

CHALFONT HEIGHTS ROADS COMMITTEE

65th Annual General Meeting

to be held on

Tuesday 8th March 2022, at 7.30pm

Online, via ZOOM (call opens earlier - please join at 7.20pm):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87387008409?pwd=NEdzb1BpM0V4dkhzWFRDMWlVRcU0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 873 8700 8409, Passcode: 848726

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Minutes**
- 4. Financial Report and Accounts for 2021**
 - a. To consider the content
 - b. To approve and adopt the Financial Report and Accounts
- 5. Chairman's Report**
 - a. To consider and accept the Chairman's report
- 6. Committee Reports for 2021**
 - a. To consider the content and matters arising from under-noted sub-sections of the Report:
 - i. Communications
 - ii. Development, Planning
 - iii. Roads, Signs and Snow
 - iv. Trees, Islands, Verges & Gates
 - v. Neighbourhood Watch
 - b. To approve and adopt the sub-sections of the report
- 7. Key decisions**
 - a. To confirm that the Annual Subscription should be reduced to £250 for 2022
 - b. To confirm that the basis for computation of Development Fees should remain unchanged.
- 8. Committee**
 - a. Appointment of Committee for 2022
- 9. Other Business**

If a resident would like to raise an item of any other business at the meeting, notice in writing must be sent via the website <http://www.chrc.org.uk/contact-us/> at least 7 days before the meeting.

- 10. To close the Meeting**

Only residents who have been admitted as members of Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited, or their proxies, are entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting of that company, which will be held immediately after the Estate AGM

CHALFONT HEIGHTS ROADS COMMITTEE LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited will be held immediately after that of Chalfont Heights Roads Committee which begins at 7.30pm on Tuesday 8th March 2022, online via ZOOM

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87387008409?pwd=NEdzb1BpM0V4dkhzWFRDMWlVRcUQZz09>)

Meeting ID: 873 8700 8409, Passcode: 848726), to transact the following business:

1. To approve the Financial Report and Accounts for 2021

2. To fix the Annual Subscription for 2022 at £250

3. To elect Directors

The current directors are deemed to cease to hold office at the conclusion of the meeting, but may be re-elected. The following directors offer themselves for re-election:

Michael Bird

George Eykyn

Peter Gourd

Jane Greaves

Jim Greaves

Jon McGowan

Keith Quilter

Mark Simmons

4. Other business

If a member of Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited would like to raise an item of any other business at the Annual General Meeting of the company, notice in writing must be sent via the CHRC website <http://www.chrc.org.uk/contact-us/> or to the Chairman at Kilima, Lincoln Road, Chalfont St Peter, SL9 9TG at least 7 days before the meeting.

Chairman's Report

Committee membership has remained unchanged from the previous year. I would like to thank my colleagues on the Committee for their enthusiasm and dedication in looking after the estate for the last twelve months. All of our meetings, including last year's AGM, were held virtually because of the pandemic. Despite these difficulties the expertise of the Committee members has meant that we were able to meet the challenges of running the estate in these difficult times. The task of maintaining the roads, trees and verges as well as the character of the estate is a constant challenge which, I am sure you will agree, they have met admirably.

Keith Quilter is our Treasurer. Keith continues the struggle of collecting the annual subscription from residents. Since most people will have a banking App on their mobile which will enable them to set up, modify and cancel standing orders it is difficult to understand why some residents resist the invitation to do so. Expecting Keith to knock on doors to collect subscriptions in these Covid times is unreasonable. The Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Limited bank account is with HSBC, the sort code is 40-17-69 and the account number is 11431641. These details are repeated at the end of Keith's report. If you have not already done so, please set up a standing order for the annual subscription due in May using the subscription rate approved at this year's AGM.

George Eykyn and Jon McGowan have been responsible for communications, making sure that messages are communicated and that the Committee responds to questions raised by residents. Jon looks after our website and manages the technical aspects of the Zoom meetings.

Jim and Jane Greaves continued to provide us with the benefit of their expertise in reviewing planning applications and in advising residents on their development plans. Jim continues to monitor any developments of the Local Plan to try and protect the Heights from threats of overdevelopment in the fields to the east of the estate.

Mark Simmons has continued to plan and supervise the maintenance of the roads. The last year has been extremely busy, with gas mains replacement and BT laying new fibre to upgrade the broadband provision. The planned road resurfacing for the end of 2021 had to be postponed until 2022 because of the sewage pipe replacement in Upway. This meant that the cost of road resurfacing was much lower than forecast, these costs now being incurred in 2022.

