

## **MINUTES OF THE EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION.**

**COMMITTEE MEETING, HELD ON Thursday, February 5, 2015, commencing 7.30pm at 3, Phillimore Road.**

### Present

Margaret Ormonde (MO) Barry Prior (BP) Bill Harper (BH) Linda Glithro (LG)  
Jane Handley (JH) Doris Hiscox (DH) Vera Bodman (VB) Annette Fairweather (AW)  
Veronica Leeke (VL)

### Apologies

Liz Lyke

### **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES AS A TRUE RECORD**

Proposed by Linda Glithro and Seconded by Bill Harper

### **MATTERS ARISING**

#### **EGRA'S FUTURE**

Three committee members have stated that they intend to stand down at the next AGM. These are Vera Bodman, Jane Handley and Doris Hiscox. Margaret Ormonde will also be standing down from her role as Chair but is willing to continue on the committee. Veronica continues to monitor planning issues. Annette has taken over as Membership Secretary. The Chairman thanked Annette for her work with regards to membership and the new members who have signed up will help secure EGRA'S future. She said that we are still in a state of uncertainty but it is hoped that the AGM will see matters improving. LG said that it should be noted that the members who are standing down had done sterling work. Vera had served EGRA well for 16 years and had been a great ambassador for EGRA. Margaret had served as Chair for eight years, Jane Minute Secretary for 5 years and Doris had helped until ill health forced her to give her notice. The committee thanked them and wished them well.

There are four new members who have shown interest in helping EGRA. They would be contacted.

It was agreed that anyone who has affinity with Emmer Green but who live on the borders, would be welcome to join and therefore could join the committee.

Annette said that on January 31<sup>st</sup> there were 44 members subscriptions outstanding and 16 new members.

#### **THE HEIGHTS SCHOOL**

At the time of the meeting the Heights School stakeholders were awaiting official news from the EFA (Education Funding Authority) on the number of sites to be included in the consultation process. Although a clear majority voted at the last stakeholder meeting in January for the timetable to be kept the same, it now seemed this was unlikely, with the public meeting deferred until at least March. Recent local press reports had indicated that Dyson's Farm in South Oxfordshire and out of the school's catchment area, was likely to be included. Although not bordering Emmer Green, if planning permission was granted, consent could seriously undermine future attempts to block South Oxfordshire planning applications on Oxfordshire land bordering Emmer Green. EGRA has prepared informative statements on all potential sites, which have been submitted to the EFA. In due course, once things have been clarified, these, together with photographic montages, will be uploaded on to the EGRA website. The EFA will also be preparing information packs which will show the location and percentage of land needed for the school, for each site. We will not be making any recommendations, but we do give support to the Save the Bugs Bottom Campaign. As soon as news filters, through our members will be kept up-to-date.

## THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This will be prepared for distribution in mid-March. MO will again be appealing for help and for new committee members to come forward.

## HIGHDOWN SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE

We were advised by email by Dorothy Company that the sports centre has been going through a lot of changes since it opened on the 1st September last year.

“Facilities are available for all clubs and associations to hire. The numbers of people, clubs and age range have drastically increased. Names of our current clients include Emmer Green Gymnastics, Caversham AFC Trents AFC, SwimDay, iswim with Jill, Baby splash, Elite Soccer, Go Kart parties, Amanda Stevens Fitness classes, Stagecoach, Progressive Fitness and Slimming World, to name but a few. The quality of the gym if being upgraded with grants being sought to refurbish the facilities such as the swimming pool. The timescale for the completion of all these works is not known at present as a lot of the bigger plans will be subject to grants applications being successful. In the meantime we are working with governors to look at the possibility of opening in some form to the public in September 2015. The exact format of which is to be decided but will be announced and given press release as soon as it is ready to go.”

## NOTICE BOARD REPORT

JH reported that she would be standing down from the role of co-ordinator of the notice board duties. One of the team is also leaving. She would approach the existing members of the team to ask if they would stand as co-ordinator. MO said she would be putting out an appeal for helpers.

## READING CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

VL attended a meeting of the action network. There was general discussion which was very informative and interesting. She had seen an article in the Midweek Chronicle with information about a new education centre in the Caversham area.

