



WELCOMES & UPLANDS ROAD ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN KENLEY MEMORIAL HALL ON THURSDAY 2nd JUNE 2005 at 8:00 pm

Chairman's Opening Remarks

The chairman welcomed all the residents present – particularly any new residents to the area.

He announced that Irene Prosser had resigned as secretary at the end of the last committee meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Andrew Dixson-Smith, Robin McCallum, Doug Haig, Mr Ewins, Mr & Mrs Matlock, Mr & Mrs Harrison, Mr & Mrs Magnus.

In attendance

Colin Brown (Chairman), Bill Tolman (Treasurer), Joan Tolman (Acting Secretary), Liz Copeland, Dave Barrell, Peter Runacres and Brian Clinton.
16 other residents attended.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th May 2004 were approved. Proposed by Dave Burrell and seconded by Jill Dixson-Smith.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from these minutes.

Chairman's Report

The chairman reported that there had been no major events during the year.

There had been a few requests from solicitors of new purchasers regarding the right of way over the road. The chairman informed the meeting that there is an appropriate letter explaining the situation that can be provided to any interested party. This is in the form of a signed statutory declaration relating to the Prescription Act 1832 and is signed by a long term resident. It appears to be acceptable as no follow up queries have been received.

There had been a number of planning applications during the year:

- ❑ 157 Welcomes Road – application for erection of 2 houses has been passed.
- ❑ Kenley House – application for 38 new houses has been denied. There was an appeal but this has been subsequently withdrawn. Should a major development on this site become reality in the future there was concern regarding vehicular access along Royal Avenue (the lane between 119 & 121 Welcomes Road). The council has been made aware of the potential problem and the possibility of erecting a barrier or notices provisionally investigated. It is actually a criminal offence to drive on a public footway without authority. No further action will be taken at the present time – further developments will be awaited.
- ❑ 36 Uplands Road – plans for a major extension were passed and work is now in progress. It appears that the contractors are adhering to the request to keep road use and damage to a minimum. There is concern regarding the erosion of the footpath between 34 & 36 Uplands. The committee will keep an eye on it and the Council have been approached and are aware of the situation.

- 53 Welcomes Road – The chairman had written to the council on behalf of concerned neighbours however retrospective planning for the terracing of the rear garden has been approved. Concerns have been raised by several residents regarding the high fences and brick walls currently being constructed in the front garden.

A parcel of land adjacent to 115 Welcomes Road was sold some 18 months ago. The new owner is still unknown as the purchase has not been registered with the land registry. Consequently any request for levy or for upkeep of the land bordering the road cannot be made.

The road sweeping has been taken away from the council's contractor (Cleanaway) as they were becoming increasingly expensive. The latest quote was approximately £2,000 per sweep. Kent Sweepers were approached. They quoted approximately £650 per sweep. Kent Sweepers have now carried out two sweeps efficiently. An attempt to clear the soakaways and drains is planned for the near future. Attempts in the past have been of limited success as due to the large quantity of debris and silt which runs down the road the cleaning effect is very short lived.

A letter has been received from one resident with a high sided vehicle requesting that overhanging branches be cut back to 14 foot – he says this is a statutory obligation. The chairman realised the practical difficulties of cutting back to this height but asked residents to do their best to minimise the interference of trees overhanging the road from their properties and also to attempt to keep branches and leaves from obscuring street lights. The chairman reported that he had recently checked the visibility of the lights and all very clear with the exception of one or two at the bottom of Welcomes Road – he will approach the residents responsible for trees obscuring these. Mrs Olver said that she regularly used the road as a pedestrian and had found no problems. The chairman informed the meeting that the street lighting itself is the Council's responsibility – he suggested anyone finding problems with the lighting should contact the councils lighting department who usually respond very quickly.

Secretary's Report

There was no secretary's report due to her earlier resignation.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer reported a healthy balance of £105,000.

He reported that a new deposit account with Standard Life had been opened as this gave a much higher rate of interest than any other bank or building society that was available for an Association account. The old Lloyds TSB deposit account will be closed.

There is only one outstanding levy for last year despite attempts from the treasurer, chairman and secretary to obtain payment before the year end. This household consistently pays in arrears but the treasurer has been assured that payment will be made.

The introduction of standing orders has been very successful. Some 25% of residents have taken this up and the treasurer hopes many more will do so this year. This method of payment is beneficial to both the residents and the treasurer and significantly cuts administration.

Presentation of Budget and Proposed Levy

There were not as many road improvements as were budgeted for last year. It is hoped that this year works will be undertaken to further improve the water flow in the lower half of Welcomes Road (see item on road improvements).

3 road sweeps are planned for this year plus drain cleaning as mentioned above.

The treasurer reported that the student that to date had maintained the web site was no longer in a position to carry on doing this so there may be costs involved in transferring the site and future updating.

The treasurer proposed that the levy remained the same as last year. There were no comments from the floor. The motion was proposed by David Collin and seconded by Ken Greenwood.

