properties at this time of year.

Editor.



PLANNING NEWS

The most controversial proposal currently being considered by the Council in Monks Orchard affects the back garden areas between St.George's Church and Woodmere Avenue. A planning application has recently been submitted by Sunley Estates plc to demolish nos. 1, 3 and 11A Elstan Way and build 4 three bedroom houses, 3 four bedroom houses and 2 five bedroom houses on the site. A new access road is also proposed between nos.1 and 5 Elstan Way. Your Executive Committee has objected to the proposal on the grounds that:-

- The more intensive housing development proposed would adversely affect the character of the area.
- There would be a resultant loss of amenity to adjoining occupiers and increasing unwelcome pressure on local primary health care and school provision.
- There would be an unacceptable loss of mature trees and planting from the existing back gardens which contribute greatly to the amenity of the area and as a valuable wildlife habitat.
- The proposal will have an adverse impact on traffic flow on Elstan Way and would create a particular hazard because of the new access being inserted between the existing junction of Elstan Way with Woodmere Avenue and the access to the Church, Church Hall and Vicarage.
- The proximity of some of the proposed houses to the existing Church Hall may prejudice its viability as a long standing and well used venue for local community and social functions.

MORA understands that the Church is very worried that the occupants of new housing so close to the Church Hall may complain about noise from the Hall or from cars using the car park. The Church Hall provides the only local venue for important community and social events in the area. The Association agrees that its future use must not be put in danger.

Now for some slightly better news. The proposal to erect two 3 bedroom bungalows at the bottom of Mere End has been refused by the Council who agree with MORA and local residents that the proposal would produced a cramped development which would be detrimental to the amenities of those living close by. Regrettably, an appeal has now been lodged against this decision and so planning permission could still be granted by a Planning Inspector.

MORA is still waiting to hear what the Council is to do about reinstating the Burrell Close Greenview Avenue footpath. Similarly the proposed new housing development at 139-141 Shirley Road (H.W.West & Sons) is still being considered.



VACANCIES ON THE COMMITTEE

As you can see from the following list of Committee Members, we have a number of important vacancies which need to be filled.

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Chairman: | Vacant |
| Secretary: | Vacant |
| Transport Officer: | Vacant |
| Highways Officer: | Vacant |
| Social Secretary: | Vacant |

We need your support to keep MORA active and capable of representing local residents interests. At our first committee meeting after the AGM, Alyce Mehennuit has offered to take on Membership Secretary and Bob Akers agreed to undertake the task of both Secretary and Minutes Secretary in order to keep MORA functioning.

Please let any committee member know if you are interested in helping on the committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 1997

| | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| President: | Vacant | |
| Chairman: | Vacant | |
| Vice Chairman: John Walkington | ████████████████████ | ████████████████ |
| Secretary: | Vacant | |
| Treasurer: Ken Butler | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |
| Planning Officer: Owen Whalley | ████████████████████ | ████████████████ |
| Minutes Secretary: Bob Akers | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |
| Editor: Derek Ritson | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |
| Transport Officer: | Vacant | |
| Highways Officer: | Vacant | |
| Membership Secretary: Alyce Mehennuit | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |
| Social Secretary: | Vacant | |
| Hon. Historian: Charles Hutchings | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |
| Area Manager: Arthur Taylor | ████████████████████ ████████████████████ | ████████████████ |
| Area Manager: Arthur Collen | ████████████████████ ██████████ | ████████████████ |