Mike Bird has continued his vital role maintaining the trees and verges, which gives our estate its special character.

Last year I reported our success in suing one of the estate's residents, Mr Watters, through the Small Claims Court for the shortfall in payments of the annual subscription. A subsequent appeal hearing overturned this decision. The Committee received legal advice as to how this could be pursued further, but has reached the conclusion that it is not in the interest of the estate to perpetuate the legal action further. We will continue to serve the resident with notice of subscriptions owed, based on the level mandated each year after due and open discussion by the AGM.

Last year a number of you commented favourably on our use of Zoom to report back to you. This year the AGM will again be held virtually. You will receive your invitation link by email and I hope we will have a record turnout this year. I hope that everyone participating from their own home will not detract from their enjoyment of the special occasion of our AGM.

Peter Gourd
Chairman

Communications (George Eykyn & Jon McGowan)

We have maintained the range of email alerts offered on behalf of the Committee. Around 180 households subscribe to the Roads Committee emails about the estate – ie about 90% of our residents. We continue to comply with data protection as per GDPR. Our privacy policy is available on the website. All new residents are asked for their consent for their personal information to be used, and emails on estate and Neighbourhood Watch matters remind recipients of their right to withdraw their consent at any time.

In line with residents' decision at the 2019 AGM, we continue to use primarily electronic (email) distribution of key documents like the Annual Report. For residents whom we are unable to email, we continue to deliver a hard copy.

Website

Our website, www.chrc.org.uk, remains a useful tool and a repository of information about the estate. We have moved hosting and security of the website to the UK-based firm Dessol. CHRC previously used a low-cost virtual provider but this supplier's security and customer service were very poor. Our new hosting company is based in Norfolk and the website and online assets are all secured on UK-based servers.

CHRC is looking at refreshing the website design and improving the navigation and search. The Committee will consider design proposals and ideas in the first half of 2022. Our design brief is to improve the overall look and feel of the website, make it easier to navigate, make the news section more prominent and easier to update, and to close off the Forum. This section did not attract sufficient take-up from residents, who have other more accessible channels like the Chalfont St Peter Forum, Chalfont St Peter Connected on Facebook, and various WhatsApp groups to use. Our new web agency also advised us that the Forum section of our website was a vulnerable point of access for hackers, so this led us first to suspend the area and ultimately to close it off.

During lockdown we scanned all of the previous years' AGM minutes and they are now available to download and view in the Committee section under the CHRC Archive Tab.'

WhatsApp

We have a "Chalfont Heights General" WhatsApp group which has proved popular during the Covid pandemic. More than 80 residents belong. If you wish to join, please email geykyn@btopenworld.com.

As always, the Committee is grateful for any help from residents putting new neighbours in touch with us. It really helps. With at least an email address, we can send them a welcome pack and offer them the different email alerts. It's especially challenging to maintain accurate records and contacts for properties owned by companies or rented out to tenants. Likewise at the moment of sale: if you sell your property and leave Chalfont Heights, please put the new owner in touch with us. This involves minimal effort for the departing resident, but can save a lot of time for us, as well as giving the new residents the best experience as they arrive in their new home.

We are keen to obtain email contacts for the following properties, if their occupants would kindly email geykyn@btopenworld.com or contact@chrc.org.uk, or if neighbours could help us establish contact:

- Transloi, Sandy Rise
- Lantern Lodge, Chiltern Hill
- Greystoke, Winkers Lane

Thank you.

Finance (Keith Quilter, Treasurer)

The 2021 cash balance shows £233,000. This balance has been sharply reduced in January 2022 to £173,000 after payment to our road contractor, BESTCO. The Committee proposes to reduce the annual charge from £300 to £250. Residents will decide the matter, in the AGM.

Non-payment to CHRC Ltd from residents in 2021 was higher than normal partly due to new residents, standing orders being lost by banks, and forgetfulness: this causes a lot of extra work chasing the fees especially if we hold incorrect records and are working under Covid restrictions. Please check you have paid for 2022 by the end of May.

Bank details for Standing Orders

Account name: Chalfont Heights Roads Committee Ltd

Account number: 11431641 Sort Code: 40-17-69.

Please use your house name as reference.

A full set of accounts will be available for display in the 2022 online AGM. A hard copy will be made available to those few households not able to receive them by email who request a copy.

