

Croft Avenue Residents' Association
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
30th March 2023 at 7pm in R42 Ashcombe School

Present:

Diane Delaney No.1; Ken Wright No.7; Simon Murray (Treasurer) No.10; Bruce Ottaway and Margaret Barford No.11; Bryan and Margaret Dennis No. 12; Gwen Robson No.17; Jill and Steve Valentine No. 20; Colin and Lynne Wills (Secretary) No.22; Heather and Mark Epps No.24; Jerry (Chair) and Sue Maxwell-Timmins No.27; Catherine and Jack Jackson (Vice-Chair) No. 28.

Apologies:

Kate and Stuart Daniel No. 5; John and Marianne Pilkington No.6, Claire and Edward Kent No.21; Lisa and Henry Herouvin No.23; Pam and David Pettman No.25; Mike and Helen Kendrick No.29

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2021

Minutes proposed by Ken Wright and seconded by Bryan Dennis. Passed unanimously.

Matters Arising

Jerry confirmed that this year's accounts will end in December and from then on, the accounts will run 1st January - 31st December each year. (Our year end for accounts used to be 31st August).

Simon confirmed that all subscriptions will remain at £80 per household; ideally to be paid between January and March each year, so that accounts can be completed before the next AGM.

Election of Officials

Jerry again paid tribute to Ken, for his long service to the committee and continued input and advice.

Jack Jackson volunteered to be Vice Chair. He was proposed by Jerry Timmins and seconded by Ken Wright. Jerry proposed that himself, Simon Murray and Lynne Wills remain for another year in post on the committee. This was seconded by Ken Wright and unanimously agreed by all in attendance.

Jerry proposed that the Inspection Group consisting of Claire Kent, Bryan Dennis and Steve Valentine remain in post and this was seconded by Mark Epps. Jerry thanked them for their valuable work.

Tree Pruning

Jerry explained that we have received a quote from Mattree Professional Tree Care of £750 to complete the tree pruning - which is very similar to previous quotes received.

It was suggested by Jerry that we consider a severe pruning back to prevent the spread of disease.

Sue Maxwell-Timmins proposed that we should consider leaving the pruning for an interval of three years, instead of two, to enable the trees to flourish in between pruning sessions and to reflect the true appearance of an 'Avenue'.

Bryan Dennis agreed to leaving it to three years as did other attendees.

Jerry offered to speak to Mattree about delaying the pruning this year to Winter. After the meeting Mattree confirmed they will return in October to complete the pruning at the price already offered.

Jerry said he would raise pruning every year with a view to establishing a regular cycle so that the pruning can be planned on a regular basis. The suggestion at the meeting was that this should be every 3 years and this will come back for discussion/approval next year after the next pruning.

Chair's Report

Jerry discussed the recent installation of Fibre Broadband by Openreach within Croft Avenue and Mowbray Gardens and confirmed that they did manage to dig a trench and roll out a new cable to complete the contract on time. The advantage of signing this contract with Openreach is that each household now has the ability to choose from a very wide range of providers.

Jerry confirmed that Hey Broadband have stretched a wire over the top of the telegraph poles and Box Broadband have also laid their cables in the trench provided by Openreach. Unfortunately Diane Delaney's front garden was left a mess by Box Broadband, but this has now been tidied up.

Steve Valentine added that the telegraph pole outside No 23 was not in the best of condition and will have to be replaced at some point.

Jerry confirmed that we have still not received a final invoice by Openreach for the completion of the works and contract, so final payment is still awaiting transfer.

Treasurer's Report

Simon confirmed that all residents who contributed to the Openreach project will receive a refund of around £50 per household, including four properties who contributed from Mowbray Gardens.

Five properties in total chose not to contribute from Croft Avenue for various, individual reasons. If in the future they decide to contribute that would increase the size of the refund and bring the price down for everyone.

Simon asked if any residents present had any questions or points to raise about the accounts.

Ken Wright commented on how well the accounts were presented and this was unanimously agreed by all present.

Simon stated that there is nearly £20,000 in the road account, however there is still around £7,000 still to be paid to Openreach.

No funds are required for tree pruning just yet, so we are at present accumulating funds. However, Jerry pointed out that there is a slight concern about the future costs of repairing/resurfacing the road because inflation is running at a high level - and that we will need to be prepared and to have sufficient funds to cover this big expense in the future.

We last had the road repaired roughly 5 years ago and it needs to be done every 10 years. Ken Wright proposed that the accounts be adopted and Jerry seconded.

A.O.B

Diane Delaney proposed consideration of the possibility of installing a public defibrillator in the road. However, there are strict guidance rules- as outlined by the British Heart Foundation on their website about this and Mark Epps mentioned the BHF offering part funding. There also needs to be a clear need to achieve this funding, eg. a location with a high foot fall or in a remote area, in addition to the provision of an electricity supply. So as a small, private road, within a town we would unlikely qualify for part funding.

Ken Wright mentioned that the continued parking of buses and coaches in the layby on the A24 by the yellow railings, creates a very dangerous blindspot, making it dangerous for those trying to pull out onto the A24. Ken believed that technically they shouldn't be parked there, as it is meant to be a bus stop and not for long waits.

Ken also wished to add to the discussion (regarding the road resurfacing) and mentioned that if we decided in the future to change the current road surface (bitumen with small stones added on top) we should be wary of going too deep, below the road surface, as this would increase the price greatly. The Avenue used to be an apple tree orchard before the houses were built. Jerry thanked Ken and acknowledged this information. Ken noted that he has information about this and would share it.

Mark and Heather Epps wished to let residents know that they are having an extension built on their property at No. 24 and that works will commence from 27th April, lasting approximately 5 months. They will be vacating their property whilst the works take place. Whilst Mark didn't anticipate any issues, they wanted to let residents know to feel free to contact them if problems did occur in their absence.

The Coronation of King Charles on 6th May:

The Coronation of King Charles III will take place on Saturday 6th May and some residents expressed an interest in celebrating it with a gathering in the road.

The date that appeared to be the most popular was the Bank Holiday Monday 8th May. It was suggested that any residents interested could meet, as in previous years (and if no objections) in the cul-de-sac area near No's 17, 19, 21 and 23. A list would go up regarding food selections to bring and tables/ gazebos would be erected on the day. More information about this to follow in due course.

Simon Murray currently holds the *Book of the Road* and was asked to pass it on to the Jacksons at No 28 when he can. Helen and Mike Kendrick would also like to see it at No.29, followed by Lynne and Colin Wills at No.22. Residents were asked to pass the book on quickly in the coming year, so that everyone gets a chance to see it and contribute to it, if they so wish.

Finally, Simon Murray wanted to thank Jerry and acknowledge the incredible, hard work and achievements by him, in shouldering the burden of organising Broadband for the road. This was agreed by all in attendance.

Ken Wright in addition gave a vote of thanks to everyone on the Committee.

MEETING ENDED