



RIVERSIDE AVENUE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AGM

Thursday 23rd February 2023

The meeting started at 7.30pm. The Chair (David Haldearn DH) welcomed everyone and expressed a wish to keep the meeting cheerful, short and lively! DH thanked the outgoing committee for all their hard work on behalf of the residents.

Thirty residents attended representing 20 households.

1. Apologies: Lulworth, Rosehill, Linden House, Meadowbank, Linden Lea, Fairlawns, Emerald.

2. Present: David Haldearn (DH) Chair, Alison Carey (AC) Treasurer, Kay Mingay (KM), Elaine Thatcher (ET), Mark Carey (MC) Vice Chair, Penny Dixie (PD) Secretary, Zoe Grist (ZG), Kate Osborne (KO)

3. Minutes of the previous AGM meeting on 07/09/21 were agreed and approved.

They will be posted on the RARA website. The Chair noted that since the last meeting the new bank account had been established, fast fibre broadband had been installed in the Avenue, and contributions had been increased to £100 a year – still very low compared to other private road costs.

4. Corrections and matters arising from previous minutes (not on the agenda).

There were no corrections.

The Treasurer (AC) noted that the new RARA bank account is now open and functioning well. Residents contributions towards the road maintenance fund have increased to £100 per household per annum, payable in instalments (see Treasurer's report)

The Chair (DH) noted that the installation of fibre broadband had been completed by Gigaclear.

5. The Treasurer's financial report

The Treasurer (AC) reported as follows:

As at 31 January 2023

- Current bank balance - £9,560.48
- A new bank account was opened with Lloyds Bank in 2022. This seems to be working well.

- There were only two expenses in the last 12 months; (annual email/website hosting costs) - £144.00; and The Online Salt Company (18 bags of salt purchased to replenish salt stocks for the road) - £170.63
- Amount currently outstanding from residents - £7,700
- AC will be sending out statements over the next few days
- Next contributions are due on 1 May 2023
- The contributions for 2023/2024 have been set at £100 per annum per household

Discussion following the Treasurer's report:

- RARA's governance arrangements do not include a formal requirement to audit the accounts. It was agreed that a volunteer not on the Committee should be sought to audit the accounts and report to the Committee and AGM (see below)
- RARA's salt stocks were used up in the big freeze before Christmas hence the decision to buy and store 18 bags along the road. Glenside and Dunsley residents offered to store bags for RARA. Hannell House is struggling with salt storage! Westfleet resident offered to help with gritting during any future freeze. **MC**
- Gritting Riverside Avenue will help with the safety of all residents but without Old Nazeing Road being gritted, residents still have significant access and safety issues. Following discussion, RARA will write to the Council to request that Old Nazeing Road is gritted in future. RARA will also provide a template letter (via the website) so that individual residents can also contact the Council. **DH/MC**
- RARA has a two-step authentication process for payments that are proposed by the Treasurer and approved by the Committee.
- The only signatories to the RARA account are the Treasurer (AC) and the Chair (DH).

6. Elections of Committee Members

The Chair noted that Matt Fox and Fred Brewer had stood down during the year and thanked them for their service. The current members and the Chair stood down for the election of a new committee. Nominations were encouraged from those attending. The results of the elections were as follows.

Position	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	David Halldearn	Zoe Grist	Dave Mingay
Vice Chair	Mark Carey	Luke Mingay	Elka Bhatt
Treasurer	Alison Carey	Luke Mingay	Jan Halldearn
Secretary	Penny Dixie	David Halldearn	Elka Bhatt
Member	Kay Mingay	Linda Payne	Jan Halldearn

Position	Name	Proposer	Second
Member	Zoe Grist	Darren Payne	Ashok Bhatt
Member	Elaine Thatcher	Jan Halldearn	Sue Myring
Member	Kate Osborne	David Halldearn	Elka Bhatt
Member	Rob De La Mare	Kate Osborne	Damian Fagan
Member	Damian Fagan	Rob De La Mare	Kay Mingay

All were elected by a show of hands. The Chair welcomed the new committee and expressed the hope that the forthcoming year would have some fun as well as hard work to keep the Avenue safe.

In view of the decision to appoint an auditor for future years Linda Payne (LP) volunteered to review the reports until the next AGM. **AC/LP**

7. The website

The RARA website <https://www.rarauk.org/> is up to date but very difficult to manage because of embedded coding problems. Webhosting costs £144pa. MC announced that he hoped Design Portfolio would produce a completely new design free of charge to RARA. Web hosting would remain a chargeable item. Chair expressed thanks to AC & MC for this generous offer. **AC/MC/KM**

Residents were encouraged to send ideas for the website to MC via rarainfo@rarauk.org
Ideas from the meeting included:

- Useful links page eg link to the Council to complain about uncollected bins
- Trading page eg where residents could promote their own business or recommend services provided to them by others.
- RARA free cycle or swap page
- A page dedicated to the Riverside Community Garden (Trust Land)

8. Brief Report on Jubilee Celebration

ZG reported that £1,079 was raised for Cancer Research by the participants at the RARA Jubilee Celebration. The Celebration was very successful and extremely enjoyable despite the rather dismal weather.

