

**PETTS WOOD & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, 24th MARCH 2009 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mrs M Mason	Vice-Chairman	Mrs Margarethe Batteson
Mr Roger Barber	Treasurer	Mr Chris Harris
Mrs Janet Guntrip	Secretary	Mr Chris House
		Mr Derek Marrable
		Mr John Pattenden
		Mr Philip Webb
		Mrs Anne Willatt
		Mrs Laretta Wright

GUESTS:

Mr John Horam MP	Mr James Cleverly GLA
Cllr Tony Owen	Inspector Kevin Smith
PC Katherine Reeves	PC Darren Barlow
Mr Brian Wilkin (Knoll RA)	Mr Tony Allen (The Chislehurst Society)
Mr Michael Long (National Trust)	Mrs Ann Lockwood (PW Churches Together)
John Charsley (PW Business Association)	Ms Sian Spencer Little (ArtsEnhance)
Alan Doyle (PW Library)	Ms Susan Willans (PW Library)

About 80 other Members were present

APOLOGIES:

Mr Paul Stanley (Chairman)	Cllr Doug Auld
Cllr Simon Fawthrop	Ms Lorraine Potter (LBB)
Dr Bob Hadley (Crofton RA)	Ms Jan Abrahams (Crofton RA)
Sam Pettman (National Trust Warden)	Mr Brian Stoneham (Auditor)
Mrs Margaret Hindle, member	

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The Vice-Chairman, who for this evening would be acting as Chairman, opened proceedings by welcoming all those present in our eightieth year, and particularly our guests. Apologies had been received from those listed above.

1. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 20th MARCH 2007

The Minutes, copies of which had been available via the website and on the top table before the meeting, were taken as a true and accurate record. Mr Short proposed that they should be adopted, Mrs Hiscocks seconded the proposition and it was carried by the meeting.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

Acting Chairman Mrs Mason stated that the Chairman Paul Stanley's Annual Report had been published in the March Gazette, but he had since decided to stand down as Chairman and had written a letter for the April Gazette explaining his reasons. On behalf of the committee Mrs Mason thanked him for his tireless work and wished him all the best for the future. She did not intend to repeat Mr Stanley's report which gave an overview of the committee and Association activity over the last year, but she wished to highlight a few specific items which were worthy of note.

The Gazette continued to go from strength to strength and had become a useful and informative monthly publication for all our members. Mrs Mason wished to thank the editor Ken Short for all his time and effort in spite of having had a particularly difficult year personally. Laretta Wright represented the Association on the May Fayre committee. Her hard work and enthusiasm was much appreciated and we looked forward to this year's event on Bank Holiday Monday. Thanks to Chris Harris we were able to pass on accurate and responsive information about public transport in the Gazette and he had regular contact with all key transport providers.

The Chairman's report in the March Gazette had stated that we were supporting the renewal of the licence for Fab Kebab to trade as a takeaway food premises. Mrs Mason wished to clarify this statement: whilst we did not support individual commercial enterprises, we certainly did support fair and due process in planning applications as well as favouring open and trading shop units to maintain a thriving centre for Petts Wood. This misunderstanding highlighted the committee's wish to represent its members as they would like and it had therefore been looking at ways in which to seek input from members. It was important to find out what our members' vision for the Petts Wood retail area would be and it had been decided to deliver a questionnaire to our keenest members so that they could convey their thoughts and views to us. The committee had produced a chart showing the current mix of retail outlets which was to be updated regularly to demonstrate the development of the retail area over time. We were asking our members what mix of businesses they would like to see in the shopping area and how would they like to see it develop. Mrs Mason appealed to those present, who had shown a commitment to the Association by turning up, to help with the survey which would cover retail and residential planning and a checklist of planning criteria to be covered to ensure consistency. It would also ask if the committee covered all aspects of members' concerns and what community projects we should be encouraging in the area.

Mrs Mason thanked all the committee for their time, professionalism and effort in ensuring the smooth running of the Association. She mentioned finally the financial position of the Association which gave us the stability to represent and report to our members. In the last year our Treasurer Roger Barber had done an amazing job, looking in detail at our financial position, advising us of the best way forward and working hard at minimising our costs and maximising our income. Mrs Mason thanked him for all his work.

She commended Mr Stanley's report and her overview to the meeting.

