

HURST PARK ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

AGM 2021

7.00pm on Sun 25 April 2021

Via Zoom

Present:

Committee Andrew Milbourn (chair), Nicky Webb (secretary), Sophie Musson, Michael Page, Mary Pountain, Barbara Thomas, Jane Wheatley.

Plus around 60 residents from 43 households who logged in to the meeting.

1. Introduction and Welcome:

Andrew Milbourn welcomed residents to the meeting and suggested using the chat function for questions or simply asking questions.

2. Minutes of 2020 AGM

The Minutes of the 2020 AGM (10 May 2020) were agreed and signed. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's report and accounts

Andrew Milbourn presented his report to the meeting.

Our strategy

HPERA reviewed its strategy when Andrew took over as Chair after the past AGM. The major issues facing our estate – and the whole city – are as a result of growth. The Local Plan requires that 70,000 new homes be built by 2040, which Andrew believes will have a huge and negative impact on our quality of life. HPERA originally came into being because of one issue - the Milton Road development - and much of what we do now is driven by our concerns about the wider issue of the growth of the city.

Our priorities are all based around one aim: 'to strengthen the community and protect and enhance the physical character of the estate.' In the past year we have tried to involve more residents in matters that affect us all, and especially to engage more people through community events and activities designed to foster resilience and community cohesion.

Andrew introduced members of the committee and their responsibilities.

Communication

HPERA now communicates via email newsletters, although we do produce paper newsletters on request. This is more economical and means we can respond more quickly to issues and send newsletters more often – there were 12 newsletters in the past year. Andrew emphasised that residents need to subscribe to receive the newsletter.

We have made efforts to improve coverage. At present there are 271 subscribers to the newsletters, which means that 63% of the dwellings in the estate subscribe to the newsletter. Coverage is lower in Mulberry Close who have their own newsletter, and among renters, who tend not to sign up.

Currently we are looking at how we might develop the website.

Community Engagement

We've had to adapt in the year of Covid. We established a list of people prepared to help neighbours who needed help during the pandemic. The independent traders offered excellent support.

There were several Covid safe initiatives during the year, all of which helped to strengthen our community. The Christmas windows were impressive, but there were also other events such as an online quiz, concert, treasure hunt and driveway tea party. The gardening group worked on the border at the bottom of HPA and on the Arbury Park hedge.

Issues

There are several ongoing issues:

- Nuisance motorbikes using the cut-through between Highworth Avenue and Leys Road continue to cause problems at times.
- City Fibre's installations caused widespread disruption..
- Speeding in Orchard Avenue continues to cause problems; we have managed to get a post installed for a digital speed display to remind drivers of their speed.
- There are still parts of the estate which have inadequate street lighting. We have been able to negotiate at least one new lamp per year.
- We've asked the council to improve the poor state of the back of Arbury Court.
- One of the biggest issues continues to be parking. Commuter parking has been an issue for us since the Ascham Road residents' parking scheme was introduced. The County Council suspended any new parking schemes in 2020, and the GCP is now producing a parking strategy for the city, expected this autumn. If parking schemes are reintroduced, there would be a consultation followed by a referendum on any scheme put forward. The last time residents were consulted about 70% of respondents were in favour of a scheme (though only 30% of residents responded). Our policy is to bring residents the information and let them decide. In the meantime, yellow lines have been painted at some junctions to improve visibility.

Arbury Road traffic filter trial

Andrew described the proposal for a traffic filter on Arbury Road, which has been very controversial. This was proposed at the start of lockdown as an emergency Covid measure, but never introduced. The idea is now with consultants who are due to report back in July. There would then be a consultation before implementation.

Milton Road redevelopment

We are pushing for repairs to the road surface in advance of the reconstruction which has now been pushed back to 2022.

Planning

Andrew outlined two developments of concern. One is a back garden development of four houses at 45 Highworth Avenue. This has been rejected. There is also a proposal for 10 flats at the bottom of Highworth Avenue, which neighbours have objected to amid concerns about parking, green space, and the scale of the building. Again, this has been rejected.

We are concerned about the cumulative effect of development within the estate, particularly as residents and RA's are not consulted. We are planning to create a village design document which could help communicate design characteristics of the estate for developers and planners, and we could even set up a structure like a Parish Council that would have to be consulted by planners.

North East Cambridge Development

HPERA has been actively involved in opposing this, along with John Latham. There is more information on the website, but our concerns revolve around the number of dwellings proposed and the height of building, but also lack of infrastructure, impact on traffic etc. We organised an online meeting about this and got good press coverage as a result.

