



2013 WURA WINTER NEWSLETTER

WELCOMES AND UPLANDS ROAD ASSOCIATION

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Message from the Chairman

Sadly I cannot report that work on Welcomes Road has been completed as we are still involved in legal discussions with the contractor Arnold Tarmac Ltd. The committee has come to realise it is a frustratingly slow process that cannot be rushed and moves at its own pace. Hopefully we are nearly at the point when both sides will sit down with our respective legal representatives and hammer out a solution rather than going to court. Whilst we have been advised that an agreement could be in place in time for the work to be completed between April and September next year (the spray and chip process requires the summer heat and lack of moisture to maximise the adherence), we do have our doubts. We will communicate with residents as to future progress and we ask you all to continue to be patient until hopefully we end up with a road surface that befits the area.

Whilst it hardly seems the time to bring up the subject of a levy increase the committee feels it is prudent to assess WURA's future financial stability and, although any increase will not be implemented in 2014, in our opinion an increase is inevitable. The levy has remained at current levels for 25/30 years whilst, as we all know, inflation has driven up costs across the board. It has been calculated that G band which was set at £60 in the 1980's is equivalent to £172 today — don't panic, any increase will be realistically set and possibly index-linked (as perhaps it should always have been) and then only after consultation with all residents and voted upon at an AGM.

Our present quandary has not necessitated this but it is felt that if residents want to keep the aura of an area that is well maintained and pleasant to live in with property prices to match then a healthy bank balance is vital. Hopefully we are all like-minded and to this end it would be appreciated by all if any hedges, overhanging foliage and undergrowth are trimmed back from the edge of the roads thus ensuring good visibility for both pedestrians and drivers.

Thank you for ploughing through this lengthy missive and we welcome comments and suggestions prior to the AGM.

May we wish you a very happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy 2014.

From the Treasurer's desk

Our assets are currently about £46,000. We issued 42 reminders about unpaid road levies last month and 32 are still outstanding at the time of writing. There are 212 houses in the roads which we are responsible for, so if you are one of the 15% who have not paid, please do so.



We are taking legal action against the contractors who resurfaced Welcomes Road as recently as September 2012

Uplands Road

The work on the Morven House extensions will continue into March/April next year. The builders found problems with the foundations and rectifying the problems added 18 weeks to the contract period.

An agreement has been entered into with UK Power Networks to permit a new electrical connection into Morven House. This will require some minor excavation outside Morven House but is not expected to be a major problem. Any damage will be made good by UK Power Networks and the power will **not** be cut off.

Recently a small contract was given to Frank Gaskin of FG Blocplan to make good some of the defects in the surface of Uplands Road and sweep up any leaves. This work has now been completed.

Early in the New Year a meeting is to be set up with the owners of Morven Healthcare regarding the funding of more extensive re-surfacing work on Uplands Road to compensate for the heavy use that has been made of the road during the alterations to Morven House.

A resident recently reported a fall due to the build up of very slippery moss on the pavement leading to Benthall Gardens. This was reported to the Council but if nothing happens salt can be put down which should deter the growth of moss. The moss on the pavement along Abbotts Lane provides a similar hazard. Care should be taken when walking on any moss covered areas as they can become lethal in the winter. In need your Committee will take action to kill this moss.

From the Secretary's desk

The workload for the Secretary has increased substantially as a result of the dispute with Arnold Tarmac Ltd. (ATL). In regard to this dispute some material has been taken down from our web site at the request of ATL's solicitors pending resolution of our claim. This Newsletter will not appear on the web site until the dispute with ATL is resolved. It would appear from the advice received from our Solicitor that the case will drag on for some time although as the Chairman says ideally a solution is required early next year.

The report on the work carried out by ATL by Munro Consulting is not available on the web site but if you want a copy I can email you a pdf version. At the risk of repeating what was advised previously our case is based on the contractor failing to display due care and skill in executing the work. This is demonstrated by the contractor's failure to adhere to what is known as Road Note 39 which gives the relevant advice on when and how to use the seal and chip process. Andrew Munro of Munro Consulting has indicated a willingness to be our expert witness should the case go to Court.

Should we be obliged to have ATL back in 2014 to carry out remedial work this will probably be overseen and signed off by Andrew Munro.