### 3. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer was pleased to present the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2008 which were published in the March Gazette. He said that in the previous two years there had been little change in income but a marked increase in expenditure. This year the picture was different as income had increased by 25%, due largely to an increase in advertising revenue of 83%. The other components making up income showed only minor changes in comparison. However, expenditure had also shown an increase of 34% and, as previously, this was due largely to the increased cost of printing the revamped and larger Gazette. The other expenses in running the Association had actually fallen from the previous year. Additionally we now had an annual liability to corporation tax on any profit that we made, but this excluded members' subscriptions as these were deemed to be mutual trading. We had settled with the Inland Revenue for tax due for the years from 2002-7 and also interest on the outstanding amounts.

The deficit between Income and Expenditure amounted to £2,576 and in addition we made donations throughout the year to various organisations such as Council for Music in Hospitals, Petts Wood War Memorial Hall, Petts Wood Business Association, the National Trust, the May Fayre and Harris HospisCare. Donations to registered charities can be offset against our liability to corporation tax and wherever possible Mr Barber sought to channel funds in a tax efficient manner. Overall the deficit for the year amounted to £4,973 which included a provision for almost £500 in respect of corporation tax that Mr Barber calculated to be due for the year but not payable until later this year. Last year we indicated that we wished to reduce our General Reserve by making funds available to good causes and we had gone some way towards this with the result that our General Reserve which was £20,718 now stood at £15,745. £4,500 of that was represented by the stock of *A History of Petts Wood*.

The present financial climate was having a major impact on the interest receivable on our cash balances and this would be substantially lower this year. However, last October Mr Barber took the decision to fix some of our surplus funds at 6¼% until next September which would offset the dip in interest to some extent. Mr Barber commended his report to the meeting.

There being no questions, Mr Cox proposed that the Accounts should be adopted, Mrs Edwards seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

Subscription Mr Barber said that in view of his financial report he recommended an increase in the subscription for the first time in 10 years from £2 to £3. Mr Waters of Crescent Drive suggested that the Association should consider emailing the Gazette to its members. It would cost a lot less and would be less onerous for the Road Stewards. Mrs Mason acknowledged that this might be the way to go in the future, but there were several objections to the idea from the floor. A Road Steward suggested that personal contact was preferable and new people could be welcomed more personally. There being no further comments, Mr Barber again proposed that the subscription for 2009 should be raised to £3. Mr Clancey seconded the proposal and it was carried with only one contrary vote.

#### 4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND AUDITOR

Before proceeding with the election of the committee Mrs Mason mentioned some changes since last year. In addition to Mr Stanley's resignation three new members had joined the committee: Margarethe Batteson, John Pattenden and Mary Mason herself. At this point, in the absence of a Chairman, the Secretary Mrs Guntrip stated that Mrs Mason had been catapulted into chairing the AGM at very short notice and the committee was extremely grateful to her for taking on the task so ably. Once the committee had been elected this evening, they would address the question of a new Chairman at their next meeting and co-opt somebody either from the existing committee or from any volunteers who might come forward. In the meantime, as proposed and seconded in the Gazette, Mary Mason was elected as Vice-Chairman and Acting Chairman. The other officers of the committee were re-elected: Roger Barber (Treasurer) and Janet Guntrip (Secretary). The rest of the committee members were then elected: Margarethe Batteson, Chris Harris, Chris House, Derek Marrable, John Pattenden, Phil Webb, Anne Willatt and Laretta Wright.

Mr Brian Stoneham had decided to step down as Auditor this year and Mrs Mason thanked him for his services over the past few years. Mr Fred Dale had come forward to offer his services, although he was unable to attend tonight. Mrs Mason proposed that he should be elected as Auditor for 2009, Mrs Guntrip seconded the proposal and it was carried by the meeting.

#### 5. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Before throwing the meeting open Mrs Mason invited one or two guests to say a few words:

John Horam Mr Horam said that he had been dealing with issues as diverse as flood plains, speed humps and cushions, and trains. In view of the economic climate he had discussed with Southeastern Trains a possible reduction in fares next year. Fares were fixed in July but, if at that time the RPI had gone down even further, then a reduction might be possible. Mr Horam was also dealing with health issues: major changes in the distribution of resources to our hospitals were in the pipeline. Three trusts - Bromley, Queen Mary Sidcup and Queen Elizabeth Woolwich - were to be amalgamated into one trust. The new managing director was a clinician and the new chairman had worked at Canterbury. Mr Horam hoped that as a result of this new blood there might be an improvement in the service which had deteriorated in the past few years.

Sian Spencer Little Ms Spencer Little was the Leading Play Specialist at the PRUH and she explained the work that ArtsEnhance did in producing entertainment on the children's ward. She was grateful to the Association for their annual donations to the cause. A live band visited the children's ward once a month – some of the children had never heard live music before and the musicians allowed the children to try out the instruments. This was very therapeutic for the children and in many cases they needed less medication as a result of the pleasure that they received from the music.

