



**Minutes of Committee Meeting
12 May 2014
Highfield House Hotel**

Present: Jerry Gillen, Jill Baston, Nicolla Martin, Simon Hill, Steve Connolly, Headley Rossell, Nadine Johnson.

Attending: Quintin Gee, Tom O'Connor, Nick Bacon, Cllr Adrian Vinson.

Apologies: Roger Brown, Chris Klewe, Alison Farmer.

1. Welcome and apologies

Jerry as Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced Quintin Gee, Chair of Old Bassett Residents' Association.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Taken as read.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. AGM

Jerry invited comments. The turnout was good, with about 80 attending. In general, people felt it went well.

Points to note:

- Some felt the meeting was a little rushed.
- The work on the Little Common is not in fact complete. Further work remains to be done.
- People drifted in from registration after start of the meeting. Three tables could be placed on the door, positioned further back into the hotel lobby to avoid a bottleneck.
- It was difficult to hear speakers because of the new layout. Amplification will be arranged through the hotel.

5. Website

Roger will meet with Elly, the webmaster, later in the week.

6. HMO survey

Simon reported that progress is being made in some areas, but lack of volunteers means that there are large gaps in coverage. As well as the initial survey work, there is a need to monitor streets to keep information up to date. HRA should now actively seek volunteers. The work is not complicated and in any case taps into people's existing knowledge. There is a form for each street.

Nicolla and Simon will meet to check the members' list to see where people could be approached to cover gaps.

Simon also commented on the Little Common, at the Chair's invitation. He will organise working parties for a fixed day each month. More people are needed. No work will begin till late autumn, so as not to disturb the summer growth of plants and creatures.

Simon is also working with Phil Banyard on the proposed upgrade of Lovers' Walk.

7. Social events and fundraising

Jerry pointed out that HRA's sole regular income derives from membership fees. This does not cover our outgoings. He has asked Waitrose for a November slot in their regular monthly appeals.

Social events seem to have fallen out of favour. They are time-consuming to organise, and increasingly people are too busy to attend.

Ideas for fundraising are welcome.

8. Reports

Planning:

- It is felt that we are not getting good responses from SCC.
- Jerry reported that DCLG are dragging their feet in discussions with NORA and local MPs about matters of concern such as Stop notices. This situation is not likely to improve as the election approaches.
- Quintin Gee said that 9 Pointout Close was still not resolved. The difficulty is that every decision is appealed.
- Simon noted that SCC officers appear to be inconsistent in the way that policy is applied. Some policies are referred to in decision making, but others which are no less relevant are left out. He suggested that next time this happens in a Highfield application, we should make an application for judicial review
- Jill reported that very few planning applications were made this month in our area, none being of note.

Cllr Adrian Vinson gave an update on the Scrutiny Panel Report on HMOs. The committee has met to discuss the final report, which will be published later in the week. Depending on the ward, the limit for permission will be 10% or 20%. Build-up of an accurate picture of HMOs and the demand is needed before any change can be made to percentages. They agree that enforcement is under-resourced. SCC is to lobby government on stop orders and increased fees for retrospective applications.

Membership:

The database is now at 560, rolling 204, total paid up members 437. Nicolla raised the question of whether she should reduce the database again. The AGM had enrolled 2 new members, the newsletter 6. Donations are still forthcoming.

Finance:

Healthy. Headley reported that the lengthy process of account transfer from TSB to Lloyds is still not complete.

9. AOB

- Simon reminded the meeting of the Big Lunch on the 1st of June, venue the Little Common. A reminder email will be sent out.
- Caroline and Tony are working on an improved format for emails from the database.
- Simon will write to the Vice-Chancellor about the steps installed by the university from the common to university land.
- Nick Bacon asked when Brookvale Road will be repaired. The promised date has slipped several times. Adrian Vinson will check the current start date.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.