

STOKE D'ABERNON & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of AGM held on 16th October 2008

Stoke D'Abernon Village Hall

Ian Nelson (Chairman) opened the meeting at 8.10 pm. and welcomed all present. Lee Fabry and Sandra Treadgold representing Surrey Police made time in their busy schedule to attend as did Councillor John Butcher and Ken Purssey. Councillors James Vickers, Jan Fuller and Roger Whittaker sent their apologies as did Mr & Mrs Hacking, David Tipping and Jenny Vickers (Treasurer).

Our invited guest Ian Taylor MP had warned that he was held up in traffic so Ian Nelson invited Lee Fabry to start the evening off with a short address. Lee Fabry bravely suffering 'man flu' introduced PCSO Sandra Treadgold who looks after Stoke D'Abernon and Oxshott and then went on to announce that the successful meetings that are held every 3 months, for residents to discuss any problems with the police, are to continue and the next will be on December 4th at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. In the past social disorder, especially from people coming off the trains, has been the main concern of residents but he did point out that theft from vehicles has been a problems and on one night recently there were twelve such incidents between the hours of 0200 and 0330. The thefts are mainly 'sat navs' and lap tops and he warned those present to be especially vigilant by locking cars and not leaving anything on display. There was a question from the floor asking if any progress had been made on the theft of cycles from the station. Ian Fabry did reply that he is trying to get the council to install CCTV to cover the area but so far without success. The CCTV at the station does not cover the area where the cycles are left and so without witnesses it is a problem. He did say he will speak to the station staff to see if anything could be done. As there were no further questions both officers left to continue their duties.

Chairman's Report:

Meetings over the last 12 months have been well attended. We have had some excellent speakers namely Nicholas Chisholm, Headmaster of Yehudi Menuhin, Rev'd Rosemary Mason (who is retiring at the end of November), Nick Driver and Peter Mathers who talked about Envisage and John Stevens and Ken Purssey who kept us up to date, as near as possible, on the proposed M25 Service station.

Christmas tree lights: The lighting up for the first time of the tree on the corner of Stoke Road and Blundel Lane was probably the Associations biggest achievement as over 100 attended. We hope this year it will be an even more memorable occasion as we have carol singers arranged and a Shetland Pony (the nearest we could get to a reindeer), a Santa Claus and a vintage bus and mulled wine. The tree is actually a sequoia (which could grow to 150 ft.) which has fortunately grown into a wonderful 'christmas tree' shape. The lights are being supplied by the same company as last year in artic white. The date for the lighting up is 6th December from 5.30 pm. with the 'switch on' at 6 pm. It is hoped everyone will turn up but there will be further reminders before the day.

Spring bulbs: Last autumn 850 daffodils were planted and this year we will be

planting more. There are still areas which could benefit from spring colour.

Trees: During the year we have had some money donated by Elmbridge and Dorothy Mitchell (Surrey County Council) to plant some trees in the area. Ian Nelson asked Warwick Hutchinson (who looks after Environmental issues on behalf of the committee) to give a brief idea of where he, after discussions with Ian Gayton Elmbridge Council, proposed to plant and what trees would be best suited. The types of trees need to be drought resistant, not grow too large, preferably colourful and pleasing appearance. The trees suggested are Robinia, Silver Birch, Rowan, and possibly Lime. The proposed sites are Bray Road, Tilt Road/Stoke Road end, Vincent Road, Blundel Lane North and Station Road.

Planning: Not many applications for development have been received since the Half Yearly meeting but the Association did object to the proposed development in D'Abernon Drive which was refused, then appealed and finally rejected. The committee have decided that the Association cannot oppose all applications but will monitor and object if they will have a local impact. However we did object to the development on the Inglenook site for safety reasons but our concerns were not supported by the council and so the development went ahead. The hedge by the Inglenook site was illegally removed, a new hedge was planned but so far there is no evidence of it. The development at 152 Tilt Road was halted for some time due to opposition but there was an appeal and work has recommenced. We did object to the proposed development of Skilton's Yard, along with the majority of Cobham. It went to full council and the development was rejected.

