

# Copthorne Residents' Society

## Annual General Meeting

Saturday 29th January 2022 7.30 p.m.

Via Zoom

## Minutes

### 1 Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chair (Joe Watts) welcomed all to the Annual General Meeting of the Copthorne Residents Society again on zoom. He said that this time last year we hoped we would all be back in the church hall and we almost were, but the Committee felt that it was safer, and we would get higher turnout, if we met on Zoom (hopefully one last time...)
- 1.2 The chair expressed thanks to the Parish Council for the use of their zoom account. Findlay Simpson and Andrew Gallagher were introduced as joint-hosts in the zoom format. After setting the ground rules for participation the meeting commenced.
- 1.3 Apologies were received from Val Shaw (#9 U) Samways (#59 CR) Blincko (#19 CR) Monod (#65 CR) Larkworthy (#15 CR) Hill (#38 CR). On behalf of committee the chair expressed his condolences for the sad deaths last year of Keith Shaw (#9 U) who had been an active member of the committee and caterer and noted the passing of Bill Fisher (#54 CR) and Mary Thomas (#56 CR). The chair welcomed Oisin and Siobhan Byrne (#2 CR) and although he had welcomed them last year they were only now due to move in shortly, Karen and Mark Bonnamy (#23 CR)
- 1.4 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6th February 2021 had been made available on the website and links made available to all households with the notice of this evening's meeting. There were no objections and therefore were approved by all those present.
- 1.5 The agenda was to follow the format below and there were no items presented for any other business.
- Executive Committee Report
  - Financial Report from our Treasurer Fred Cleary
  - Subscriptions for 2022
  - Broadband – update from Gordon Ross
  - Neighbourhood Watch – unfortunately Richard Saunders is not able to join us this evening but you will have received his report so we will just take questions at this stage

- Considerate Contractors
- Executive Committee election
- Society social events & Platinum Jubilee Weekend– Gordon Ross
- Any other business

## **2 Executive Committee Report and matters arising**

- 2.1 The Chair presented the committee report which had been made available to all houses with the notice of this evening's meeting.
- 2.2 Joe introduced the current members of the Executive committee (EC) and their roles: Joe Watts (Chair) John Eldridge (road maintenance), Linda Coles (website), Jim Forder, Findlay Simpson (IT and all things email), Fred Cleary (Treasurer), Gordon Ross (broadband and wine evenings), Mike and Melinda Collins, Hasmita Behda and Kirsti Eraneva Dibb (open gardens) and Sally Williams (Secretary).
- 2.3 Joe gave thanks to John Eldridge for his long service on the Committee as he would be standing down this year. John has been a real asset to the committee and has been instrumental in keep the drains maintained and flowing – a low profile but essential task! He was given a warm round of applause.
- 2.4 In accordance with the Rules of the Society Jim and Gordon are due to step down but will stand for re-election. They were unopposed so continue their roles on the committee. Joe indicated that there is at least one vacancy for 2022 and any volunteers would be appreciated.

## **3 Road Matters**

- 3.1 The road is generally in good condition. John Eldridge and Andrew Gallagher have identified all the gullies and drains during the year and arranged for the Council to clear the drains in the concrete section of Chess Vale Rise.
- 3.2 Joe noted that it is important for residents to keep mud and grass cuttings away from the drain covers.
- 3.3 Snow and salt: the salt bins have been maintained. During January 2021 we experience heavy snow and salt was spread on the bend and main slope. The bollards at the Scots Hill end of the road were temporarily removed to help the flow of traffic on to the dual carriageway. Thanks were given to Tom Turner for his help with this.
- 3.4 The committee have continued with the help of the Trustees, to pursue the ownership of the section of road from the boundary between numbers 50 and 52 Copthorne Road and the junction

with the Green. This section is neither owned by the Society, Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) nor Herts County Council.

- 3.5 Joe reported that the committee is also aware of one resident fencing off a section of land, adjacent to the tarmac section of the road, that we strongly believe is within the Society's ownership based on several maps and physical evidence. After speaking to the resident, the Society has requested the fence be removed. However, the resident disputes our ownership of the land.
- 3.6 In order to support the ownership of the top of the road near to the green and pursuing the matter of encroachment and our ownership, the committee have had the road professionally surveyed and mapped to strengthen our case.
- 3.7 Tom Turner said that he had been in contact with Three Rivers District Council and Ridgeway about the resurfacing of the access to Scots Hill. Joe thanked Tom and said this would be picked up after the meeting.

#### **4 Planning Applications**

- 4.1 The Committee provided response to one planning application and one breach of planning permission during the year.

#### **5 Financial report subscriptions and road fund**

- 5.1 Fred Cleary delivered the financial report. To date, Subs have been received from ninety-two households, this was up on 82 in 2020 but the best recent year was 96 in 2018. This could be due to houses changing hands and legacy issues from many years ago. The wine tasting was well organized and raised £500 in ticket sales. It cost just over £500. The public liability insurance was renewed after seeking 2 quotes. The best quote was 4% higher than the 2020 premium. The survey work referred to earlier in minutes cost £1020 and the drain cleaning cost £1020. The website cost £187.18. Interest on the account was under £11.00.
- 5.2 Since the balance is standing at £48,925.83 Fred suggested that it was sensible to look to find safe investments to maintain the road fund to find more yield to protect against inflation.
- 5.3 It was proposed by the committee that the road subs which have been £65.00 are frozen this year at £65.00 with a view to a rise between 2-5% next year to maintain fund for next road resurfacing. (Possibly in 15-20 years). This was approved by meeting.
- 5.4 *post minute note:* We will again send out invoices for the 2022 subscriptions as in earlier years.

## **6 Broadband**

- 6.1 Gordon has been monitoring this work for the Society. After a great deal of effort over several years we have finally been able to get high-speed, low cost, fibre broadband to the homes covered by the Society. With the exceptions, due to technical problems of Uplands and the houses at 46, 46A and 67 CR, which are still to be done. Now (almost) everyone covered by the Society can upgrade to full fibre to the home for a little extra expenditure. Even ultra-fast speeds are available for those who are prepared to pay a little more.

## **7 Neighbourhood Watch**

- 7.1 Richard Saunders was unable to attend but his report for 2021 was made available prior to the meeting which makes salutary reading. Joe gave thanks for Richard's continued vigilance and reports. The reassurance is that we do live in one of the safest counties.

## **8 Considerate Contractors**

- 8.1 Gordon and Kirsty had been drafting a considerate contractors document to highlight the concerns when so much building work is underway in the roads. It was felt useful to have a document on the website for owners and contractors to refer to. An initial draft would be put on the website for general comments before adopting.
- 8.2 Joe thanked Kirsty and Gordon for their work thus far.

## **9 Society social events**

- 9.1 Gordon reported that in view of the successful autumn wine tasting there would be a second evening of fine wine tasting with cheeses on 14 May 2022, once again in the Church Hall. He proposed that Alex from Majestic will make the selections and attend. The price will be £20 per person or £5 for non-drinkers. With a smaller number of wines.
- 9.2 Margaret Gallagher proposed that the social event (which has taken place in Uplands for 3 years) to remember Jo Cox and encourage community cohesion was extended.
- 9.3 This coincided with the committee's proposal for a Platinum Jubilee Street Party on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. With the intention of closing off part of the road and opening the barrier to provide access to either side of the area designated for tables. The committee would welcome more volunteers and any suggestions to Gordon.

## **10 Any other business**

- 10.1 No further business so the chair thanked the zoom providers, committee, trustees and all the members for their attendance and hoped we would be able to meet in person next year.