Getting Involved

Andrew encouraged residents to get involved, and stressed people don't need to join the committee to get involved. Residents with particular skills would such as knowledge of planning or landscaping would be particularly welcome, but we would be keen to hear from people willing to organise events or activities. Andrew expressed thanks to everyone who has been involved this year, especially the committee.

Coming Up

Andrew reminded attenders that HP resident Annemarie Federle will be featured in the BBC Young Musician of the Year (postponed from 2020). The semi final is on 30 April, and the final on 2 May.

4. Treasurer's report

Anthony Willoughby (acting treasurer) presented the accounts for 2020. There have been a few small expenses mainly for printing, and a couple of donations, and at present there is about £400 in the account.

HPERA Accounts - 1st January - 31 December 2020			
	Year	2020	2019
Income			
Donations	£	50.00	£ 267.50
Expenditure			
AGM costs	£	-	£ (109.87)
Printing costs	£	(124.00)	£ (129.00)
Domain renewal	£	(23.98)	£ -
Net income - current year	£	(97.98)	£ 28.63
Balance brought forward from previous year	£	497.43	£ 468.80
Balance carried forward	£	399.45	£ 497.43

5. Q @ A

Residents had the opportunity to ask questions at this point. These related to the Arbury Road filter and planning.

6. Vote of thanks

Andrew Milbourn proposed a vote of thanks to former committee members John Beasley and Jane Wheatley who had given long service over the years. This was unanimously agreed.

7. Election of Committee and Officers for 2021/2

Jane Wheatley is standing down and ideally should be replaced by another resident from Mulberry Close. Jane proposed that Yung-Chin Oei, director of the Mulberry Close management company, be elected to the committee. Nicky Webb seconded the nomination. Annie Galpin will deputise for Y-C if he is unavailable. Attenders at the meeting were invited to vote and Yung-Chin was elected with 32 votes and 3 abstentions. There were no votes against.

John Beasley stood down from the committee some months ago. Andrew Milbourn proposed that Tony Willoughby join the committee as Treasurer. Nicky Webb seconded the nomination. Karen Willoughby will deputise for him if necessary. Tony was duly elected, with 35 attenders voting in favour, and 1 abstaining.

The remaining committee members have all agreed to stand again. John Latham proposed that they all be re-elected and Lorna Cox seconded. The other members were duly elected with 34 in support and 1 abstention.

The committee now comprises:

Andrew Milbourn (Chair), Nicky Webb (secretary), Anthony Willoughby (treasurer), Sophie Musson, Yung-Chin Oei, Michael Page, Mary Pountain, and Barbara Thomas.

8. Playing Out

Nicky Webb outlined proposals that HPERA applies to the County Council for road closures once a month in order to run a Playing Out scheme in our neighbourhood. Playing Out began in Bristol in 2009 and there are now schemes all over the country. CCC wants to encourage applications in Cambridge and the wider county. We want to propose that HPERA applies for a scheme, 3 hours once a month, perhaps alternating between Leys Ave and Highworth Ave. Days of the week to be decided, but possibly Friday afternoons in the summer and a weekend afternoon in the winter.

Process is that we consult on the idea (through this meeting and via newsletter) and then write an application including a traffic management plan and a risk assessment, recruit marshalls, and then run the sessions starting in Summer 2021 if Covid allows. People immediately affected would be informed.

NW invited comments.

Rebekah Dolby from Highworth Avenue spoke in support of the idea. She has consulted Highworth residents via the Jam Jar newsletter and Whatsapp group, with a very positive response. Highworth is a road with lots of new younger families, so feels right for their road.

Robin Standring reminded the meeting that Judith Rattenbury's Big Lunch event used to take place in the space between Highworth Ave and Leys Road, and that had the fringe benefit of stopping motorbikes temporarily. He is therefore in favour of the proposal.

9. Expenditure and collection

Nicky Webb explained that in the past the AGM has been combined with a social event and a collection. HPERA wants all residents to be a member of the RA and doesn't wish to charge a fee as some RA's do. However there are some costs associated with our activities, and some initiatives we'd like to spend money on. For instance, the committee would like to propose that a community noticeboard be purchased for the estate. We are therefore asking residents to contribute to a fund to be spent on initiatives like these via a gofund.me page.

10. AOB

Robin Standring suggested virtual village hall events might take place at the Milton Road Library community rooms.

Sally MacLean asked about the local history project. NW confirmed that this will take place from 1 May for a week. Residents also invited to take part.

11. Close of AGM

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.