CHALFONT HEIGHTS ROAD COMMITTEE INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2020		2021
	Income	
62,450	Annual subscriptions received	53,325
506	Other income	620
2,474	Development charges	8,160
13	Interest received	1
<u>65,443</u>	Total Income	<u>62,106</u>
	Expenditure	
15,026	Roads maintenance	1,718
96	Bank charges	72
3,588	Tree maintenance	9,214
792	Insurance	798
274	Secretarial & AGM	40
1,392	Accountancy	1,404
3,730	Legal & professional fees	12,897
<u>24,898</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>26,143</u>
<u>40,545</u>	Surplus for year carried to Balance Sheet	<u>35,963</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

2020	2021	2020	2021
Capital Account			
156,236	Balance B/F	196,781	
40,545	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	35,963	
<u>196,781</u>			
		Bank	
		185,044	Current Account
		12,637	Deposit Account
		-	Six Months Bond
		<u>197,681</u>	Total Bank and Bond
			233,644
		Creditors:	
		(900)	Accruals
			(900)
<u>196,781</u>	<u>232,744</u>	<u>196,781</u>	<u>232,744</u>

for and on behalf of the Committee

Keith Quilter
Hon. Treasurer

Peter Gourd
Hon. Chairman

Development (Jim Greaves)

(Sub-Committee members: Jane Greaves; Peter Gourd)

The Development Subcommittee has dealt with a variety of issues this year.

Last year we reported that there was an outstanding development fee on a few developments within the estate, but this year I am pleased to advise that most of our residents have paid the necessary fees. To remind residents, the development fee is a fee payable to the CHRC when new development within the estate is undertaken. It was introduced as a means of obtaining additional funding for the repair and upkeep of the roads to cover the extra wear and tear that our roads, and particularly verges, are subjected to by contractors' and suppliers' vehicles.

There continue to be some residents submitting planning applications to the local authority without consultation with the CHRC. Residents are reminded that they or their agents are advised to consult with the CHRC development subcommittee *before* applying to the Council for planning permission. The CHRC will review the proposed application and where appropriate provide guidance. Immediate neighbours will now be contacted for their views about planning applications that will directly affect them. Therefore, it is best if the applicants consult with their neighbours beforehand.

Unfortunately, there was one instance this year where a resident applied for planning permission to develop a coloured zinc clad building facing the street. The proposed material was incompatible with the estate's character and the CHRC raised an objection to the application and consequently it was refused. It would have been better if the applicant had discussed their proposals beforehand, as it would have saved abortive time and money.

Continuing this theme, the Committee is increasingly required to deal with inappropriate development within the estate. As a good many of you know, the estate is an officially designated Established Area of Special Character. This character is described in the Chalfont St Peter Neighbourhood Plan as:

Strong rectilinear road layout and large plot sizes. Planned nature of the area gives it a strong uniform appearance.

Houses are generally large, two-storey detached homes set within large plots. Front gardens are deep and contain a variety of lawns, hedges, trees and shrubs.

The roads have a distinctive character with narrow carriageways and soft verges. Grass verges are planted with mature deciduous trees which are a particular feature in the street scene. The deep front gardens in this area add to the green, leafy character.

Many houses do not have front boundary treatments adding to the informal feel of the area.

Close-boarded or solid fences and structures such as car ports set within the front lawn of the dwelling have an adverse effect on the character of the estate. The CHRC recognises that residents sometimes wish to erect fences for reasons of security, but we ask that these comprise low steel railings inset with hedge planting to preserve the green leafy character of the dwelling frontages. Gates are increasingly being installed and we would ask that these are either timber, or steel railings. Solid metal gates are discouraged, because they detract from the character of the estate.

Lastly the proposal for 14 dwellings on the site of the Winkers night club recently obtained provisional planning consent. The CHRC attended the planning committee and a report will be given at the AGM.

Utilities and Roads (Mark Simmons)

Utilities

It has been a busy year around the estate with both BT and Cadent Gas undertaking extensive programmes of asset renewal work during Spring/Summer 2021.

During Feb – May 2021, BT and their contractor KN Cirnet installed new telecom ducting on nearly every road and then pulled in new fibre-optic cables to the various junction boxes and BT poles in preparation for BT to start selling new fibre-optic broadband contracts to customers. Most

customers could then be connected via overhead lines or existing underground ducts. Occasionally the final section from the BT chamber to a property needed to be replaced. BT then asks permission from both CHRC, who are responsible for the roads and verges, and the homeowner to lay a new duct from the BT chamber to the property. This is an ongoing process as households gradually upgrade to a fibre broadband contract.