Petts Wood Library Mr Alan Doyle appealed to members to visit their local library, where the stock of books was excellent and DVDs, CDs and cassettes were available. The general public could use the computers free of charge and free tuition in how to use the internet was available. He pointed out that anybody without a computer could visit the library to read the Gazette electronically if that was the future. The library also had a children's reading group and an adult group.

PC Darren Barlow PC Barlow reported on the achievements of the SNT over the past year. In July last year there had been a successful drugs raid in Franks Wood Avenue. In August there were incidents of children who were alighting at Petts Wood being threatened by youths with knives who demanded money or

their mobile phones. The police patrolled the station for a week and eventually arrested the culprits who were warned never to return to Petts Wood. In September two brothels opened up in Queensway, but they were eventually closed down and returned to residential properties. In November the pharmacy in Queensway was targeted, windows were broken and the Asian pharmacist was racially abused. This went on for a month until two people were identified, caught and sent to court. In December there was another robbery at the Nationwide where money was being delivered for the ATM. Two arrests were made and charges brought. There was also a burglary in Beaumont Road where four thieves were arrested and charged. The police stopped a cannabis factory starting up in a house in Petts Wood Road. Five bedrooms had been set up with lights and heaters, but the police stumbled upon the house while dealing with another incident. The house had now been cleared and the police checked after six months that it was still clear. There had been a lot of shoplifting in Iceland and the manager had managed to get CCTV footage so that they could identify the culprits.

Postcards Mrs Jeffery of Sutherland Avenue said that postcards of Petts Wood used to be on sale in Websters and With Best Wishes, but they were no longer available. She was sure that there would be a market for postcards and notelets if the Association was interested. Mr Short offered to look into this. Mrs Brunton of St Thomas Drive suggested that Colin Earl's front covers for the Gazette would make great postcards or notelets, but Mr Short pointed out that Mr Earl was a professional. He kindly produced sketches for the Gazette free of charge, but he would need payment for any such project.

Pedestrian crossing Mrs Gurney of Crest View Drive said that the junction of Crest View Drive with Queensway was very dangerous and she wondered if anybody had asked for a crossing there. Cllr Owen was not aware of a problem at that junction, but he offered to look into it. There had been talk of extending the refuge outside the library but lorries and buses needed a wide arc to turn the corner and would have difficulty from Queensway into Franks Wood Avenue. The question of refuges and crossings was continually raised but there had to be a certain level of traffic before the Council would consider them. Cllr Owen had not wanted the crossing outside Morrisons because there had never been an accident there, and statistics showed that one was more likely once the crossing was installed.

Recycling Mr Stockwell of Homesdale Road appealed to residents not to leave their black and green recycling boxes by their front gates in between collections as it made Petts Wood look very untidy. Mr Webb said that he would write another article in the Gazette, even though just such a request had been published last year.

Parking review Mrs Webb of Greenfield Gardens was concerned that in the parking review her road was to get a yellow line down one side of the road, even though the majority did not want it. Cllr Owen apologised for this and agreed to look into it. A yellow line in Derwent Drive was necessary because cars picking children up from the school parked indiscriminately, blocking drives so that residents could not get their cars out. However, Mrs Webb pointed out that the yellow line was on the wrong side of the road there.

Cllr Owen said that the parking review in Petts Wood was the most democratic he had ever known. Everybody had been given the opportunity to comment and the majority of views had been taken into account in deciding what restrictions to make. Mr Stanley, Mr Pattenden and the ward councillors had looked at the plans at the Civic Centre and there had been a one-day exhibition to give residents the chance to comment on the final decisions. Adjustments had then been made and the decisions were to be published in the April Gazette which was due out at the weekend. There would be a review in six months' time with further public consultation. Cllr Owen went through all the changes, three of which concerned the shopping area: a mini-roundabout at the junction of Petts Wood Road, Woodland Way and Station Square, a refuge near Costa Coffee and a disabled bay at each end of the proposed pay and display area. Another resident commented that she had not received any notification of the exhibition so she had not had the chance to comment on the decisions. She had concerns about the S-bend in Shepperton Road near Crescent Drive, where parked cars made it very dangerous to negotiate, but no yellow lines were to be installed. Requests for double yellow lines had been ignored. Mr Pattenden said that Lisa Allen had acted upon the majority opinion in Shepperton Road, but the lady pointed out that it was other drivers, not those that lived in Shepperton Road, who were concerned about this corner. Cllr Owen pointed out that drivers should take extra care when there were obstructions and he was not aware of there having been any accidents at this spot. In six months' time there would be another door-to-door questionnaire when hopefully these problems could be ironed out. In the meantime Cllr Owen urged people to write immediately if they had a problem, rather than wait for the questionnaire. That way the Council would be alerted to these matters well in advance.