Dog fouling: I am getting reports of dog fouling along the road side. Dog mess is an eyesore and a health hazard. If you are a dog owner, you have a legal duty to clean up every time your dog *messes in a public place*. Also on several occasions I have seen golden retriever type animals roaming about unsupervised. If you see a dog walker not clearing up after their pet please consider challenging them politely (unless their dog is unmuzzled and looks threatening!).

Other jobs: There is a steady flow of enquiries about rights of way over our roads when houses change hands. On these occasions if there are road levy arrears we endeavour to collect them as well as make sure the Land Registry records the obligation to pay a road levy. We attempt to collect an admin fee of £50 for this work.

Maintaining frontages: It would be very useful if residents could try to keep their frontages tidy and mown where necessary. It is also helpful if you could try to keep debris out of the channels along the side of Welcomes Road. Frank Gaskin was recently contracted to clear the surface water drains themselves and the channels along the side of the road as well as the compacted stone built up by some of the speed ramps. This is still work in progress. Hopefully this measure will make walking along Welcomes Road to and from the station less unpleasant on the occasions it is raining.

It was nice to note that the front of Avenshaw on Welcomes Road was cleaned up recently. It would be appreciated if other untended frontages are also cleaned up as it is greatly upsetting for the majority who look after their frontages to have to put up with neighbours who do not seem to care what the road looks like.

We expect to do another leaf sweep once the last lot of leaves fall and also to trim off the verges along the woodland frontages.

Please note that the Council will not be collecting green waste until next March - 2014.

The Welcomes Road and Uplands Road junction.
Photo taken in Oct 2013 just a year after the new surface dressing was applied.

The contractors were well aware when they were on site that this junction would need special consideration because of the extra loading from turning vehicles but never offered a solution let alone carried out any remedial work.

Discussion notes for revised road levy rates at 2014 AGM

The road levy has remained at the current level for at least 25 years. Basic economics tells us that this is an unrealistic state of affairs.

Your Committee wish to put our finances on a firmer footing to safeguard our future repair and maintenance budget.

However, until the legal position with regard to ATL, the Welcomes Road contractor, is resolved, it is impossible to calculate what those future liabilities could amount to.

We propose the following as a basis for discussion at the 2014 AGM:

The current levy should increase to £60 (D) £70 (F) £80 (G) £100 (H) £200 Morven House from June 2014 or from such other date set at the 2014 AGM.

As soon as the current dispute with ATL is resolved, we will then solicit opinions from all interested parties as to what improvements they would like to see to our roads, bearing in mind the ambitious resolution passed at the last AGM 'to build a road we can be proud of'. This will then allow us to see more clearly, what changes, if any would need to be made to the levy, going forward or whether some other approach to funding the improvements might be appropriate.

The opportunity will also be taken to review the rates of levy for all the residents located in side roads (including Simone Drive who currently make no contribution) with a view to arriving at an equitable and lasting arrangement for payment of road levies by such residents.

GRIT BINS for location around 40-60 Welcomes Road

No one has come forward offering space for a grit bin so this stretch of Welcomes Road may well not be salted during periods of ice and snow.

Reminder from last Newsletter!!!!

Whilst on the subject of salt/grit please apply it in sparing quantities as it is very costly and one shovel full per 3 yards of road is quite enough to do the job. Moreover excess salt is damaging to the environment as well as the bottom of your car.

Actual gritting rates are:-

Before snowfall 14 gms per m². To clear ice 60-70 gms per m².

1 litre will clear 12-15 m².

We are looking into placing some sort of scoop in each bin which will measure the correct amount to be used for 3 yards of road.





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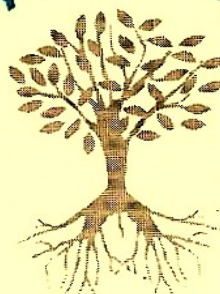
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VISIT OUR WEB SITE: www.wura.org.uk:

REGULAR NEWS FLASHES appear on the web site so please visit it from time to time.

WURA RESIDENTS DATA BASE: Please email your phone number and email address, if you have not given it to us, to weluplandsroads@aol.com. This helps us to keep you informed of developments and road works via group emails.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS: If you cannot access these on the web site please leave your name and address with the Secretary at 12 Zig Zag Road Kenley CR8 5EL and he will make sure you get hard copies delivered to your house.

NEW RESIDENTS: A welcome pack will be supplied. Ask the Secretary for one if you have not got one

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