



## WELCOMES & UPLANDS ROAD ASSOCIATION

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN KENLEY MEMORIAL HALL ON THURSDAY JUNE 9th June 2016 at 8:00 pm

#### Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed the residents present and thanked them for attending.

#### Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr and Mrs Hollis, Mr and Mrs McCallum (Committee Member), Simon Hunter and Rachel Dickson, David and Lynn Smith, Mr Dosan Vucinic, Mr Martyn Last, Mr and Mrs David Rundle, Peter and Betty Runacres, Cllr Steve O'Connell, John and Christine Carr, Adrian Harrington

#### In attendance

Committee: Colin Brown (Chairman), Richard Russell (Secretary), Janice Scully (Treasurer), and Michael Lott (Uplands Road Representative) and Ian Dixon (Lower WR representative)

Residents: **18** (13 in 201, 12 in 2014, 34 in 2013, 17 in 2012, 10 in 2011) attended representing **14** (9 in 2015, 9 in 2014, 27 in 2013, 11 in 2012 and 8 in 2011) households. (**Quorum: 10 voting members.**)

Observer from Homefield Road Maintenance Association, Graeme Wood

Mr Adam Howell, Representative from Buxton Building Contractors Ltd., Developers, 40 Welcomes Road.

A warm welcome to Mr and Mrs Carter who have just moved into a property in Uplands Road and attended the meeting.

#### Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10th June 2015 were adopted.

Proposed by Hartmut Klein and seconded by Derek Jenkins.

#### Matters Arising

The Chairman mentioned our abortive attempts to find a solicitor to assist with the determination of our legal position in regard collection of road levy charges. The search for a suitable local solicitor continues.

#### **Chairman's Report**

**6 WR:** Building work is well advanced on this site with the construction of the 2 planned houses.

**7-9 WR** (sub division of 22 Kenley Lane): This vacant land was sold by a developer with planning permission for a single dwelling. The buyer tried to get planning permission for 2 houses which was refused due to the small area available and then auctioned on to a party who has so far failed to communicate with us. A letter was left on site to be picked up and has been taken away. After the meeting a member indicated that they could assist in tracing ownership of this plot through their business and resolving any other similar issues. **Secretary to action.**

**57 WR:** The planning application submitted for 7 flats was lodged with the Council some time ago and attracted over 100 objections. No decision made to date.

**Road Levy:** There has been some success during the year in getting residents living in spur roads to make a realistic contribution to the cost of maintaining our roads. The Committee wishes to acknowledge the community spirit exhibited by nearly everyone in those roads.

**Road sweeping and drain clearance:** We now use Tandridge District Council contractors to do this job and have been impressed with their work. Cost £2500 for 2 sweeps and drain clearance.

**Levy arrears 8 residents totalling £560.** The current levy on **40WR**, which has been sold to a developer, following the demise of the last occupant is still outstanding and was claimed from the Executors but with no response. **WR 42** owes £90 and will be issued with an account including interest and charges to support any claim that may be made through the Small Claims Court. **28a UR**, which is company owned, does not respond and registered letters have been returned undelivered. 2 of 5 houses in **SD** still need to respond to us and another has financial issues but we believe will eventually pay. From now on it is intended to charge interest at Minimum Lending Rate plus 8% p.a on arrears and £10 for each chaser letter sent after one overdue invoice has been issued. In addition an annual account will be rendered to the defaulter showing the amount of arrears, interest and charges, which will be used in evidence if there is a need to go to the Small Claims Court.

There was some discussion of previous experience with the small claims court and the possibility of collecting arrears when a property is sold which has in the past sometimes happened.

### **Chairman's note sent out with AGM Agenda regarding the options available to resurface Welcomes Road**

**Welcomes Road:** Having recovered some 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the cost of the work done on WR in 2012 reserves are back up to about £96,000 today. The road is not perfect but still fit for purpose subject to some attention in certain places. An expert report we have just received from a Professor Ian Walsh (retired from Kent County Council and now lectures in road engineering) states that the existing surface is closed and sealed and should be fit for purpose for another 3 to 4 years. He suggests that should we wish a 2 layer surface dressing, which at current prices would cost about £65,000 plus VAT (£78,000), could be applied at any time but obviously only in the window for this type of surface dressing.

To plane off the surface and lay stone mastic asphalt would cost probably £150,000 with VAT, a remedy the consultant advises as not the best idea as the road has no properly established base. To quote from his report *'I was not able to identify any structural failure of the road that would justify a strengthening overlay of asphalt'*. The funding is not available and the Association cannot borrow money. A special levy would require about £400 from each resident and the Committee is not realistically able to pursue residents for this when some seem to resent paying the modest annual levy. There seemed little appetite for this course of action.

**Uplands Road:** Prof Walsh suggested that micro chipping this road would lengthen its life and is giving us some contact details of contractors who do this kind of work.

**Uplands Road/Welcomes Road junction:** We have current quotes to rebuild this junction which takes a lot of punishment from turning vehicles. Our preferred contractor has quoted £14,000 plus VAT (£16,800) for this work which includes surface dressing Uplands Road up to the Morven House entrance. We are in correspondence with Morven House concerning the quotes on the basis of an earlier understanding that they would make a financial contribution to the surface dressing of Uplands Road given the extra wear and tear caused by heavy plant and other site traffic during the building phase. Some of the kerbing installed opposite MH requires a rounded end piece fitted for safety reasons. Notice will be given to residents regarding any road closures needed whilst this work proceeds. We envisage the roads will be open for access but not for passing traffic. **Secretary to action**

Once the work on the junction has been completed white lines will be repainted at junctions including the triangles on the speed ramps at a cost of about £1,000.

Meeting these costs will reduce reserves to about £80,000 meaning that if reserves are kept at £20,000 then it would be necessary to find about £90,000 to carry out the most expensive option (40mm of asphalt). See the comment below from a resident regarding the idea that we should build the best road available not the best we can afford.

### Chairman opened the floor for comments

**No 98 WR.** Agreed that the annual levy can be hard to collect

**No 54 WR.** Suggested that the 4/5 years could be used to build up reserves and mentioned storm water erosion and the need for more kerbing in strategic locations.

**5a UR ML** Committee reminded the meeting that annual surpluses are quite small making it impossible to build funds sufficient to pay for the option 3.

**No 54 WR.** Mentioned Marshalls are highly respected in the area and should quote for the road junction. Chair mentioned that Marshalls appear to be too busy to contemplate this job. Allfreys, who are well regarded, have quoted for the work along with Frank Gaskin (Blocplan Ltd). Both quotes were studied by Ian Walsh who agreed the specs but felt Blocplan's was on the expensive side.

**No 41 WR.** Owner is building a wall to reduce the damage/erosion done to the verges in front of his house. Would like kerbing installed at the WURA expense and will give up 18 inches of his land for this purpose to keep WR reasonably wide at this point. **To be discussed in Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> June.**

**No 25 WR.** Surface water in the road in front of his house and further down WR is running right across the road making life difficult for pedestrians, leaving no dry route and eroding his verges and no doubt others. It is important that this water is kept in the existing gully on the even numbered side of the road and not forced across the road. The reason for the flooding is due to blockages by speed humps, building of ramps on the even numbered side of the road at bottom of drives and the gully which has been filled in sometime in the past perhaps by a utility making good a trench. Problem confirmed by **No 31 WR.** In 2012 ATL only added some bitumen and stone chips which is unlikely to have caused the flooding issue. **To be discussed in Committee and a response given to these residents.**

**No 98 WR.** Mentioned kerbing in UR where road has collapsed but area round pillar box subsequently repaired by frontager.

**No 14 WR.** (Committee Member) Mentioned that in last Tuesday's storm surface water covered the whole road and there is no solution to flooding when confronted with severe storms or cloud bursts of that type. Valley Road was impassable for a while but the water drained away very quickly.

**5a UR.** (Committee Member). Frank Gaskin reshaped humps in UR to good effect.

**The Chair** at this point mentioned that an email from a resident who had been unable to attend the meeting Stated:

' I believe that we should have the best road available, not the best we can afford.

The value of our homes is affected detrimentally by the poor quality of our existing road and replacing it with second best isn't worth the effort. I have had this opinion reinforced by a number of estate agents.

I understand that the more expensive option would involve a one off payment by each household. The few houses who never pay shouldn't decide the issue. If the sum is too large we should spread it over 24 or 36 months and do the road when we have the funds.

I would rather postpone than get it wrong.

We could look at monthly standing orders to alleviate the pain. We must not be mealy mouthed about this most important issue.

If we put the right road in the value of our houses is more secure'

Other residents who had been unable to attend but commented mostly went for option 2 the double layer of stone on the basis of affordability. One was adamant that the road should be left as it is bar essential maintenance. This stance reflects a desire to make the road less attractive to speeding rat run drivers. Another was anxious for the speed hump markings to be repainted which is going to happen as soon as the junction has been rebuilt.

Temporary reflectors installed by the Committee, marking the humps, were removed by a person or persons unknown.

**No 54 WR.** Was concerned that to spend a lot of money without proper kerbing along the length of the road would represent an unacceptable risk of failure.

**Chair** suggested a vote on which way to go.

**No 33 WR.** Not in favour of option 2 and happy to accept experts view that WR good for 3 or 4 years.

**No 31 WR.** Asked about life of option 2 which was thought to be 10 years.

**Chair** mentioned that Andrew Munro would had advised us on the ATL case had suggested option 2 and suggested we leave and surface dressing work on the road for 2 years as long as essential repairs to potholes continues.

**No 33 WR.** Asked that edges and speed humps be dealt with re surface water erosion.

**No 31WR.** Argued for doing the work this summer bearing in mind on-going maintenance costs and rising prices plus potential economies of scale if carried out in conjunction with WR/UR contract.

**No 2 MH.** Suggested splitting up the work to deal with the worst areas first. It was pointed out by **25WR** that this would lose the economies of scale in doing the work piecemeal.

**Chair.** Agreed we would get a quote for doing the surface dressing of WR as part of the work on the WR/UR junction asap (**Allfreys emailed for comment since meeting**). Allfreys have said already that they would not carry out the seal and chip process unless weather conditions are optimal meaning that we may be looking at 2017 anyway.

**98 WR.** All this work seems to be being done for the non residents using the road as a short cut in spite of the 16 speed humps.

**5a UR** Committee Member. The levy is still too low when it is considered that you would need £346 today to match the purchasing power of £100 in 1982. We only increased the levy by 50% in 2015/16 not the c300% really needed. (Secretary comment- interest earnings on reserves were significant until 2008) but capital was not being replaced sufficiently fast enough. Hence our lack of funds. Since the AGM, HRMA have kindly sent us a road material inflation table for a more accurate guide to road building costs.

**54 WR.** Noted the job done on WR in the 1980s had lasted about 25 years (Secretary comment - c£50,000 spent on shoring up road between 2010 and 12) and was against adopting option 3

**Chairman.** When we get new quotes they will be circulated and a ballot taken to see what the majority really want to do with the road bearing in mind available finance. This can be supported by 5 year cash flows showing the likely effect on our finances of different courses of action. **Committee and Secretary to action**

**54 WR.** Noted road often looks untidy because some residents never take in their wheelie bins. **Secretary to mention in next Newsletter.**

### **Secretary's Report.**

#### **The resident statistics (at 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016) are as follows:-**

Total number of houses served (may increase) by up to 8 houses in next 24 months) - 221 (220)

Number of email addresses on file - 154 (110)

Number of residents who have specifically asked for hard copy - 17

Number of residents who have not or may not have given the Secretary an email address or asked for hard copies of AGM papers or any other information- 50.

Email addresses are not shared outside the Association or its members.

**Newsletters:** All residents receive the twice yearly Newsletter delivered to their door. The German printing company mentioned last year continues to print 250 x 4 sided copies (minimum order) for £87 or about 40p a copy in full colour on gloss paper. Given the number of residents for whom we do not have email addresses this is an important means of keeping in touch with everyone as required in the Constitution. I understand some Uplands Road residents gave their email addresses but these seem to have slipped through the net for which I apologise. They will be repeating their addresses.

**Email traffic:** Approximately 1900 (1500) emails were received over the year 2015/16 most of which needed a response. Nonetheless much time and money is saved when circulating important documents and information.

**Insurance:** WURA remains a member of Private Roads Services through whom the Association is insured at a favourable premium. If you want to access the site please contact me for the password.

**Web site -** WURA.org.uk. The use of the site is a repository for all our key records and is now up to date following the settlement with ATL.

**Purchase of new lap top:** An Asus laptop, wireless mouse and bag were purchased for under £400 after the last AGM and is working well providing continuity in the event of the departure of the current Secretary for any reason.

**Welcome letters were sent to the following during the year:** 10UR (back garden sold by previous owner to developer for 3 houses- approved by Planning), 13A UR, 46UR, 11KC, 7 WR (developer), 10WR, 20WR, 22WR, 24 WR, 30WR, 40WR (developer), 50WR, 4BG, 63WR, 64WR, 67WR, 1SD or 17 house sales in total.

**Developer agreements:** In view of the upsurge of developments along our roads, which shows little sign of abating, in order to compensate residents for the nuisance and the wear and tear on our roads caused during the building phase we now charge £500 per planned bedroom (minimum £2,000 per house). Also it is not unknown for the road to be dug up by the utilities to connect the new houses causing additional disruption. The requirement to pay the road levy is being incorporated into agreements setting out the code of conduct for the actual building works. The protocol covers the routes to be taken by site traffic, signage, parking, storage of building materials, playing of radios, washing mud from the road and so on. Contact details of the site manager are taken in case of problems. A special road levy may also be asked of residents carrying out extensive building works and their contractors must follow the same rules as developers.

At this point **Mr Adam Howell** introduced himself as representative for **Buxton Building Construction Co. Ltd** (BBC) in respect of the purchase and subsequent development of the plot on **No 40WR**. He was duly welcomed to the meeting. He confirmed his company's willingness to help with the road fund and the Secretary will be in touch with Mr Howell shortly regarding execution of the Development Agreement. After the meeting Mr Howell mentioned that BBC will be circulating via WURA draft plans prior to lodging them with the Planning Office to get feedback from residents. This is much welcomed by residents.

**Secretary to deal with this asap.**

**Utilities and other:** Letters were sent to various utilities for new water connections, electric power connection repairs and tree felling.

**Chasers sent for non payment of road levy:** 12 some up to 3 times for certain residents with mixed results.

**Internet speeds:** The results of my survey will be contained in the 2016 Summer Newsletter. The main point that emerged was the surprising variation in the speeds residents are getting.

### **Treasurers Report.**

Revenue from road levies was £17,500 with interest earnings of £608 less 20% tax. The surplus generated in the year was £48,694 reflecting the result of the settlement with ATL. The projected surplus for next year is only £365 after accounting for the work on the UR/WR junction.

The Chairman thanked Gary Lowe for once again auditing the accounts and the meeting voted approximately £90 to purchase 12 bottles of wine for Mr and Mrs Lowe's wine cellar.

### **Flood Management.**

Michael Lott Committee spoke about this issue and the well known problem of surface water accumulating in Valley Road from Park Road, WR and Kenley Lane which the Council have been trying to address for some years with some recent success it would seem, in terms of diverting surface water into the Bourne River quickly. We know water drains into Royal Lane from Corporation of the City of London land above WR but for legal reasons the Corporation is unwilling to address the problem. The report from the Civil Engineers made it clear that nothing was going to be done to reduce or at least slow the flow of water into WR and that residents might help by installing water butts!!! We have gone back to the City Engineer with suggestions for slowing the rate of flow off the land above us and asked Cllr Steve O'Connell to lobby on our behalf for some action.

The email included a photo of a pipe discharging water into Royal Ave (Youngs Ave) from C of L land which in turn flows into WR. It was mentioned that there is a large culvert under KL/WR junction near Valley Road but its current function is not clear. Similarly there is one of the Caterham side of the Airfield runway. There was £400,000 made available by Government for local flood alleviation; a drop in the ocean?

**31WR** it was noted had been good enough to clear the drains (grids) at the bottom of WR from time to time for which he must be commended

### **Election of Committee.**

The following offered themselves for re-election:- Chairman: Colin Brown, Secretary: Richard Russell, Treasurer: Janice Scully, Committee member for Uplands Road: Mike Lott, Committee Member: Robin McCallum and Committee Member for lower part of WR: Ian Dixon. Mr McCallum offered to stand down if anyone was willing to take his place. No one came forward at the meeting.

Proposer: Patsy Feeney

Seconder: Peter Darnell

The Committee Members were returned unopposed

A request was again put out for a new member of the Committee preferably with an engineering or project management background. Please come to a Committee Meeting if you feel you would like to join us.

### **Any other business.**

The Chair mentioned his continued efforts to make the Hayes Lane/WR junction safer but it seems only a death or two will bring about any changes. Mike Lott and others have built a path from Wattendon Pond to a point opposite WR on Hayes Lane which avoids the hazards of walking along Hayes Lane. There was some discussion about the blanket 20mph speed limit likely to be imposed throughout the Borough and how this would impact us and WR. It was felt that without more traffic police nothing much would change.

### **Closure of Meeting.**

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm with thanks from the Chairman to the residents who attended the meeting and for their valued input.

**Derek Jenkins 149WR** from the floor kindly proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee for their work during the year.