The cost of the celebration for RARA was £0 ! This was possible because of the generosity of residents.

Thanks were expressed to all who contributed their time, money and expertise. Boat rides, stalls, marquees, BBQ, cakes, sweets all contributed to the fun...and of course, the fun and laughter of the friends, families and neighbours who attended and made it all worthwhile.

DH expressed particular thanks to residents who allowed the end of the Avenue to be closed for the event and to Zoe and Ben Grist and Linda Payne.

9. RARA Summer Bash- Save the date

Because the King's Coronation weekend involves 2 bank holidays, it was felt best to choose another weekend for a RARA summer party. The date has been agreed as Saturday 24th June. The event will be based on last year's successful Jubilee Party. Planning will include consulting residents on closing the lower end of Avenue **DH/ZG**

Attendance is entirely voluntary and aimed at fostering good neighbourly relations. There will be no cost (£0) to RARA for this event.

DH asked residents to make suggestions by email rarainfo@rarauk.org of local charities that would benefit from any funds that were raised **DH**

10. Christmas Bash brief report

DH expressed thanks to MC/AC for hosting this. It was good to see new residents coming along to meet their neighbours. Those attending collected c£80 for Trussell Trust. There was no cost (£0) to RARA for this event.

11. Constitution

DH reported that the Constitution was felt to be out of date and not reflective of RARA's current activities. It had been discussed and redrafted by the Committee and the draft circulated to all residents by hand and by email prior to the AGM. DH asked for comments and recommended that those present at the AGM formally approved the new Constitution by show of hands.

Having been unanimously approved, the new Constitution will replace any historic documents on the RARA website and in the Committee records. **DH/MC**

12. Riverside Community Garden (Trust Land) update

DH clarified that the land (situated between Lilybank and Salcomb) was left in Trust in 1929 for the benefit of residents of Riverside Avenue and the Keyzers Estate so that they could access the river bank.

Over the years, the land had become neglected and overgrown. In 2020, a group of volunteers cleared the land, erected a fence, built a decking and started the process of landscaping. Amazing work has been done to date and more work is planned for 2023. The vision for the Trust land is to create a tranquil place with a wildlife sanctuary, a place for fishing, a vegetable patch, a place where children can experience nature on their doorstep and adults can share tips on gardening in a natural environment. A fruit tree was planted in 2022 to commemorate the Jubilee celebration.

There is no cost (£0) to RARA for work on the Riverside Community Garden. Everything that has been achieved, has been done by donation eg seeds, plants, materials and hard

labour! KM thanked all the volunteer gardeners and donors and gave special thanks to Dave, Luke, Mark, Wes and Roy.

Ideas for consideration in the future include setting up a book club, painting pebbles with house names and setting up a stall outside the Trust land so that surplus produce could be given away rather than wasted.

Residents were encouraged to visit the Riverside Community Garden and help themselves to fruit, vegetable and herbs that are grown for the community to use.

KM asked for donations of sand, ballast, garden tools, seeds, plants, bird food and feeders, pond dipping and bug hunting equipment and garden furniture. Pre-loved is very acceptable.

In the discussion that followed, residents suggested asking the Council for a green wheelie bin. **KM/MC**

DH thanked KM for her report and her tireless work to landscape and transform the Riverside Community Garden.

Members of RARA are entitled to access the Riverside Community Garden by emailing riversidetrustland@gmail.com and after completing an access form, will be sent the gate lock code. The code is obviously not to be passed on to third parties!

13. **AOB**

- Concerns were expressed about vehicles parked on Old Nazeing Road that obscured the safe view of drivers turning out of Riverside Avenue. The Chair was asked to write to the Council to request double yellow lines as it is not permitted to park within 10m of a junction. **DH**
- Residents asked whether there were any updates to the bridge works and particularly whether they would be completed on time. The Chair agreed to find out and inform residents. **DH**
- Residents were informed that the large numbers of sewerage lorries parked on the Old Nazeing Road were involved in repairing a 10m stretch of pipeline rather than simply emptying sewers.
- Residents with BT reported interruptions to services since the bridge closure. Some were without services for several weeks but all present reported that their service was now running. By show of hands, it seemed that those present who had Gigaclear full fibre broadband had been unaffected and were happy with their service. It was reported that Gigaclear now also offer a home phone service.
- Residents are advised to take extra care after three local robberies. Houses have been robbed and cars stolen, sometimes during daylight when residents had just

popped out. Safety ideas like being aware of neighbours holidays and parking on each other's drives might help. Be vigilant, your house might be being watched!

- After a brief exchange of views about local foxes, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and brought the meeting to a close.

Date of next AGM

Thursday 16 November 2024 at The Crown

ALL