

Minutes of MPRA Annual General Meeting

Held on Thursday 25 April 2024

At Magdala Tennis Club 7pm

1. Apologies, minutes of last meeting, matters arising

Apologies: Mike Read, Francis and Carol Reeson, Linda and Mark Jenkinson, Phil Glanfield

Minutes of the last meeting, held on 26 April 2023, were agreed as a true record (Proposed: John Harding; Seconded Steve Goode).

Actions arising:

Kerry Hayman-Harrison of Nottingham City Council had undertaken to raise the issue of the over-large trees on Tavistock Drive with the relevant department. Ellen Turner had taken an action to write to the Council regarding the flooding issues on Tavistock Drive. Ellen had written to the Council but no response had been received. However, she noted that the Council had in recent months stepped up the sweeping of the kerbs and clearing of drains on Tavistock Drive, and this had helped. There had been fewer floods as a result.

Kate Lockhart had taken an action to draft a letter to local councillors and the police highlighting concerns around anti-social behaviour in the area. This letter had been sent and action had been taken by the authorities, leading to an improvement (see item 3 below).

Jen Guiver had liaised with the police and published on the MPRA Facebook page the importance of residents reporting any incidents of anti-social behaviour to the police (see item 3 below). Jen thanked Kate Lockhart for her help in raising awareness.

2. Chair's Report (Sue Clague)

It had been a busy year for the committee. Sue noted that the nature of volunteering seemed to be changing, with people happy to give their time and energy to community work, but less inclined to serve on committees. It was good to see a growing group of residents getting involved and Sue thanked Kate Lockhart for her work on tackling social issues, which had made a positive difference, the team of litter pickers led by Leena, and the team of gardeners who looked after the roundabout at the top of Mapperley Hall Drive (led by June).

We continue to grow our paid membership and Facebook page users. Facebook is well managed and is a positive route for community engagement, thanks to Jen.

We continue to work with Alex Begg at the Council on tree planting, and more trees are planned for next winter.

The Christmas social for paid up members was very well attended. All these activities are funded by MPRA.

At the November committee meeting we heard from Machin Planning Consultants about a proposed development project based on the site of the former bowling green at 412-418 Mansfield Road. This was a positive meeting and illustrates the high regard the association is held in.

Sue has served on the committee for 13 years in several different roles. We are lucky to have technical experts on the committee, such as Mike Reade (planning), Howard Davies (Finance) and David Podesta (trees) as well as those with generic skills. Sue thanked Jen Guiver, Leena Kore Schroder, Bee Sanghera and Ellen Turner for their support and also thanked Gursharan Nijran, who had helped with Council related issues. It was now time for Sue to stand down, as noted at last year's AGM. No volunteer had come forward but the committee was in good shape, as were the finances, and the work would go on. Thanks to all who have supported Sue over the last decade.

ACTION: Neil Marriott said he would be interested to learn more about the proposed development. Sue undertook to put him in touch with Machin.

3. Update from Police and Nottingham City Council (Inspector Steve Dalby, Neighbourhood Policing, and Nicola Jones, Community Protection)

Crime

Steve Dalby introduced himself as responsible for several areas of the city, including Mapperley. He said the crime statistics for the area are looking good currently, with only 9 incidents last month, most of which have been around Tavistock Court. Steve had liaised with Kate Lockhart around concerns about anti-social behaviour, particularly around hotels on Mansfield Road at Carrington being used to provide shelter to the homeless. A lot of effort has gone into addressing the issues, with some success. He said anti-social behaviour can cover several issues, including homelessness, noise, and driving. He said it was important that when people come across situations that cause concern, they report them by calling 999. The call handler will assess the urgency but the police need to have a record. He said he understood the concerns around begging, and about the recent sudden death outside the Co-op. He assured that the death had been investigated. He said many people may not know that the police carry out a number of actions on behalf of the coroner where there is a sudden death. In the case of the death outside the Co-op, the individual was known to the police and other authorities and had been offered, but refused, support.

