

Spring Grove Residents' Association
Minutes of the AGM – 26 April 2012, Parish Hall

PRESENT

Chairman: Alan Leeds **Treasurer:** Karol Smal **Secretary:** Jackie Steinitz
Committee members: Gordon Bell, Phil Chapman, Phil Harvey, Paul Hemmings, Natascha Logan, Emma Poole, Pippa Sparks, Dawn Trigg, Sean Yeates, **Residents:** Approximately 50 **Guests:** *St John's Church:* Rev Jonathan Wilkes *Grove Ward Safer Neighbourhood team:* PC Matt Cefai, PCSO Pat Read, PCSO Ian Renouf *Kingston University:* Anne Barr (Community Liaison Advisor), Mark Horne (General Manager of the Students Union) *Grove Ward Councillors:* Chrissie Hitchcock, Marc Woodall, *MP:* Ed Davey, MP for Kingston and Surbiton, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

1. Apologies for Absence: Phil Chapman

2. Rev Jonathan Wilkes, Future plans for the Church and Church Hall

JW noted that he was originally invited in January by the SGRA to attend this meeting to talk about the regeneration plans for the Church. However in light of recent discussions he is now going to talk about the Parish Hall, and in particular the ownership and management of it. Following conversation with parents of Kingston Kindergarten he has agreed that so long as the Church is able to secure funds for heating, lighting and disabled access it will not look to sell the hall.

In January the Church felt there was some value in considering, as one of its options, if capital sum tied up in the Parish Hall could be put to better use if reinvested in community space in the Church. Since then it has become clear that part of the community does not want this to be done. While the Church would have preferred an open mind on this possibility it accepts that this is the case. JW reiterated therefore that so long as the future of the Church building itself can be secured it will not look to sell the hall. Meanwhile plans for the wider regeneration go on and he believes that the regeneration will be of benefit to the greater community as the building will be available for community uses. Help to raise funds will be greatly appreciated; the more help the better, though of course no-one has to help.

Last year Vicky Maunder (the Vicar of St John's, currently on maternity leave) obtained legal advice about the ownership and management of the hall. It is owned by the South London Church Fund on behalf of All Saints & St John's, and should be administered and managed in accordance with a conveyance of 1903 which requires a committee of 5-7 people; the Vicar, 2 Church Wardens and 2-4 others all of whom must be "bona fide" members of the C of E. The advice received was that the conveyance should be adhered to.

At present the SGRA has two representatives on the committee so it needs to be established if they are bona fide members. If they are things can continue as they are. If not then two others must be found. JW sees no reason why these should not be

people in the local community who also qualify under the terms of the 1903 conveyance.

The Church also intends to set up a forum of hall users and other representatives of the local community to ensure wider participation in the running of the hall. This would enable greater representation of all users and of the full geographic area of the Parish (which is bigger than the SGRA).

The Q&A session included questions on whether the Church would apply for a variation to the conveyance (A: It did not feel the need to as the management structure in the conveyance is typical of many across the country), how it would do things differently from the current arrangement (it would ask for feedback on this, and set up the Hall users group), whether services would be held in the Parish Hall instead of the Church (no), the costing for the plans (£500k for basic repairs improvements, £1.5M for the full regeneration, £1m for a scaled back version) and how these funds might be raised.

2. Minutes of the 2011 AGM : Approved.

3. Chairman's Report: Many events took place in the community. The committee continued with all its regular activities (keeping contact with councillors/ MP/ police/ university, organising events such as the barn dance and barbeque, monitoring all planning applications in the area, delivering 5 issues of Springboard, running the website etc.). It also provided input into Kingston's Core Strategy and the Market Place proposals, organised a public meeting about the Kelly arms, pursued an issue relating to fencing in Bloomfield Road, set up a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/SGRAKingston), and is co-organising the street party on 2nd June to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee RBK with St John's Church Regeneration Fund, and Kingston Kindergarten Nursery mothers. Thank you to all on the Parish Hall committee for all their work during the year and also to the SGRA Committee.

4. Treasurer's Report: Income totalled £625 including £349 profit from the barn dance and £240 advertising receipts from Springboard. Expenditure totalled £530. The two largest items were Springboard costs + admin (£246) and annual public liability insurance (£155). On 31 March 2011 the SGRA had an accumulated fund of £845, up £95 on the previous year. The accounts have been audited.

5. Election of the Committee/Approval of Parish Hall representatives: All the previous year's committee members were willing to stand for re-election and there were no further volunteers to join the committee. The committee for 2012/13 thus remains: **Chairman:** Alan Leeds **Treasurer:** Karol Smal **Secretary:** Jackie Steinitz **Committee Members;** Gordon Bell, Phil Chapman, Natasha Logan, Paul Hemmings, Sean Yeates, Phil Harvey. Dawn Trigg, Emma Poole and Pippa Sparks.

6. University Issues (Anne Barr, Mark Horne): AB reported on a number of developments over the last year:

- The new VC of the University, Julius Weinberg, has a strong focus on community relations.
- Police patrols (visible and undercover) funded by the university are continuing.

- Night buses which ferry the students from town to halls are continuing, thus reducing noise and increasing safety.
- An education programme is in place to educate students right from their very first day (when parents are there) to respect local residents and keep down noise levels. AB asked residents to please help by welcoming new student neighbours from the outset (even if the previous set were difficult). Some have never lived away from home before and welcome advice on issues such as putting out the rubbish/recycling. Once they know the neighbours they are less likely to create disturbances.