Election of Committee

8 committee members stood forward for re-election. The floor voted for these members to continue.

The resignation of Irene Prosser leaves a vacancy for a new secretary. The chairman asked for anyone who was willing to take this on, or knew anyone willing, to come forward. There were no takers at the meeting. This is an important role and any offers would be greatly welcomed.

Appointment of Auditors

The Chairman again thanked Peter Davis for his work and he was re-elected for the coming year.

Traffic Census

A traffic census was carried out between 28th February and 6th March this year. This covered week day term time and one week-end. The cost was £500. The census reported volumes of traffic and speeds, broken down into different times of day and each day of the week. The results showed an average daily flow of 500 vehicles and an average speed of 17.5 mph. No significant speeding was detected. The report is available to anyone wishing to view it.

The main reason for the census was the anticipated possible traffic increase once the Kenley Aerodrome housing development was complete. It was also noted that the increased size and numbers of road humps in surrounding roads may tempt more motorists to use Welcomes and Uplands Roads. Should the need arise this survey can be used as a basis to compare with any survey undertaken in the future to monitor changing patterns.

It was asked as to why the census did not take place lower down Welcomes Road but the chairman explained that the committee had decided on the chosen location as this was thought to have the heaviest use.

One resident had written to ask why there were large gaps between the humps in some parts of Welcomes Road that made it easier for vehicles to speed. The response was that it was the Code of Practice that humps should not be installed near road junctions – the locations in question were adjacent to the junctions with Uplands Road and Simone Close. The floor voted for no additional humps or higher humps to be installed.

The chairman reported that the road humps may have to be altered in the future as they are, strictly speaking, illegal – as the road is a designated footpath the humps should be positioned so as to allow free passage for push chairs etc. This ruling is only likely to be enforced if complaints are received by the council. The floor did not consider that the humps were a problem to pedestrians with push chairs – to the contrary, children found them quite fun!

Road Improvements

Water Flow

The committee had obtained quotes for improving the water flow at the lower end of Welcomes Road:

Extension of gully from 12 to 28 Welcomes Road	Marshall	£10,000
	Hobart	£10,000
Realignment of camber 44 to 48 Welcomes Road	Marshall	£6,000
	Hobart	£10,000

Some members of the committee subsequently met with Bob Shilling from Marshalls on site to discuss the proposals. This resulted in the opinion that altering the camber could in fact lead to additional problems further down the road or even encourage water into residents' gardens / driveways.

Mr Collin commented that during heavy rain storms water already bridged the gully between 8 and 12 Welcomes Road and had on one occasion come very close to entering his front door.

Additional soakaways have also been considered but due to the frequent blocking up of the existing ones the efficacy of more was questionable. Siting of these could also be a problem.

Mr Collin thought that additional curbing would stop much of the debris being washed into the road but the response was that most of the debris came from the lanes at the top end of the road and there was little more that could be done to prevent this.

Mr Collin also suggested that proper drainage could be installed – although expensive it could be done over a number of years. The chairman responded that it would not be practical to spread the work over a long period as you could not leave drains with ‘dead ends’ while connection to the main drainage system was awaited.

Mrs Greenwood suggested that a pavement could be installed if every one was prepared to give up a little of their front gardens.

Peter Knight asked if the council would be prepared to help with the costs as the road is a designated footpath. It was anticipated that this would be unlikely due to the financial situation.

The chairman asked for anyone who knew of a structural engineer (or similar) who may be able to advise on solutions to the problem to let him know.

Peter Davis commented that whatever action was taken it was inevitable that as the water had to travel down a hill with 2 bends in it there would always be an issue somewhere on the route.

Speeding Traffic

Several suggestions were received from the floor for the prevention of speeding:

- ❑ More speed limit signs.
- ❑ Reducing the limit to 15 mph.
- ❑ Take registration numbers of regular offenders.
- ❑ Additional / higher humps (but these were not wanted)
- ❑ Illuminated speeding signs to slow down.
- ❑ 20 mph signs painted on the road on the faster stretches.

It was generally considered that none of the above would actually deter the serious offenders and as the police were not interested in speeding in private roads where limits were set below the public roads in the surrounding area there was little extra that could actually be done.

The chairman commented that these 2 issues, drainage and speeding, had been issues for many years. Fortunately there had been no known accidents or personal injuries to date but that this should not lead to complacency and care by everyone should be ongoing.

It was also reported that there were two areas of Welcomes Road, at the bottom of Simone Drive and between Nos. 8-10, where the tarmac became very slippery in icy conditions and sticky in hot weather. The chairman suggested that the local residents to these spots made use of the local grit bins to minimise the hazard but also said he would speak to Bob Shilling about these problems and alternative surfacing could be considered when the road was eventually resurfaced or sooner if practicable.

Any Other Business

Mr and Mrs Imtiaz commented on the noise from some of the St Winifred’s flats. It was commented that echoing around the valley from neighbouring roads could be a problem but if there were further specific issues to let him know and he would pass on details of the owner’s agents who had been very helpful in the past.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm.