


Chalfont Heights Roads Committee

Minutes of the Forty Eighth Annual General Meeting

Held at Tithe Barn, Sandy Rise
at 20.15 on
Wednesday 19th February 2003


Chairman
25 February 2004

Present:

Forty six residents (representing 39 households) signed the attendance register. This number included eight members of the Committee as follows: D Bryan (Chairman), B R Bradbrook, G J Gillies, B Hulme (Treasurer), Mrs P E McNair, K L Morrison, R W Stewart & J W Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Albury, Mr P G Cassell, Mr S Cowen, Mr A C Lane, Mr J A Nesbitt, Mr M R Reynolds, Mrs M E B Smith and Mr C P Watters

The Chairman, Derek Bryan, welcomed all residents for attending on a bitterly cold evening before opening the meeting.

1. Minutes

1.1 The Minutes of the forty seventh Annual General Meeting held on 19th February 2002 were submitted for approval. This was proposed by Mr R Mellor, Clayton, Lewis Lane. Mr A I M Belton, Garran, Lewis Lane seconded the proposal which was carried.

2. Committee Report

2.1 Introduction

The Chairman introduced two new Committee members since the last meeting, Mrs Tricia McNair of Halfacre Hill and Gordon Gillies of Ellis Avenue, who has taken over responsibility for development from Bob Stewart. He also said that we were sadly saying au revoir to Bob Stewart who is retiring from the Committee after being a member since 1996 and an outstanding Chairman from 1997 to 2002. The Chairman expressed sincere thanks to Bob for his tireless work and contribution to the Estate and this was warmly applauded by the residents present. We are also most grateful to John Nesbitt of Lewis Lane, a retired architect, who is now acting as architectural adviser to the Committee.

Property development continued last year at roughly the same level as in 2001 as residents continue to develop rather than move elsewhere. Roads & trees continue to be our main items of expenditure but the level and rate of increase of those

expenses are of increasing concern to us in the running of the Estate. This year our budgeted expenditure is £40,000 and our income barely £17,000 at current levels, which is a recipe for disaster. We must maintain reserves at a level which gives us funds should we have a major unexpected expense, especially on roads or trees. A pie chart breakdown of our budgeted expenditure this year was circulated. Whilst general inflation is reported as between 2.5 and 3.0%, the official index of industrial inflation is running at close to 9.0% and the increases in our road repair charges are much closer to that figure. Damage to roads and verges from heavier and larger commercial vehicles is an increasing problem for us and you will hear more of this later.

After my first year as Chairman my major feeling is one of gratitude for the effort and time put in by the members of the Committee in maintaining the Estate in good condition. The one universal comment made by every new committee member over the past few years is that they had no idea how much time and effort is required to run this Estate.

2.2 Roads and Signs - K L Morrison

a) Ken Morrison confirmed that some road repair work had been deferred from 2002 to 2003 when we shall resurface Sandy Rise with a macadam wearing course and apply a tar spray and shingle surface to Halfacre Hill, Lewis Lane, the Upway spur, Winkers Close and Winkers Lane. Some adjustment was made to the speed ramps when we resurfaced lower Chiltern Hill and they are generally considered satisfactory if negotiated slowly as intended.

b) Road sweeping is an increasing problem because the new tax on disposal of sweepings is now more expensive than the sweeping itself. Councillor Dr John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road advised that this tax is due to increase dramatically over the next five years from the current £13.50 /tonne to £35 /tonne. He also offered to obtain details of alternative tipping sites where the cost may be lower.

c) Ken Morrison gave some comparative figures for the costs of tar spray and shingle versus a wearing course, confirming that we shall only use the more expensive wearing course surface on roads where the traffic loads are heavier.

d) Ken Morrison advised that Mr & Mrs C P Watters, *The Highlands*, Chiltern Hill had expressed concern at road safety at the junction of Chiltern Hill and Ellis Avenue. The oak tree island there is not a roundabout because it is offset down Chiltern Hill. There was considerable discussion on this subject and only one resident present recalled any problem with traffic there and that was from a car turning right into Chiltern Hill from Ellis Avenue without stopping or pausing. Residents pointed out that it was totally impractical to attempt to make this island a roundabout because only smaller vehicles could negotiate the right turn from Ellis Avenue to Chiltern Hill and this would lead to confusion and be dangerous. The general consensus was that this island presents no problem if the speed limits are observed but excess speed on the Estate is a general problem, much of it by

residents who should know better. Several residents suggested that ramps at the island would ensure that traffic had to slow down and this will be investigated. The Chairman advised that Barry Bradbrook and he had undertaken to see if sight lines around the island can be improved whilst preserving this original feature of the Estate.

David McDonald, *Leighton Cottage*, Sandy Rise asked if fallen leylandi trees at the turning circle at the end could be removed, although he realised this was Council property. Barry Bradbrook said that the Council have been asked but have so far not responded. John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road offered to help if the Council do not respond to such requests.

Ken Morrison gave an outline of the breakdown of the costs of this year's road repairs and how they are the main item of expenditure.

2.3 Trees, islands and Estate entrances – Barry Bradbrook

a) Referring to the report for 2002, Barry Bradbrook pointed out that the woodland trees on the Estate are maturing and require increasing amounts of work each year to keep them safe and in good condition. Smaller trees are being planted where older trees have to be removed.

b) Bollard painting was deferred from 2001 to last year and the extra year meant that we had to pressure clean the bollards before they could be painted. If each resident with a bollard in front of their house cleaned it regularly the Estate would look better and maintenance costs would be minimised.

c) The verges continue to be damaged by heavy vehicles driving over them causing extensive damage in some cases. If we are able to get details of the vehicle doing the damage we can try to get compensation. But the maintenance of verges is still the responsibility of individual residents as specified in the covenants. The verges have always been intended as grass areas wide enough for pedestrians to step out of the way of traffic. Some residents have allowed their hedges to overgrow the verge and these should be trimmed back to maintain the grass areas.

d) There are newly planted shrubs on some of the islands and these require regular watering in dry weather. Residents living close to these islands are asked to water the shrubs to keep them healthy.

e) John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road deplored the planting of smaller trees and asked that we retained English native trees which are such a feature of the Estate. Brenda Wickham, *Chiltern Lodge*, Upway suggested that mountain ash is a good variety to plant. Jim Ballantyne, *Cheriton*, Sandy Rise pointed out that flowering cherry are highly susceptible to honey fungus, which is present on the Estate.

2.4 Trustees and Development – Gordon Gillies

a) Gordon Gillies referred to the report and that there were 22 development applications in 2002 compared to 23 in 2001. Two of these were refused. Two applications were for demolition and rebuild, one of which was accepted and the other was withdrawn after we had made objections to the Council.

b) Residents were reminded that if they object to a development, it is their responsibility to write to the Council and not leave it to the Trustees to do it for them.

c) The committee are concerned at the damage and congestion caused to the Estate by heavy vehicles during development construction. Residents undertaking development are required to ask contractors and suppliers to use modestly sized vehicles where possible, control parking, confine off loading to within the site if possible and to sign an undertaking to repair and restore roads and verges to their state before development commenced. Copies of these conditions were made available at the meeting.

d) A development charge will be made in future for all new development applications. The proposed level is £100 but there was a general feeling that it should be £200.

e) Annie McAlister, *Roughdown*, Ellis Avenue mentioned that any residents who might have problems concerning regulation or control of developments should seek the advice of the Enforcement Officer at Chiltern District Council who is most helpful.

f) John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road advised the meeting that following a recent change in the Planning Committee at Chiltern District Council, members of the public are now allowed to attend and speak for 3 minutes at Planning meetings on any specific application provided that a request is made in advance.

g) Gordon Gillies expressed his thanks for the assistance of the Parish Council in providing details of planning applications within the Estate.

2.5 There being no further questions on the Committee Report, the Chairman asked for a proposal to approve these sections of the Report. Brian Davies (*Cartref*, Chiltern Hill) proposed adoption of the Report and Dennis Palmer (*Warren Lodge*, Upway) seconded the proposal which was carried.

3. Financial Report & Accounts – Barry Hulme (Treasurer)

a) The Treasurer outlined the level of increases in expenditure for the main categories in 2002 and emphasised that the rates of increase in prices for the services we need are well above the standard level of inflation.

b) There were only two outstanding subscriptions for 2002, both long term non payers who continue to enjoy the benefits of the Estate at the expense of all the other residents.

c) The Treasurer reviewed the details the Income & Expenditure and Balance Sheet for 2002.

d) The honorary auditors had approved the accounts and remarked that although the reserves were at an apparently high level, they were barely sufficient to cover the liabilities if the Estate were functioning as a business.

e) Mr Michael March, *Pembroke Lodge*, Upway proposed and Dr John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road seconded the adoption of the accounts. Motion was carried.

f) The Chairman explained that the Committee proposed that the annual subscription for 2003 should be £120. A ten year forecast of income and expenditure had been made to review the overall financial situation. Although several projections had been made at different levels of inflation, even the best possible case showed that, with the increasing cost of road repairs and tree maintenance, we shall run into a substantial deficit within five years unless we take positive action now. For 2003 alone we have a budgeted expenditure of £40,000 with an income at present levels of around £17,000. This will deplete reserves to a dangerously low level leaving us no safeguard against unexpected exceptional costs like major storm damage to trees or to roads. By making a realistic forecast of expenditure, our calculations show that we need an annual subscription level of £120 for 2003. This level does not compare unfavourably with other private estates in this area, Woodhill Estate £100 without trees, Camp Road £150 roads only. After some discussion of this proposal, the general feeling of the meeting was that £120 is still good value and not an unreasonable sum to maintain the Estate in good condition.

David Brown, *Hilltop*, Chiltern Hill raised several detailed queries about the figures used as a basis for the forecasts and expressed his view that there should be more details of the figures used to make the forecasts to justify the increase in subscriptions. The Chairman explained that the Committee had considered making a very detailed presentation to the meeting but decided on balance that a simple explanation was to be preferred. However any resident is welcome to discuss these details individually if they wish and the Chairman extended an invitation to David Brown and any other residents to discuss the figures with the Treasurer and himself outside the meeting.

David Blackburn, *Westwood Lodge*, Lewis Lane pointed out that whilst £120 is required this year, should it prove more than adequate in future years there is no reason why the subscription should not be reduced.

Jim Ballantyne, *Cheriton*, Sandy Rise said that the residents had elected the Committee to look after the interests of the Estate and if they considered this was the level of subscriptions required to maintain standards then the meeting should support that proposal.

Mrs Brenda Wickham, *Chiltern Lodge*, Upway proposed that the £120 subscription be adopted. Mrs Valerie Chandler, *Swan Ridge*, Lincoln Road seconded and the motion was carried.

4. Honorary Auditors

The Chairman thanked the honorary auditors Mr R Solomon and Mr K Quilter for once again giving excellent service to the Committee and the Estate and advised the meeting that they were both willing to be re-appointed for the year 2003. This motion was proposed by Mr Brian Davies, *Cartref*, Chiltern Hill, seconded by Mr Bob Stewart, *Wivelsfield*, Lincoln Road and was carried.

5. Committee

5.1 The Chairman advised the meeting that since Bob Stewart was retiring as a trustee and committee member, John Williams was standing down as a trustee and Ian Martin had long left the Estate, this would have left the Chairman as the sole trustee. The Committee had appointed Barry Hulme, Paul Cassell and Tricia McNair as trustees bringing the number back to the maximum of four.

5.2 All eight existing members of the Committee were available for re-election for the year 2003. Dr John Warder, *Chalfont View*, Lincoln Road proposed that all eight members of the Committee should be re-elected en-bloc, seconded by Mrs Annie McAlister, *Roughwood*, Ellis Avenue and the motion was carried.

6. Any other business

6.1 Mrs Sheila Down, *Stoneycroft*, Lewis Lane had raised a specific query concerning some buried rocks on the verge of *Bochym*, Lewis Lane. The Chairman pointed out that specific queries of this nature should be raised with the resident whose verge is concerned. However all residents should be reminded of the legal responsibilities for obstacles on verges. We consulted our liability insurers on this subject last year and they requested a survey of all obstacles on verges on the Estate, which was carried out by Paul Down, *Stoneycroft*, Lewis Lane. Our insurers advised us that liability cover arising from obstacles on verges must remain the responsibility of the individual householders and not that of the Estate. For that reason the Committee do not agree to the placing of obstacles on Estate verges. If any owners insist on placing or retaining obstacles on Estate verges, then they do so at their own risk and liability. Mrs Brenda Wickham, *Chiltern Lodge*, Upway mentioned that many years ago a few concrete posts were placed on verges by the Estate and not by the owners. It was agreed that these specific posts will be identified and the householders concerned notified that they either accept responsibility or remove the posts.