If there is a problem please report it.

- Hema Kukadia is main initial point of contact. (answerphone 020 8417 3662 and mobile 07748 650330 for urgent enquiries or contact form on the website <http://www.kingston.ac.uk/enquiries/99/community-enquiries-complaints-form/>)
- AB can then follow various routes as appropriate (including warning email/student interview/disciplinary measures/Environmental Health diaries), according to the severity and frequency of the problem. The EHA have been very helpful in previous instances.
- If there is an issue it is important to contact Hema both so that the case can be resolved and as Hema collates data so that patterns can be established in order to direct resources/patrols etc.

New events/services available to residents include

- Many events during University week (Ape 30th - May 7th), see university and SGRA websites for details.
- A free mediation service (which is now available to staff, students and the local community. Contact mediation@kingston.ac.uk)

In the Q&A there was a request to monitor the speed of the buses and concern expressed also about students speeding. AB agreed to investigate the buses (and is now in the process of doing so. The item is on the agenda for the appropriate meeting next week). Student speeding is a matter for the police, though she would talk about it in her briefings to students.

MH said that he was proud to announce that the last complaint from residents about the bars was made on 3rd October, i.e. more than 6 months ago. He was also proud of the volunteering efforts of the students. In the period from Nov-Feb (which of course includes the Xmas holidays) 130 volunteers devoted 830 hours to volunteering in the local community (at schools, in the Biodiversity Action Group, at the Rose Theatre etc). The new University strategy "Led By Learning" emphasises the need for employability and volunteering, and the University is looking for ways in which students can volunteer. So please let MH know of any suggestions. (Diamond Jubilee party perhaps, or the Church fundraising?). MH mentioned that the Olympic Torch will be passing down Penrhyn Rd.

In the Q&A thanks were expressed to the University for their efforts. There appeared to be widespread agreement that there was a significant reduction in disturbances caused by students. One resident thanked AB for her advice last year about getting to know student neighbours, saying that it had been very effective for his family this year.

7. Grove Ward Safer Neighbourhood Team: (PC Matt Cefai, PCSO Pat Read, PCSO Ian Renouf

MC noted that it had not been a typical year for Grove Ward SNT and that team numbers had shrunk. Current priorities for the SNT, as identified by the community panel, include anti social behaviour by youths causing noise and nuisance, anti social behaviour related to alcohol (especially on the London Rd) and theft of pedal cycles (especially from Kingston University and from the Kingfisher).

8 Kingston Council: Cllrs Chrissie Hitchcock and Marc Woodall.

CH and MW offered to answer any questions from residents. MW reported that a number of properties suitable for halls of residence students had come on the market in Kingston but that Kingston University had not chosen to take them and they had been acquired by developers with a view to making them available to students from other institutions.

9 Update by Ed Davey. MP

ED told residents that he continues to hold two surgeries every week; one on Monday mornings in Berrylands and one later in the week at various venues and times (details on his website <http://www.edwarddavey.co.uk/web/?q=advicesessions>). Problems raised most frequently at the surgeries pertained to housing issues (eg overcrowding, poor quality housing) and tax credits/ benefits/ disability benefits.

Local issues/recent successes/campaigns which may be of interest include:

- Health: including his work to improve the quality of service for local mental health patients, the opening of the Health Centre at Surbiton Hospital scheduled for Spring 2013 which will provide much needed local services to about 73,000 in the South of the Borough, and his ongoing attention to maintaining quality of care and services at Kingston Hospital (which was saved from threatened closures to A&E and Maternity units in 2010 but which remains subject to financial pressures as costs rise).
- Education: There has been tremendous pressure on primary school places in Kingston though this has been partially alleviated by the expansion of seven primary schools across the borough. It will be further alleviated by the opening of the Lime Tree School at Surbiton Hospital in Sept 2012.
- Police: ED has met with key personnel including the Metropolitan Borough Commander to discuss how the borough will tackle budget cuts. He has been looking for guarantees and is now feeling more confident that front-line policing will not see massive cuts. He has fought to change the Resource Allocation Formula (RAF) to ensure a fairer allocation to Kingston.

A disappointment has been the closure last summer of Kingston Magistrates Court which closed along with 103 others nationwide.

In the Q&A ED was asked about priorities at the Department of Energy and Climate Change which would be of interest to residents. He mentioned three:

- The promotion of energy efficiency across millions of homes in the UK through the Green Deal: which aims to promote a Pay as you Save approach by eliminating the need to pay upfront for energy saving measures but to provide instead reassurances that the costs will be met through savings on the energy bills.
- The drive to get the best deal for energy bill payers despite high and volatile world energy prices: through getting energy suppliers to commit to a number of actions to ensure household energy consumers get the best deal, and through collective purchase schemes (such as the one currently being organised by Which).
- Green Jobs: Green initiatives also have the potential to generate new green jobs (in renewable fuels, insulation etc.). The UK has a competitive edge in research engineering etc. and so could benefit economically as well as environmentally from green initiatives.

ED was also asked about progress on his campaign to get Surbiton and Kingston stations rezoned into Zone 5 instead of Zone 6. He is continuing to push on this, and meeting ministers and work to make it happen.

10. AOB

Joan McConn and Gordon Bell were thanked greatly for all their help over the years in running the Parish Hall which has been such a focal point for Community Life.