



WELCOMES & UPLANDS ROAD ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF 'VIRTUAL' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON FRIDAY 14TH MAY 2021 at 3 pm AT 161 WELCOMES ROAD

Chairman's Opening Remarks for all members

Because of COVID 19 the Committee agreed that once again there would be no AGM in the Kenley Memorial Hall this year and that instead a Committee Meeting was held at the Chairman's house in order to review last year's AGM minutes and to update members on more current matters and matters arising.

Member views and comments are invited and can be sent in to the Chairman colin.brown301@btinternet.com or Secretary welcomesanduplandsroads@gmail.com via email. Talking of email we are still obliged to spend time and money on printing material for delivery to members who have not given the Secretary or the Treasurer their email address. If it is all possible and you have not sent an email to us already please do so. We can then update our records and keep you on top of local events affecting our roads including scams, burglaries, road closures and so forth. We are also looking to see if we can organise a question and answer session over the internet later on.

Sections in red italics are extracts from the 2020 AGM minutes.

Apologies for Absence

Not applicable for residents/members. All Committee members attended the meeting on 14th May 2021.

In attendance

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

2015	2015	2016	2016	2017	2017	2018	2018	2019	2019
13	9	18	14	20	16	27	19	32	26
Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses	Residents	Houses

Quorum 10 voting members (paid up).

The Committee are relying on previous resolutions in General Meeting to spend sums over £30,000, the limit delegated in the Constitution on planned road resurfacing which have yet to be carried out.

A warm welcome to the new occupants/owners who have moved to the area since the last virtual AGM in June 2020. These include all the owners of the new flats at 36 Welcomes Road which are now all occupied. The new owners have whole heartedly embraced living here, recognising the need to protect the area from overdevelopment as well as supporting the Road Association. Other new owners include 40a, 67WR, 46UR, 120WR, 121WR, and 122WR are also welcomed. We hope we can meet you all at the 2022 live AGM in the Kenley Memorial Hall, Boris permitting.

The number of members is likely to rise to 246 from the 225 previously recorded following the sale of all the flats at 32, 36 and 57 Welcomes Road. We may be looking at a membership in excess of 300 by year 5 from now.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Zoom/Virtual Annual General (Committee Meeting held on 1st June 2020 were adopted.

Proposed by Robin McCallum and seconded by Jan Scully

Matters Arising

The relief/unloading bay at 57 Welcomes Road (7 new flats) was reclaimed by the developer as part of the new walled frontage and car park area.

Traffic problems, construction sites and road excavations

The problems from HGV construction traffic persisted throughout the year with damage being done to private property and on occasions the road between Kenley Lane and Zig Zag Road was made impassable from road works and unloading lorries at 32 and 57 Welcomes Road. In some cases compensation has been paid by the parties involved but without incontrovertible evidence this is not always possible. This included compensation for aggressive behaviour from work forces excavating the road.

Fibre Optic Cable (FTTP) Openreach

A member gave up a lot of his time investigating the upgrade of the telephone cables in the area and feedback from the people surveyed was that there is a strong demand for fast internet here are more and more people work from home and family members consume bandwidth. Due to the way the network is structured WURA would have needed to invite people to participate who do not even live in our roads and also set up a Community Trust account with a bank to collect the money. Also there are now new products available using the micro wave system which can deliver a stable connection. However the exercise provided useful information on the phone network here and we record our thanks to the member for the time he put in researching the Community Plan offered by Openreach. Policy now is to keep pressure on Openreach to lay fibre in our roads as soon as possible under the national roll out. However priority is being given to remote areas where internet speeds are very low.

The Croydon Plan for housing

Since the presentation by Geoff James in 2019 the plan has not been developed in any way relevant to resolving the issue of the cumulative impact of over intense use of so called 'windfall sites' fronting Welcomes Road. The section of the road south of Zig Zag Road has not yet fallen to the developers though the threat is there with Nos 78, 80 and 88 Welcomes Road in the pipeline and we believe other residents have entered into option sales further south. i.e 'upstream'. The help of a professional firm of architects may be enlisted to create a viable plan for the future development of Welcomes Road once we can get the attention of someone responsible at the Council to discuss adopting such an approach. An estimate of the cost is being obtained from the architects by the Secretary.

Traffic and parking issues

Our visiting speaker at the 2019 AGM, Geoff James, also mentioned the need for evidenced based traffic surveys which when carried out for developers merely 'white washes' what is a potentially serious issue for residents who want unimpeded access to their properties at all times. Evidence is that access is denied far too often already. A record of road closures and blockages outside construction sites is kept on our web site based on reports from members and includes pictures and videos.