Following this Cadent Gas started a programme to renew old their iron pipework with new polyethylene (PE) pipework. Whilst renewing the gas main pipework, they also renewed customer pipe connections along Chiltern Hill, Lincoln Road, Woodside Hill, Ellis Avenue and Halfacre Hill and terminated their renewal work at the junction with Upway. Unfortunately, their contract only included these roads: Sandy Rise, Lewis Lane, Upway, Winkers Close and Winker Lane were not included and work will be undertaken at some future undetermined date.

On balance, I think both the BT and Cadent contractors did good work around the estate. There were a couple of verge reinstatement issues that were addressed subsequently.

A Thames Water sewer along Upway became blocked towards the end of 2021. Tankers visit daily to remove sewage from a manhole at the junction of Upway with Winkers Close. A Thames Water contractor attended site for several weeks to carry out repairs the sewer and they finally demobilised from site just before Christmas. However, the repair work to the sewer is incomplete, and we expect Thames Water to return to complete the sewer repair. In the meantime, tankers will continue to visit daily to remove sewage from the manhole. We are corresponding with Thames Water to understand when a permanent repair will be undertaken. Not a stellar performance by Thames Water, so far.

Sink hole

A potential sink hole has appeared recently in the grass verge on Upway Spur. Upon initial inspection the hole was measured to be approx. 1.5m deep and 1m in diameter, though I suspect the depth and extent of the voiding may be greater than this. The hole has been covered temporarily with a fence panel and road cone. We have engaged a geotechnical specialist who will attend shortly to undertake borehole investigation works and then help us develop a remedial solution.

Road resurfacing and associated works, 2022

In January, we sent out an update on the resurfacing programme which was deferred from December 2021 due to the ongoing sewer repair work on Upway.

The following road resurfacing works were undertaken in mid-January:

- Winkers Lane Spur. A new asphalt road surface from Winkers Lane to the end of Winkers Lane Spur
- Lower Woodside Hill. Replace asphalt road surface from near estate entrance to Mulberry House
- Upper Chiltern Hill. Replace asphalt road surface from Ellis Ave roundabout to Upway
- Sandy Rise. Patch repair works

We have planned a further programme of resurfacing works to be undertaken during Spring 2022, comprising:

- Upper Woodside Hill. Replace asphalt road surface from Mulberry House to Ellis Ave
- Middle Chiltern Hill. Replace asphalt road surface from Ellis Ave roundabout to Ochre House
- Other minor road surface and speed bump repairs as required.

We will advise you when these resurfacing works take place after we have agreed a programme with our road resurfacing contractor.

As we expect Cadent Gas to return to complete their programme of gas main renewal, we are thinking of deferring resurfacing works on Sandy Rise and Upway to 2023. Lewis Lane, Winkers

Close and Winkers Lane have already been resurfaced in the past couple of years and so are not in the current programme. This may require condition-based patch repair works to be carried out on both Sandy Rise and Upway.

Trees, Islands, Verges & Gates (Michael Bird)

I hope that our residents enjoy the special rural, peaceful character of our Estate, and appreciate our tree-lined roads and grassed verges, which are owned by CHRC Limited. Part of our annual subscription goes towards maintaining these assets in good condition.

The condition of the trees is subject to a bi-annual survey by our arboriculturist Paul Morris (Fineland Forestry), and I'm pleased to report that the vast majority of our 430+ trees are in good or very good condition. Unfortunately, one tree came down in strong winds last year, causing some damage to a resident's property, and I should remind residents that in such an eventuality the resident needs to claim for damage from their own insurance (CHRC's insurance does not cover this type of damage to private property). In addition, three diseased or dying trees were removed as a precautionary measure. Some trees, or their branches, can deteriorate quite quickly, and it would be appreciated if residents could inform me of any concerns they may have of trees being in a poor state of health.

Most of the requests from residents are for the pruning back of low-hanging branches, cutting back of the canopy to improve light penetration, and clearing up of broken branches after storm damage. Our tree surgeon normally fulfils such requests promptly. Maintenance of the islands, bollards and smaller jobs is conducted by our Haywarden, Mike Stevens, and I would like to thank Paul and Mike for the excellent service they provide for our Estate.