At this point in the meeting Mr James Cleverly of the London Assembly arrived. He apologised for arriving late, but he had been held up at an Assembly reception. Mrs Mason invited him to say a few words:

Greater London Authority Mr Cleverly gave a brief overview of what the London Assembly had accomplished for Bromley and Bexley. Whilst a lot of the GLA's work revolved around Inner London, the Mayor was anxious that this should not be at the expense of Outer London. He had therefore set up an Outer London Commission to discuss ideas and plans for that area. It was to deal with transport, crime and the fear of crime and was there to ensure that the Mayor did not forget his responsibilities to Outer London. The new administration would continue to support local policing which was working and did not need fixing. There were a lot of open spaces in outer London and the GLA was committed to protecting the Garden City. Although housing was a top priority this should not be at the expense of London's green spaces. It should be built in keeping with the local area and with the support of the local people. Green spaces were the lungs of the city and the Assembly was aware that air quality in outer London was better. The Mayor wanted to plant more trees and this was to be financed with money saved by scrapping the London Paper. Mr Cleverly's portfolio was crime and youth opportunities. Young people were being offered skills training so that when the recession eased they would be there with the skills to exploit the opportunities. The London Assembly was also committed to bringing in the Olympics on time and on budget.

Mr Waters asked about the Mayor's commitment to the elderly, because before he was elected he did not seem enthusiastic about the Freedom Pass and Mr Waters wondered whether it was safe in his hands. Mr Cleverly confirmed that the Mayor was committed to the Freedom Pass and it was soon to be extended to 24 hours, but a lady member pointed out that this did not apply to surface trains. Mr Cleverly confirmed that unfortunately it only applied to those services immediately under the GLA's control. Surface trains were not prepared to make this concession and Oyster cards and Freedom passes were still not to be accepted before 9.30am. The GLA was doing its best to change their minds. The lady added that she was disabled and she had understood that the extension in hours applied to the disabled and she had once been challenged when she travelled up to London.

Fab Kebab Mr Boon of Manor Way wanted to know why the committee had changed its mind about the kebab house. It had taken a long time to get it shut down and now the Gazette said that they were supporting his new application to open as a takeaway. Mrs Mason explained that we based our actions on the situation at the time. We preferred to see shops open rather than closed and that had become the main focus for this in the Gazette. It was precisely because of this misunderstanding that we were anxious to set up a questionnaire for our members to find out whether they felt we should object or comment or support. Mr Boon said that it was the late-night opening of Fab Kebab which really worried him. Cllr Owen said that there was a long history behind Fab Kebab. He began trading without A5 permission and then submitted retrospective planning applications. These were refused and the planning inspector gave him 6 months to close. He continued to trade and so the Council went to court and he was then forced to close or face prison. He was being advised by Jengiz Ali with whom the Council and the Association had had dealings before. He was now submitting yet another application, hoping that he might get a more lenient planning inspector. Mrs Mason said that the Association supported fair and due process for planning applications.

Bluston Parade Mr Boon asked why the Council did not enforce the 8-10am parking restrictions in Bluston Parade as commuters were parking there all day and blocking every space. Cllr Owen said that there were no restrictions at all in Bluston Parade at the moment because the pay-and-display machines were on order but had not yet been installed. Mr Boon contradicted him pointing out that the old 8-10am restriction signs were still there, and Cllr Owen and Mr Pattenden agreed to look into this.

Daylight saving Mrs Jeffery wished to advise members of a new book which had a chapter on Daylight Saving and William Willett. This was *Ruth Belville: The Greenwich Time Lady* by David Rooney. She was asked to give the details to Mr Short for the Gazette.

Crofton Lane Mrs Thomasson of Crofton Lane East wished it to be known that residents in her road felt let down by the Association regarding proposed speed cushions. Mrs Mason assured her that this was why we wanted to create a blueprint for Petts Wood so that we could address the wishes of all our members.

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In conclusion the Acting Chairman thanked guests and members for attending the meeting and invited them to enjoy the wine and refreshments which had been provided by a local resident, Nicky Holmes. The formal business of the meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.