The behaviour of the Council Planning Committee

The pattern of decisions connected with developments on Welcomes Road and indeed in Kearton Close suggests that the Council and the attitude of Planning Officers may be changing. We note more applications pending, refusals and very demanding conditions laid down when permission has been granted. On the other hand developers are not giving up and resubmitting applications, though since 57 Welcomes Road was refused in 2017, no other applicants have been appealed. It is hoped that the departure of Paul Scott from the Council may allow a more genuinely consultative approach to housing developments in Welcomes Road.

The Welcomes Road sign at the Kenley Lane end of Welcomes Road was replaced as promised but since then has been uprooted by an HGV though we have no witnesses to that effect.

The Section of Welcomes Road near 155 and the underground spring

This was repaired using a running surface course of 20mm asphalt which is usually used for base layers. The contractor, Allfreys, had assumed we would pay for the surface to be surface dressed as part of the resurfacing of the Hayes to Uplands section. In the event retention money amounting to £2,000 is being held back from the cost of the kerbing work done at the lower end of Welcomes Road last year (as reported in last minutes) and this will be used to defray the cost of the overlay surface contracted for in respect of the HL to UR section.

Surface dressing near 41 to 55 Welcomes Road

The small granite chips used for the surface dressing compacted nicely and is wearing very well with only minor puddling and a tendency to 'butter up' in a small area in hot weather. This work was carried out by Allfreys in 2019 and so has survived 2 winters.

Chairman's Report 2021

General remarks

I have very recently written a long introduction on our Spring Newsletter the issue which has been delayed due to the number of uncertainties linked to Covid and the Council's planning policies for Welcomes Road if such actually exist beyond simply crowding the road with over developments to the point of making it impassable much of the time. I therefore will get right down to the main issues set out below and the relevant Newsletter (Spring 2021) is tabled as part of these records. In the same Newsletter the Secretary questions the benefit of living in a privately maintained road which is nothing more than a public highway in reality now the Council have in effect changed the pattern of usage by permitting the intensive development of so called 'windfall sites'.

Resurfacing plan for Welcomes and Uplands Roads over 3 to 5 years

The plan is to resurface our roads in phases starting with Phase 1 from Hayes Lane to Uplands Road, about 2300m², with a similar area for phase 2 from Uplands to Zig Zag Road. The section from ZZ to Kenley Lane will be carried out when the major new developments in the pipeline for that section have been completed or nearly so and in line with cash flow generated from related HGV and normal road levy receipts. As agreed at the 2019 AGM, following the disastrous surface dressing carried out by Arnold Tarmac in 2012, SMA or DBM would be laid instead. This is less affected by weather and temperature in particular than surface dressing though SMA is delivered and applied hot and rapid cooling before compaction is not recommended.

This expenditure (£60,000) is assumed to have been ratified in the 2019 AGM when it was agreed that we would 'get on with the job' and that DBM or SMA would be used rather than Surface Dressing. The SMA which we are going to use is expected to last at least 20 years with little maintenance assuming moderate traffic use.

Uplands Road could be treated, somewhat more cheaply, using a process called micro chipping whereby a thin layer of asphalt emulsion with finely crushed stone is applied to the surface to seal any minor defects. This seal can be ready to use within 2 hours of application and can last up to 10 years at a cost of £10 to £16 per m². The area to be treated is about 3000m² (this does not include the SMA surfaced section from WR to Morven House), so at say £15m² inc VAT, the work would cost £45,000. The process avoids the need to sweep surplus stone up as happens with using conventional 'spray and chip' with say 6mm stone chips. An indication quote from London Surfacing Ltd using an SMA overlay suggests a cost of £71,000 inc VAT to bring Uplands Road up to a standard that should last 20 years and it is the Committee's intention to earmark funding for this work bearing in mind the valuable contributions to the road fund made by Uplands Road members over many years when most of the expenditure has been related to Welcomes Road.

It appears that the development at 8 KC (road levy arrears paid now) will be going ahead and we expect to meet the developers shortly to discuss compensation for wear and tear on our roads from site traffic and to enter into a legally binding contract with them in line with the other developers needing to access our privately paid for roads.

Retirement of present Secretary in 2022

As mentioned in the Newsletter a successor to the present Secretary needs to be found and a gradual handover of the various tasks involved put in place. A replacement bank signatory will need to be found from amongst the Committee or the role taken on by the new Secretary.

Road levy payment by flat dwellers/owners/freeholders

The developers of 32 Welcomes Road kindly arranged for their solicitors to draw up a draft covenant in effect making the landlord/freeholder the prime obligant/frontager for the payment of annual road levies. The levy will form part of the service charge and be paid in a single lump sum each year.

The amended draft is back with the solicitors for further consideration. The voting rights of flat owners and the freeholders still need to be established and an amendment to the Constitution may be required.

The developer for 36 WR declined to register such a covenant preferring WURA to deal direct with the flat owners but we may re-approach the freeholder about this. As it happens the new flat owners at 36WR have been very happy to become members of the Road Association and we have all 8 email addresses and are in a position to issue road levy invoices to each flat owner effective from 1st April 2021.

Members carrying out extensions and heavy landscape work which leads to increased construction traffic are requested to make an extra contribution to the Road Fund to cover wear and tear to the roads and in most cases have kindly done so.

Damage to junction with Zig Zag Road

Ever since 57 WR was a construction site, HGV site traffic regularly used the junction to reverse into before heading back to Kenley Lane. This was before the Council routing to Hayes Lane was established.

Because of the damage to the road from construction site traffic it was agreed that the junction would be resurfaced and partially kerbed on a shared cost basis with the developer at 57WR, the frontager at 68WR, Zig Zag and Leacroft Road Association, and WURA and this duly happened with the cost (c£9000) largely borne by the developer and WURA, the latter having been the beneficiaries of developer HGV road levies for extra wear and tear.

In addition traffic (often delivering groceries from the major supermarkets) accessing Welcomes Road now uses Zig Zag Road on a daily basis and sometimes this involves HGVs as occurred for example on 21st April 2021 when a massive articulated lorry heading for 32 Welcomes Road failed to negotiate the junction, driving the trailer over the lawn of 68WR and knocking down the Zig Zag Road sign. Compensation has been obtained for the damage incurred, which Frank Gaskin is making good very shortly, along with the verges to 70 WR.

Gas pipe

Some members are aware that there is sometimes a smell of gas in the road at various locations and that at some point the old cast iron pipe will need to be lined with plastic piping. It is not clear how disruptive this process will be and when it might occur. A few months ago we met a gas employee measuring the distance from Hayes Lane to 88 Welcomes Road but he had no idea of the schedule for actually relining the pipe over that stretch.

In house road consultant

One of our members kindly agreed to help us with road maintenance and re-surfacing issues and he duly carried out a metre by metre survey of the road and also met road surfacing contractors. His overall view is that the roads are basically fairly sound although, as we know, the drainage issue is an ongoing problem, and one which we do not have the resources to deal with in any effective way. Welcomes Road was walked more recently and about 27 potholes were marked with yellow spray and these are currently being made good by Frank Gaskin of Civil Civils shortly at a cost of £2430. This will include attending to a defect near 16 Uplands Road.

Parking in Welcomes Road (Designated Footpath)

This issue was dealt with in the last AGM minutes. No action has been taken yet pending studying the effect of the new flats as they are occupied. A member suggested at the 2019 AGM that it might help to publish on the web site that parking management measures are likely to be introduced if the road and its verges are misused on a regular basis. This suggestion will be adopted now more flats are coming on to the market

Secretary report

Statistics

WURA web site has been run by Marion McKelvie since 20th September 2019.

In the period June 2020 to April 2021 1457 user sessions (visits) and 1457 users. The number of sessions are the number of visits and users are the number of uniquely identifiable visitors. (Google analytics)

Emails received 732 via Gmail plus 535 via AOL (from April 2020 to 31 March 2021) *(2019/20 2004 received)*

Chestnut trees on verge fronting City of London land

We are in dispute with the City of London over the 'ownership' of the verge fronting their woodland where there are 9 chestnut trees needing maintenance. Of these 3 are dead and need removing. The matter has been reported to Private Road Services who are our insurance agents but so far we have not had any legal advice from them save to employ our own specialist lawyer.

As reported last year the Council inspected the 9 chestnut trees considered to be dangerous growing on unregistered land which by presumption should be cared for by the City of London along with the now bramble covered verge along the woodland abutting Welcomes Road south of Morven Lodge.

In a recent storm a large branch of one of the trees split away and the Council were good enough to come and make the tree safe and clear away the timber. The insurers were notified (indeed given a full statement of facts about the impact of the constructions sites in WR and related HGV traffic) and they were happy to continue cover at the current premium. A similar problem has arisen in the Gypsy Lane bridleway and we are asking the Council to assist in the absence of a known owner.

We have a duty of care to discharge in respect of road maintenance and inspecting overhanging trees from time to time. In regard to the latter if a member sees that a tree is in a dangerous condition to report it to WURA or directly to the Environment Office at Croydon Council. Some of these trees are on private land and may be the responsibility of the relative frontagers.

Treasurers Report for 2019/2020

The 2020/21 accounts have been audited by Gary Lowe and are 'tabled' with these minutes along with the budget for 2012 to 2022.

The total cash reserves (the road fund) held on 31st March 2021 amounted to £153,633 (£140,751) with no monies owing at that date bar a tiny element of tax on our negligible interest income. By late May 2021 the road fund had risen to £167,738 as members' road levies start to flow in. The developer at 32 Welcomes Road paid the 2nd tranche of HGV levy amounting to £6750 on 24th May 2022, in advance completion of the first sale of one of the flats, lifting reserves through £170,000 after paying £2430 to Civil Civils for mending about 25 potholes (see above under *in house road consultant*).

Cash flow projection for current year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

A copy of this document can be provided on request. It includes projected income from developers by way of HGV levies (£24,000 from 10WR) and the balance (50%) of levies on first sale of flats at 32 and 57 Welcomes Road projected to be received in the next 2 quarters and amounting to £13,750. The main expenditure item is £60,000 for an overlay of SMA for the c2300m² of road from Hayes Lane to Uplands Road. The work includes the creation of an extra speed hump between Simone and Maryhill to break up a longer than standard stretch of road where drivers have tended to speed. The extra speed hump is being provided in response to a request from a member who has noted frequent speeding in this section of Welcomes Road. The actual expenditure for the new surface may appear in different quarters to the presumption of a single payment in the CF in Q2 to allow for an advance payment (deposit) of say 20%. The chosen contractor is London Surfacing Ltd who will construct the extra speed hump and also improve the flow of water past the speed hump near Hayes Lane. This Company were introduced to us by the Council Highways Department and references from other clients have also been followed up and found to be satisfactory.

Unpaid levies to date are 12% of total potential revenue of £22,914 from ordinary road levy. All overdue road levy debt is chased regularly and any accumulated arrears usually collected on sale of the relative property in terms of form TA6 which requires owners to declare neighbourhood disputes. Some of the non payers are covenanted to pay a road levy in their title deeds. The road levy will not be increased from 2021 as would happen in the normal course to track inflation but will be reviewed again in June 2021 for a possible raise in April 2022 by 20%.

The rise in the levy will be 10% from April 2022 rather than 20%, the first change for 4 years. Ordinary road levy revenue from members is expected to reach somewhere between £24,000 to £26,000 depending on progress with completing the terraced houses at 35 Uplands Road and other developments with work on No 8 Kearton Close most likely to start sometime in the next 2 quarters.

The audited accounts for 2020/21 were adopted by the meeting: Proposed by Robin McCallum and Seconded by Stuart Prior

The Chairman thanked Gary Lowe for once again auditing the accounts on a pro bono basis and the meeting voted expenditure of approximately £90 to purchase wine for Mr and Mrs Lowe's wine cellar.

Mr Lowe was re-elected unanimously as our auditor

Re- election of Committee 2021/22

Committee members offered themselves for re- election. If any members reading this are unhappy with the current arrangements for the Committee, wish to join the Committee or have any other comments please let the Chairman know.

The resignation of Marion McKelvie from the Committee was noted with regret but the Committee were grateful to note that she will continue to look after our web site and write objection letters to the Planning Committee.

The Secretary has given notice that he does not wish to continue in the role after 31st March 2022 and a replacement is being sought. A flyer is being delivered to every member with the Newsletter.

AOB

The minutes for the last AGM in 2021 included a lot of detail about the various developments in our roads stretching from Welcomes Road to Uplands Road and Kearton Close. The construction of 32 Welcomes Road, thankfully complete now, was very difficult and disruptive as there was insufficient room on site to accommodate deliveries, store building materials or park vehicles. Access is via a very steep drive. Workforce vans ended up parked in the road or in the emergency entrance to the St Winifreds flats which on occasions was also used for offloading materials. The connection of utilities to the flats has also meant some members could not access their own houses readily on occasions. The electrical and water connections to 57 Welcomes Road for example meant the road was closed at the excavation sites for more than 14 days all told. This has taken its toll on members' patience, caused stress and undermined their right to the peaceful enjoyment of their homes.

The 2 sites most likely to start work in the current quarter are 10 and 42 Welcomes Road (£8250 road levy paid) which are both now boarded up, with more housing awaiting planning approval at 35 Uplands Road (90 WR) and various other sites.

More information on developments and planning applications is available in the Newsletter accompanying these Minutes.

Closure of Committee/virtual General Meeting:

The meeting closed at about 17.30 hrs with thanks to Colin Brown, Chairman, for hosting the meeting.