Steve stressed that two different police teams covered Mapperley Park. Every morning there is a meeting to review new incidents. All areas should have the same level of consistent service. He again stressed the importance of reporting incidents. The police are listening. The number of community protection officers has increased; however, it

was interesting to note that in the modern police force an officer could walk the streets for an average of 8 years without coming across a crime being committed. In conclusion, Steve said that priorities were reviewed with councillors every three months and the current priorities were anti-social behaviour, acquisitive crime, drugs and driving offences.

Nicola Jones said the Community Protection Team works closely with Steve's team and deals mainly with noise issues (largely relating to Tavistock Court), which is about 90% of their workload. They have the authority to issue Noise Abatement Notices and to enforce landlords to adhere to these. Currently there are 3 officers covering St Anne's and Mapperley Park but this may be reduced to 2 as staffing levels are currently under review. Nicola also encouraged people to report incidents but said it is helpful if people reporting leave their contact details. She understood the desire to remain anonymous, and the team will respect that, but they cannot update if they do not have contact details. Mapperley Park has one of the lowest crime levels across the city. Nicola said the Community Protection Officers also deal with bonfires and, where they see leaves building up, they will report these through to Alan Betteridge's team, which is responsible for developing a strategic plan to address flooding issues.

Nicola confirmed that Gursharan Nijran had left the Council, but was highly regarded and expected to return to the Council shortly.

Bins

John Greenwood raised an issue with garden bins not being emptied on his street, or being emptied days late. He asked if this was going to be a pattern going forward. Nicola acknowledged that residents were now paying for brown bins to be emptied and there was an expectation that the service would be reliable. She said she would take this issue back to the waste team. She also advised that a new policy was being launched that, whilst green bins would be emptied, no side waste (extra bags of household waste) would be removed from pavements. It was likely that the Community Protection Officers would be involved in enforcing this.

Parking Permits

Leena read out a post on the MPRA Facebook page from a resident who was very upset that parking tickets were regularly being issued to residents on Ebers Road and Thorncliffe Road, despite people having applied for parking permits in good time for renewal on 1 April but the Council not having issued them. One member who was at the meeting supported this complaint. She had applied for a renewed permit in good time but the Council appeared to have no record. Although she had been issued with a reference number for her application, the Council did not recognise that reference, or accept that she had submitted it. She had had to re-submit. All appeals against the parking tickets were being summarily rejected and Council staff were being less than helpful when contacted by phone or online. The situation was getting worse and the Council showed no interest in resolving the situation. Jen said there had been a lot of

Facebook activity on this issue and she had been asked to raise it at the AGM. There were also reports of over-zealous parking officers issuing tickets where a permit had slightly slipped out of position, but was still visible. The system was clearly not working. Another complaint was that the Council required all documentation to be resubmitted with each renewal, even if nothing had changed. Surely that was not necessary. Nicola advised that Cathy Scales was the Head of Parking. Cathy was very approachable and she was sure would be happy to investigate this. All problems could be reported on the 'Have Your Say' portal.

4. Treasurer's Report (Howard Davies)

Subscription income for the year was just under £2,000, but a lot of members paid mid-year, so we had also carried over a deferred income for 2024. FHP had been regular sponsors of the newsletter, but this income had been lost for the Autumn edition. Howard was pleased that FHP had decided to continue with sponsorship for the current edition, which should be out in May. The newsletter costs about £1,000 to produce per issue. MPRA funded the last edition, but could not continue to do so, therefore it was good news that FHP had come back in.

Just under £1,000 was being held for the gardening club, which no longer exists. This will be donated to charity by the end of 2024. £3,600 was still being held for the Stump Up project, however it is anticipated that this will be spent in 2024 as we support more tree planting.

Richard Bonello, a member who is a qualified accountant, has independently examined the accounts, as he has done for many years for no payment. However, he is due to retire and it would be necessary to find someone else who is willing to do this going forward. If anyone is able to do this, please get in touch.