Mrs Down also asked if the narrow roadway in Lewis Lane on the corner between *Bochym* and *Esha Ness* could be widened. Ken Morrison agreed that this will be looked at when Lewis Lane is resurfaced this year.

6.2 Mr Brian Davies, *Cartref*, Chiltern Hill asked for house numbering to be adopted on the Estate and gave an extremely disturbing account of an attempted robbery by masked men when he returned home late one night in November. He was conscious of a car following him up the hill and as he was entering his front door

two masked men entered the drive and attempted to enter the house. He was able to just close the door and immediately phoned the police. When asked to give the house number and location on Chiltern Hill, he gave the house name and location but the control room said that was insufficient. When he explained there were no house numbers the control room refused to allocate a police car to give assistance until they could accurately identify the house location. It took ten minutes before the location was clarified and accepted and another ten before the car arrived. There have been other similar incidents within the Estate during the past year. If this had been a case of medical emergency requiring an ambulance a life could be lost if there was a delay. Dr Barry Hulme, *Wingrove House*, Winkers Lane said there had been a similar delay before an ambulance could locate his house due to lack of numbering. There was considerable discussion from the residents present with numerous accounts of delivery vehicles and others constantly unable to locate houses. Mrs Brenda Wickham, *Chiltern Lodge*, Upway mentioned that North Park, Gerrards Cross had no numbering until there was a near fatality due to an ambulance unable to find a house several years ago. The Parish Council then added house numbers in North Park. It was pointed out by several residents that even if numbers were allocated, not all houses would choose to display them, but they would assist in house location. Mr Bob Stewart, *Wivelsfield*, Lincoln Road pointed out that when the Estate map was produced by Gordon Murray eighteen months ago, copies were given to all the emergency services, medical surgeries and other interested organisations in the village. But there was no guarantee that this information was passed to a police control room that might be in another part of the Thames Valley far removed from Chalfont St Peter.

The Chairman explained that, whilst everyone in the room was concerned at this problem and alarmed by Brian Davies experience, the question of house numbering is not part of the fabric, roads and verges of the Estate for which the Trustees and Roads Committee have ownership and responsibility. Mr Dennis Palmer, *Warren Lodge*, Upway explained that identification of houses and numbering is a responsibility given to local councils by the Government but this Estate is low on the list of priorities. Before numbering can be applied to roads not currently numbered all householders must be advised and asked to indicate whether they agree. A majority must be in favour for it to be adopted and he undertook to raise the matter at the next Parish Council meeting.

A vote was taken to establish the views of the forty six residents present, although this is not a motion for which the Roads Committee are responsible. There was an almost unanimous vote in favour.

6.3 Mrs Annie McAlister, *Roughdown*, Ellis Avenue thanked the Committee in general for their work in the management of the Estate.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.00.

CHALFONT HEIGHTS ROAD COMMITTEE

INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003

2002		2003
	Income	
15624	Annual Subscriptions Received	23,675
411	paid in advance	- 150
16035	Subscriptions for the year	23,825
200	report fees	
22500	Development charge	4,625
1089	Deposit Interest	725
-218	less: Corporation Taxation	-
39606	Net Income	29,175
	Expenditure	
8487	Roads Maintenance	29,467
4501	Tree Maintenance	4,839
1188	Insurance	1,188
309	Secretarial & AGM	262
1340	Legal Fees	1,581
15825	Total Expenditure	37,336
23781	Surplus(Deficit) for year carried to Balance Sheet	- 8,161

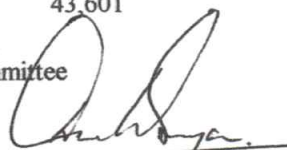
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2003

2002	2003	2002	2003
	Capital Account		
19,399	Balance B/F	200	F/H Est. & Verges
,781	Surplus(Def) for Year	-	8,161
43,180			35,019
		Bank:	
		1,524	Current A/C
271	Creditors	41,877	Deposit A/C
150	Subs. rec'd in advance	43,401	Total Bank
			35,061
43,601		43,601	
			35,261
			0

for and on behalf of the Committee



Barry Hulme
Hon. Treasurer



Derek Bryan
Hon. Chairman

AUDITORS' REPORT

We have examined the foregoing Income and Expenditure Account and find that it is a true statement of the transactions of the year ended 31 December 2003 and that the Balance Sheet gives a true and fair view of the assets and liabilities at 31 December 2003.



Roy Solomon



Keith Quilter

Honorary Auditors