

## MINUTES

### OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF EVTRA

in the Constitution Cellar Bar, Tuesday July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011

**PRESENT:** EVTRA Committee (Ed Lee, Frances Lee, Pat MacGowan, Peter McGinty, Maeve O'Connor), Cllr Roger Robinson, PC Asad Saeed and colleague, Mike Jackson, and 17 residents

**APOLOGIES:** Sandra Dystant

- 1 **Treasurer's Report:** (attached) Pat McGowan reported that the accounts were in a good state, and 64 households were members of the Association.
- 2 **Report from the Chair:** (attached) Frances Lee described the main activities: action on security, guttering, dog mess, the Garden Society, the website and social events.
- 3 **Garden Society Report:** Peter McGinty said that the Society was thriving, all the allotments had been taken, water supply issues were in hand, and the Society had been a finalist in the Camden in Bloom competition.
- 4 **Statement by Cllr Roger Robinson:** A range of matters were in hand: a forthcoming regeneration project; a Heritage Centre Museum with Lottery funding in St Pancras Old Church gardens, efforts to keep play groups and luncheon clubs running; pressure on controlling dog mess, especially in Barker Drive and the proposed formation of a TRA for the other half of Elm Village. Nigel Homer voiced the thanks of residents for the work done in clearing up the Barker Drive Open Space. This seemed to have reduced problems both of dog mess and of criminal gatherings.
- 5 **Election of Committee members**  
Ed Lee, Frances Lee, Pat MacGowan, Peter McGinty, Maeve O'Connor and Sandra Dystant were willing to stand again and were re-elected unopposed. It was agreed that at the next Committee meeting, it would be decided which of Ed and Frances Lee would be a full member and which co-opted.  
David Powell and Nigel Homer offered their services and were elected unopposed. There were no responses to a call for volunteers to be monitor particular issues.
- 6 **Election of Officers**  
Pat MacGowan was re-elected unopposed as Treasurer. There were no volunteers for the position as Chair; it was agreed that this would be considered at the next Committee meeting. Ed Lee said that he did not wish to stand again as Secretary, after many years of holding the post. There were no offers to stand, but Frances explained that there had been discussion on how to re-allocate the work, and details would be agreed at the next Committee meeting.

Sheila Sansbury proposed a vote for thanks to Ed for his long service to EVTRA. This met with the full approval of the meeting.

## **7 Issues and proposals**

The meeting moved in to consider a range of issues.

### **7.1 Environment**

#### **7.1.1 Small repairs**

There were various tasks which we had requested PFP to undertake on many past occasions. These included the gateway to the greenhouse area (Peter McGinty confirmed that this had finally been fixed yesterday), the noticeboard, the wall at the end of Rossendale Way, and the road signs. There was also the issue of blocked guttering. Ed described recent events, and notably the fact that residents had been expected to provide the power for the contractors. At the Committee's request he had referred them to Brian Bailey, but had heard that day that Mr Bailey had left, after a very short time in the post. We therefore had no Estate Manager (again).

Frances said that there had been a proposal that we should try to agree with PFP that we would find contractors for such works, and that PFP would then pay. This could be both more efficient and cheaper.

**ACTION: This proposal to be discussed at the next Committee meeting**

A resident then drew attention to the state of the paving at the end of Rossendale Way. Ed confirmed that this issue had been raised at last year's AGM. It was agreed that the situation was "dangerous".

**ACTION: Roger Robinson said he would press the Council to deal with this.**

Attention was also drawn to a cable which had been passed over a roof. It was noted that PFP consistently refused to impose the terms of the lease on such matters, including estate agents' signs and satellite dishes. Roger Robinson confirmed that there were Council regulations on the maximum size of dishes. There was also discussion of the state of Virgin Media cabling, and Ed reported recent unhappy experiences with this and the comment of engineers that the cabling was likely to cause other residents problems and needed replacing.

**ACTION: Roger Robinson will check Camden's policy on satellite dishes and on cables over roofs etc. David Powell will try to contact a senior person in Virgin Media about cabling issues.**

### **7.1.2 Trees and green environment**

Mike Jackson said that basically things were going very well in the green environment. However, there had been one unpleasant incident relating to trees in Blakeney Close, in which two trees had been poisoned and a third pruned in a very crude manner. Residents' attention was drawn to the fact that, apart from being antisocial, such behaviour is illegal and can incur a very heavy fine. If anyone comes across information about the perpetrators, they should not hesitate to pass it on.

One resident raised the fact that certain trees were now substantially cutting out light from his property. All residents are advised in such cases to speak to Mike to see what can be done legally and professionally.

Mike also drew attention to the planters in Barker Drive. Changes in the provision of water have made it impossible for Mike to water these in the proper manner. Mike therefore says that, if any resident wishes to adopt such a planter and is willing to tend and water it, Mike can provide both advice and also plants.

**ACTION: These points to be publicised through the Newsletter.**

### **7.1.3 Rubbish in the streets**

Frances outlined problems which had been noted recently. She said the sources were twofold. One was that foxes got into the black rubbish bags. The solution was for residents to obtain a dustbin to put rubbish into. Elaine Read noted that the problem applied to bags which contained kitchen (edible) refuse; people could use the recycling bins provided. Other residents noted that the problem arose when bags were left out the night before a collection.

Frances said that the second problem was carelessness by the refuse collectors. Some residents commented on the failure to return lids or to replace the right one.

Hélène Fawcett described an incident of dumping in the streets which had still not been cleared. Roger Robinson said that it was the responsibility of householders to dispose of rubbish properly and that the Council could and would take action against residents who failed to do so. But other people pointed out that it was often not possible to prove who had dumped rubbish. Roger offered to take these matters up with the relevant officer, Darren Day.

**ACTION: Roger will contact Darren Day. Guidance will be included in the next Newsletter.**

### **7.1.4 Local developments**

Ed introduced this topic with the attached report. It deals with the developments in St Pancras Way, on Camley Street, and on the King's Cross site. All seem in principle to be likely to benefit our area.

Roger Robinson noted that the St Pancras Way development will generate Section 106 money to be used for the benefit of the area. In response to a question, he said it was possible for us to bid for some of this. As no one volunteered to take on this role, it will be considered at the next Committee meeting.

**ACTION: At the next meeting the Committee will review this option.**

Ed said the main question on Camley Street was the height of the buildings.

**ACTION: At the next meeting the Committee will see if anyone is prepared to monitor this development.**

With regard to King's Cross, Ed said it would clearly have a major effect on our area. We should monitor it. Roger Robinson pointed out that there is a Consultation Group chaired by Roger Maitland – we were entitled to join this and should do so.

**ACTION: David Powell volunteered to monitor King's Cross and keep EVTRA informed. At the next meeting the Committee will consider apply to join the Consultation Group.**

## **7.2 Security**

Ed gave a summary of recent events (see attached report). In particular, there had been burglaries and drug dealing. Neighbours had cooperated to act, and a valuable relationship with the Safer Neighbourhoods team had been established. There was concern about various vulnerable spots.

Nigel Homer said that during the Membership Drive a lot of concern had been expressed. He urged that there should be a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which he would be willing to coordinate. But it would only be worth the effort and be successful if residents realised that it was essential that they should be active in it.

**ACTION: At the next meeting the Committee will consider whether to ask Nigel to take this further.**

There was then a valuable contribution from PC Asad Saeed and his colleague. Their team was now able to provide valuable information about crime in the area, as well as support for our efforts. Burglaries and robberies were now a priority for the Police in this area. If we made clear that we were on the watch for intruders, for instance with signs, it was clear that the word got around and such people tended to stay away.

He strongly advised that we should set up an email address which would make it possible to contact his team quickly and directly, and for them to alert us to dangers. A resident noted that not all people had email, but it was suggested that people could leave a written message for Nigel, as coordinator.

PC Saeed would be very willing to attend a meeting to take matters further.

The meeting expressed their gratitude to the officers for attending the meeting and being so positive.

**ACTION: As there are many details to consider, the Committee will consider this issue at their next meeting, and if necessary set up further meetings.**

### **7.3 Night-time noise**

There was substantial and emotional discussion of a long continuing series of highly antisocial incidents of loud noise from late night parties at 16 Bergholt Mews. Daniel Matlin, of number 18, described a long series of unacceptable incidents. Many other residents added to the account. Attempts to be reasonable had failed, and there had been open defiance by the tenant and his guests, with chants that they would make whatever noise they liked. Daniel had compiled a noise diary, and had contacted Camden who were to send a Noise Pollution Officer. He had contacted PFP who had rung the landlady, but without effect. Various countermeasures were suggested, including a rota to ring the landlady during the night when incidents occurred.

Support for action was unanimous and a series of options were suggested, including getting advice from the Law Centre, and appealing to a Magistrates Court.

**ACTION: At the next meeting the Committee will decide on actions, and will invite Daniel to attend. David Powell is happy to liaise with Daniel on the issue.**

### **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Jackie Churchill described problems with mice, which were also found to have been experienced by other residents. Ed reported on a previous occurrence of the problem, and the various measures taken by residents: cats, poison, traps. PFP were of no help, and the Council charged a high fee, as did commercial companies. He noted that it was important to tackle a whole block of dwellings, as otherwise the mice just migrated.

### **9 The meeting ended with refreshments provided by EVTRA, which were appreciated by all.**