The accounts were accepted – proposed Jen Guiver, seconded John Greenwood.

5. Trees (David Podesta)

Last year several trees had been planted, in partnership with the Council (Alex Begg). Most seemed to have taken. There had only been one instance of vandalism. David had recently walked round the estate with Alex and identified some sites for additional trees to be planted, including some streets where there were no trees, such as Carisbrooke Avenue. Support will be sought from residents on those streets in advance of any planting. John Greenwood said he hoped the trees would be appropriately sized and not acidic (like lime trees). David said they had tried to make sure the new trees were appropriate.

David and his wife will be moving out of Mapperley Park around the end of May, so he will be standing down as the person responsible for the trees project. Sue thanked David for all his hard work.

6. Newsletter (Leena Kore Schroder)

A bumper spring edition of the newsletter will be delivered around the second week of May. Leena thanked Jen's sister-in-law, Ginette, for her help in typesetting and layout. Leena had received a lot of nice comments about the last edition.

Neil Marriott asked if publishing the newsletter online had been considered. Leena said it was being kept under review but there were no plans to stop printing it. The newsletter goes to all residents, whether they are members or not. The committee had considered delivering it to members only, but decided against this as it is a good way of communicating and encouraging new members.

7. Membership (Leena Kore Schroder)

MPRA membership reached 344 members in 2023 and was expected to remain around this level. Leena had put a lot of work into chasing people to pay their subscriptions. At the end of 2023 only 118 members had fully paid up. Leena had chased 110 households for the full £10 and 116 households for £5 outstanding. That meant 226 reminders, many of which had to be hand delivered (with help from Robin and Ellen Turner and Sue and Steve Clague, for which many thanks). This level of effort could not be sustained year on year.

So far in 2024, 143 are fully paid up, 99 have yet to pay and 49 have not realised the fee has increased to £10. Over the next few weeks and months Leena will be writing to those who still have not fully paid.

Of most concern is the 53 people who have not paid any subs for two years in a row. These are the current priority. Leena will be writing one last letter and if this fails to bear fruit she will terminate their membership.

Neil Marriott asked whether asking people to set up a monthly direct debit for £1 had been considered. Leena said she would think about this.

8. Planning (Mike Reade)

In Mike's absence, there was no report. Sue reminded that Mike offers free advice on planning issues to paid up members. He has a lot of expertise and is highly regarded. However, it is up to residents to bring issues to his attention.

ACTION: Jen to put Neil Marriott in touch with Mike.

9. Social Media (Jen Guiver)

The number of Facebook members had increased to 793, against 725 at the last AGM. This is over twice the number of paid-up members and illustrates how effective Facebook is as a communication tool. Some months ago, Jen relaxed the rules around posting, so the level of maintenance is lower, although she does keep a watching brief.

Facebook is used to promote community events, such as the Carrington Farmers' Market, fundraising, and local events. Jen has rarely had to intervene on inappropriate postings and these have usually been around crime, where incidents ought to be reported to the police, rather than put on Facebook.

10. Events (Bee Sanghera)

Sue welcomed Bee back to the committee.

Bee is arranging for a summer barbeque and fun day to take place, at Magdala Tennis Club, on Sunday 4 August between 1pm and 4pm. There will be live music from Frank Power, BBQ, face painting, fun games for children, and pickleball will be available to play. Details will be included in the next newsletter.

11. Election of Officers

Sue Clague is stepping down as Chair and David Podesta as Trees specialist, leaving these vacancies. If anyone is interested in getting involved in either capacity please contact a member of the Committee.

All other officers were re-elected. (Proposed Neil Marriott, seconded Suma Harding).

12. Any Other Business

Howard thanked Sue for all her hard work on behalf of the residents of Mapperley Park over the last decade and presented her with flowers and wine.

(Minutes taken by Ellen Turner)