## RECRUITMENT FOR 2015

It was suggested that we ask the church for help with recruitment literature which could possibly be delivered with their church leaflets. BH said that the church would perhaps be willing to include something that would also assist church matters but he could not make a case for recruitment forms. They could possibly put a small item in their newsletter. VB and JH agreed that the personal touch of chatting to people in the community was also important as they had had some measure of success this way. Our business cards had been placed in the premises Budgens and The Bite, on the green. JH told the committee that, on checking, she found that a lot of cards had gone from The Bite, showing that there had been some interest and she had replaced them. The committee are grateful to both premises for their support.

## AGM

The AGM will take place on Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>. It commences at 7.30pm and the refreshments will be at the beginning, as this arrangement proved successful last year. Rachel Sanderson from the Chiltern Conservation Board has been booked as our speaker. She will be speaking about the five year Chilterns Commons Project. LG will arrange for

the display boards regarding the Wilfred Owen exhibition to be at the AGM. This had proved very popular and interesting.

### PLANNING

VL said that there was nothing new to report. We are still waiting for a response from SODC with regard to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

### READING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY CENTRE (RISC) – ROOF GARDEN VISIT

LG told the committee about this organisation. The committee discussed the possibility of an organised trip for members, as it is fascinating. They are not funded so a contribution would be required, and asked for a donation of £50. It was suggested that people should pay towards this cost. There could be 12-20 in a group which is the usual number for the trips held in the past. They need a date arranged, maybe in June. It was felt that late afternoon or even a weekend would be popular, particularly with working residents. It is planned to promote this event at the AGM.

LG would make enquiries and also about a possible visit to the Blade and report back to the committee.

### PLANNING

VL said that there was nothing new to report. We are still waiting for a response from SODC with regard to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

### TREASURER'S REPORT

BH passed the Treasurer's report to the committee. He said that the subs collected covered the expenditure. The figures show that EGRA is still in a financial healthy state. The committee thanked Bill for his usual excellent handling of the accounts. He said that Burnham Rise Blossom Project had the surplus money returned. We held this on their behalf. The committee discussed the possibility of new members paying online. We already give bank details and some people have already paid this way. Annette would speak to a contact at CADRA as they have the full facility for their members.

### FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

#### NAG

DH attended the November meeting but was unable to attend the January meeting due to ill health. The problem of litter was discussed at the November meeting. Cllrs. reported that after the Love Clean Reading initiative there were very few roads/locations in Upper Caversham that were included. Cllrs. are making sure this does not happen when this is revisited. Litter behind Cavendish Road shops needs to be monitored along with Emmer Green Recreation Ground. A bin was requested by the seat at Budgens near the crossroads but nothing has happened. Speeding is also a problem in Kiln Road. VL asked about the outcome of the speeding survey in Kiln Road. Nothing has come of this. The plans for refuge islands is going ahead for Rotherfield Way and should be installed by the end of March 2015.

Crime remains low with burglaries continuing to be down. Police are active when burglaries have taken place, talking to neighbours. Attention is also drawn to scams where criminals pretend to be police needing to check money and cards in the house.

Speeding and parking is an issue in Shepherds Lane and is to be taken up with Traffic Management. People are invited to get involved in Community Speed Watch.

The next meeting of NAG is March 26<sup>th</sup>.

### AOB

#### DEFIBRILLATOR FOR PUBLIC USE

An EGRA member has suggested this and it has been discussed at the Emmer Green Patient's Group. There is a possibility of applying to The British Heart Foundation and this will be investigated. MO had told them that she would see if the EGRA committee would support the idea and maybe donate. The committee were in agreement with the concept but a decision would be made at a later date.

**RBC DIGITAL INCLUSION PROJECT**

This is a project to help people to be more computer literate and able to get online. There could be a drop-in sessions at a local centre. Reading Voluntary Action Group have asked us to discuss the concept. They would initially be at the Central Library but could be extended to local communities. MO told them that we have limited manpower and resources but could possibly promote the idea.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS**

MO had a conversation with David Nichols from the Oxfordshire Archaeological Group to have the site on the Emmer Green Recreation Ground listed. A request has been made to RBC. MO will chase up.

DH asked about the broken tree in the park. This is the responsibility of RBC.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

To be arranged after the AGM.

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The meeting concluded 10.05pm  
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The Chairman thanked Linda for her hospitality.