Newsagent/Post Office: The newsagents in Stoke D'Abernon will open as a Mace convenience store after refurbishment. David Worsfold has applied for an licence to sell alcohol until 10 pm. Ian Nelson has spoken to David Worsfold about possible local objections to the late opening and alcohol licence and he was assured that at least in the first year the opening hours will not be changed and he has no intention of keeping the shop open until 10 pm. A show of hands was taken in the hall which came out overwhelmingly against the alcohol licence. The Post Office section of the store will be open on Sundays for general post office business such as stamps/ parcels etc. which should prove very convenient over the Christmas period.

Website: The website has made huge progress in the last 12 months and is experiencing 400 hits a month. Interesting material of local interest is still being sought. Residents who would like something included in the website should contact John Dare or a committee member.

Ian Nelson then introduced Ian Taylor MP our guest speaker.

Ian Taylor MP

Ian Taylor opened by giving a brief run down on life as a Member of Parliament and the many responsibilities it entailed. He represents approximately 78,000 voters so the responsibilities and problems are many and varied. Surrey has done extremely badly for many years with regard to government money and a much larger portion of the funding for local government and police has to be found from rate payers than in other parts of the country. As an example Surrey has to fund nearly 50% of the police force whereas

Durham, receiving much more government help will only have to fund 7% from the rates. He holds a surgery once a month for constituents to discuss problems.

Planning: He expressed his general objection to 'garden grabbing' (one house demolished and 2/3 more built on the same plot) but did point out that as the government has told Elmbridge to provide 5625 extra homes some 'garden grabbing' could prove useful as otherwise the green belt is in danger of being severely eroded. Surrey has been designated a growth area and it is feared that there will be selective re-assessment of the green belt which he said he will fight against. The government is about to release a new provision to allow modest extensions to existing properties without the need to obtain planning permission. We will have to wait and see how this will work and whether speculators/developers/householders will remain within the guidelines.

Heathrow: Mr Taylor informed us that he was in favour of a third runway at Heathrow as it will bring much needed employment to the area.

M25 Service station: The government has decided that the M25 service station to be built in our area will have accommodation for 85 beds rather than the proposed 60. The footprint of the external dimensions will remain the same but obviously the bedrooms will be smaller.

NHS Epsom Hospital: The twinning of Epsom with St. Helier has proved a nightmare. Services in Epsom have been decimated but there will be a new maternity unit built at Epsom.

The Chairman thanked Ian Taylor MP for his informative talk and for sparing us the time in his busy schedule. Ian Taylor and his wife then had to leave to get back to London.

Before opening the meeting to questions from the floor the Chairman thanked Councillor John Butcher and Mayor Elect James Vickers and David Tipping (who both arrived late) for attending. He also thanked the following residents for their help - John Stevens for maintaining the Bray Road path, Alfred Pratt who springs to duty for the trees and Marianne who picks up litter.

Comments from the floor:

Anne Mager expressed concern at the height of the curbs in Tilt Road.

There was consternation at SW Trains proposal to reduce ticket office opening times but unfortunately it seems this is going to happen. Another ticket machine would be useful. Elmbridge Borough Council have finally talked to Surrey County Council and agreed to put curbing and yellow lines on Tilt Road but there is still the problem of residents parking on the Stoke Road end where there are a few dwellings with no off street parking facility.

The hedge by Knowle Park needs attention.

Calendar dates:

2008 Friday 7th November – Friends of Cobham Cottage Hospital at Church Gate House.

2008 Thursday 4th December – Police liaison meeting – 7 pm. Stoke D'Abernon Village Hall.

2008 Saturday 6th December from 5.30 pm. Lighting the Christmas Tree by The Old Plough.