I would also like to thank the vast majority of our residents for the work they do in maintaining their verges in an excellent state, which not only helps to keep the Estate looking smart, but also reduces expenditure from our subscription income. However, I would like to remind a small number of residents that parking on the verges is strongly discouraged, in part because heavy vehicles compact the soil, reducing access of the tree roots to oxygen and water. This can damage nearby trees and encourage fungal growth. Some verges are easily damaged by delivery or contractor's vehicles driving onto them, especially after rain, and I'd be grateful if residents could inform me of any such damage. Since the verges are owned by CHRC, we also ask that our committee should be consulted before any plantings or alterations are made to the verges. In addition, if a resident is considering installing fencing or metal railings at their front boundary, we request that a natural hedge is planted in front to help to maintain the green, leafy nature of our Estate.

Looking forward, we intend to plant a number of new saplings around the Estate in order to maintain the attractive nature of our tree-lined roads for current and future generations. To give the saplings the best chance of survival, it would be very helpful if residents could water the young trees during dry weather.

Neighbourhood Watch (George Eykyn)

The NHW scheme has continued to be valued by residents, with more than 200 subscribers to the email alerts.

In 2019 we set up a Chalfont Heights Neighbourhood Watch "WhatsApp" group, for those residents with smart phones who wanted to receive immediate communication of the most important information – such as any police appeals or descriptions of individuals or vehicles sought. There is also a WhatsApp group for all NHW Co-ordinators in Chalfont St Peter, so occasionally one of their messages may be shared. We now have more than 90 residents who have joined the Chalfont

Heights NHW WhatsApp group. Anyone who would like their mobile number added should email geykyn@btopenworld.com. It should be stressed that the WhatsApp group is used very sparingly.

Since Jan 2021, there have been a total of 6 crimes in the estate formally recorded by the police. These were classed as

- Violence & sexual offences – Ellis Ave, Jan
- Violence & sexual offences – Lower Chiltern Hill, Feb
- Vehicle crime – Sandy Rise, April
- Vehicle crime – Chiltern Hill, May
- Violence & sexual offences – Upway, June
- Vehicle crime – Lincoln Rd, Nov

First please note that thankfully, there were no burglaries recorded in the estate during 2021. However keyless car theft is on the rise. Motor theft is up 38% in Chalfont St Peter as a whole, with 51 incidents in the village over the last year. We know quite a lot about one vehicle theft in Chiltern Hill in May 2021, and will share some details about it during the AGM. The police believe keyless car crime has become “a huge problem” and that the public are still not sufficiently aware of the risks.

Sgt Darren Walsh of TVP said on this subject in January: “If you see something suspicious, call it in on 101 - if it's very suspicious and you think it is a crime then call 999. Cars are targeted by gangs from out of area. They will walk around estates trying to get car signals. We are noticing a number of cases where offenders are using cars equipped with scanning equipment to relay car key signals.”

If a vehicle parks on your driveway or outside your house for some time without good reason, it is perfectly possible that the occupants are running scanning equipment trying to pick up the signals of car keyfobs inside the house. Once the key fob is scanned and cloned, they can return at any time that suits them (eg middle of the night), open your car by replaying the correct signal, start it and drive off, all in a matter of seconds.

Top tips from Thames Valley Police

- 1; Use your garage - if you have one
- 2; Keep your keys safe. Get yourself a Faraday Pouch. For £5, this blocks the key's signals
- 3; Keys - can you turn the signal off? Some models do allow for this. Check your manual.
- 4; Consider a steering lock. We may have thought we got rid of these in the 90's - but they do work as criminals come equipped to steal with technology rather than tools.

Although there were no reported burglaries in Chalfont Heights, police advice remains unchanged.

- If you go away, please set timer switches; it is glaringly obvious that a house is unoccupied if there are no lights coming on and off.
- Please look out for your neighbours; if you see anything unusual, make a note (descriptions, vehicle registrations etc) and call 101.

Committee

The current members of the Roads Committee are as follows:

Peter Gourd (chair, development)	Kilima, Lincoln Road	893971
George Eykyn (communications)	Timbers, Chiltern Hill	888828
Jon McGowan (communications)	Tickencote, Upway	07851 296165
Keith Quilter (finance)	Beam Ends, Winkers Close	882020
Mark Simmons (roads)	Old Maples, Sandy Rise	07812 985378
Michael Bird (trees, verges)	Birchwood, Lincoln Road	882530
Jane Greaves (development)	Pembroke Lodge, 19 Upway	886117
Jim Greaves (development)	Pembroke Lodge, 19 Upway	886117

All members are standing for re-election at the Annual General Meeting on Tues 8th March 2022.