

**Notes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Lower Henlade and Stoke Road Residents' Association
held on 13 October 2011 at The Mount Somerset Hotel**



Present: Gill Ellis (Chair)
Mike Westlake (Treasurer)
Paul Stroner (Vice Chair)
Jacqueline Cairns (Committee Member)
Keith Hammond (Committee Member)
7 residents of Lower Henlade, Stoke Road and Presidents Court

Apologies: Lisa Ashbaugh (Committee Member)
John Ashbaugh
Gloria Westlake
Vivienne Bedingham
Judy and Rupert Jones
Cllr David Fothergill

Gill Ellis thanked the Mount Somerset Hotel for kindly hosting our meeting.

1 Treasurer's Report

Mike Westlake reported that the Association is currently £321 in credit. Subscriptions for the year were £111. The only significant expenditures were for web hosting and the summer barbecue.

2 Chairman's Report

Gill Ellis reported that membership had reduced slightly from 42 to 39 households but with a possibility that a further 5 would renew. 3 households from Presidents Court have joined the Association.

Gill reported that there were no matters arising from the previous meeting and all pertinent issues were covered on the agenda.

3 Election of Committee

The following committee members were voted in for a further term of office by a unanimous vote:

Gill Ellis – Chairman
Paul Stroner – Vice Chairman
Mike Westlake – Treasurer
Jacqueline Cairns – Committee Member

Gill extended thanks on behalf of the Association to Keith Hammond, who has decided to stand down from the Committee.

Lisa Ashbaugh is not due for re-election until next year and continues as a Committee Member.

4 Neighbourhood Watch and Speedwatch

4.1 Neighbourhood Watch

Mike Westlake gave a brief update. There has been very little communication from the Police in recent months. People should be aware that vehicle crime is on the increase in rural areas, with 10 recent car thefts in the Taunton area, 4-wheel drives vehicles being a particular target.

Don't leave valuables on display in cars, even coats and jackets. Mike reiterated the sensible precautions that should be taken in respect of home security, eg leaving lights and/or radios on to act as a deterrent. If you see anything suspicious contact Mike or the Police, or dial 101 for non-emergency issues (15p per call irrespective of duration).

Gill reported that the mobile numbers for the local PCSO's are posted on the notice board and web site.

4.2 Speedwatch

Gill reported that in July the Police admitted they were not processing reports submitted by Speedwatch groups in this area. A new volunteer has been recruited, vetted and trained by the police to carry out this work but there has been no confirmation that processing of reports has been resumed. Responsibility for Speedwatch co-ordination within the Police was also changing. All were disappointed with this but are determined to continue.

Gill Jeffrey has volunteered for Speedwatch and will be trained in due course.

Gill Ellis reported a good news item, that the camera does not need to be recalibrated, saving a potential expenditure.

5 Oil Club

Jacqueline and Gill reported that they have been researching the possibility of establishing a local oil club, to benefit from the cost savings of bulk buying.

It was further reported that the Community Council for Somerset recently started a scheme but this has a £20 annual membership charge.

All those present who have oil heating agreed that an Oil Club would be beneficial.

Jacqueline and Gill undertook to do further research.

6 Winter Gritting

Gill thanked the Parish Council for funding the bin which had been delivered and was to be filled the following week. So far there have been 12 volunteers from 7 households to do grit spreading, which is disappointing as the whole community will benefit,

7 Social Events

Mike reported that a Bowls Night has been arranged for Friday 27 April 2012, the estimated cost will be £5 per head to include buffet food. No experience necessary to participate in this event.

A group walk was planned for Saturday 12 November. (*Post-meeting note: this has been postponed to Saturday 10 March.*)

Mince pies will not be held at the Mount Somerset this year. Jacqueline Cairns has volunteered to host mince pies at her house on an afternoon in December.

Games Night at the Nags Head will be held on Friday 27 January 2012, with a different combination of games.

Annual Summer Picnic and Barbecue will be held on Saturday 23 June 2012.

Gill reported that Ruishton will be hosting a series of events to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on Sunday and Monday 3 and 4 June 2012. These events will cost around £6,000 with £1,000 being donated by the Parish Council. Therefore a number of fundraising activities are being organised, and they would like us to be involved in both the celebrations and the fundraising.

Gill reported that there are rumours that the A358 was second on the list of priorities for dualling, after the A30.

8 Any Other Business

On a more general note, Gill reported that many people were concerned about Government proposals to change planning guidelines to "a presumption in favour of sustainable development". The National Trust is running an e-petition at www.planningforpeople.org.uk for those who would like to voice their concern. Other information is available from www.tauntoncivic.org.uk/planning. Links to these are on our web site.

9 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 19 April 2012 at 7.30 pm at the Mount Somerset Hotel.

With thanks to Paul Stroner for these notes.