

OPRA AGM Minutes 29 September 2018

Martyn welcomed everyone to this years AGM, both the last social event - tea and cakes and after the AGM, the first of the new year - wine tasting

Thanks to Kate for al the cakes and to neighbours who have helped with today.

Voting of Committee

Chair - Martyn

Val Ellis - Treasurer and Membership Sec

Comms - Paul Cox

Treasurers report

Copies available at the meeting and on request.

Balance approx £900. Present members will receive next years membership for free. New members still £5.

Hall Close Land

Has attracted some unwanted attention from people who congregate there, plus selling soft drugs as cars drive by. Still not fully resolved and being discussed by council.

Possible solution may require time and help from the residents.

Elizabeth Sparks, councillor, asked to talk.

Elizabeth - explained the position is quite unpleasant. The land is owned by West Sussex Council.

Option - community garden, rather than possibility of housing. Council do it initially, ideas, labour but not goods - so OPRA would need to do some fundraising. The area could possibly be fenced off with a coded lock which neighbours would have.

There's also low maintenance options. What would our residents like? Would people be prepared to maintain it? Would residents work together to raise funding for the actual goods?

Q - Everyone needs to be involved and haven't been? Martyn agreed that everyone should be and he has tried to contact everyone. Martyn asked for a show of hands of those who feel they are affected.

Q - Martyn asked - is it a significant problem and you want something done about it?

Answer: Yes

Q - Can you envisage a community garden solving the problem?

Member Q - I live in Hall Ave - direct opposite - concern is people will jump over any fence if a locked areas and then no-one can see in and if people abuse it. Concern that options will open a bigger problem - e.g. if you clear the area then it encourages football. Benches encourage people to sit.

Members agreed solutions could create bigger problem. Issue seems to be easier lately, but summer has ended. However, problem still exists unto two weeks ago with loud music.

Member Q - could Neighbourhood watch help - yes but only advised to involve police.

Member Q - Police involvement has helped, much better this year. But often Police don't do anything if tackled on own - so its better to tackle it together as OPRA.

Q - Should we leave it another year as the group of people are growing up?

Q - Could it be more garden/low shrub areas with gravel walkways so that there's little or no grass

Q - I'm the neighbourhood watch rep for Hall Close, dealing with the police when major incidents. They continue with visits. She thinks the worst is over. Some neighbours have had a lot of abuse. Feels very sure the boys have left college and got jobs/gone to uni etc and she feels the worst is over. Some new younger boys have appeared playing football but seem to be earlier in the summer.

Martyn - thank you everyone, but need to bring discussion to an end.

Martyn Q: - Does anything need to be done before next year - Yes

Martyn Q: - How do you want to take forward - Martyn will look into arranging a meeting of interested residents, OPRA chairman and councillors.

Paul raised that this is the only piece of open land left in Offington Park - all others at the hands of road developments. We have people living in flats - it would be a shame to lose it entirely.

Councillors update

Louise send her apologies

- Poulter's Lane flats - banged on the head by planners
- 106 Warren Road (Skyring) - with planning committee - residential/nursing home for approx 60 beds.
- Grove Lodge roundabout - some work has been completed, but more to do. Awaiting action from Highways England who is testing samples of the road.
- A27 - New Monks Farm to be determined on 3 October at Robert Woodard Academy - 500 seats.
- Broadwater Green - Some fencing has been replaced - mended in wood, can't do concrete as not an option but have stored what they took away to fix other areas when needed.
- Worthing college held successful open air cinema which sold out.

Elizabeth Sparkes update

Warren Road development North side 106 Warren Road. Application to demolish and build 60 bedroom care home - three storeys.

Statutory requirement is only direct neighbours and those opposite. Lots of objections submitted. Slightly modified plans - new letters sent to all objectors. Will be decided by planning committee - elected members. Set for 17 October.

Important to write in again. Likely that application will be refused.

Elizabeth has written to Highways England to explain delays to A27 decisions are affecting planning decisions and asking for new timescale. They replied no timescale and no proposals.

59 Warren Rod - house demolished plan to build five - two and three bedroom townhouses with seven parking spaces. Objection, but new proposal input with little change and no objections received so is going ahead.

Q - Heard that developers can't make a profit, so land now up for sale.

Community fund - applications for funds and used for various things. Arrangements have changed - now under a crowd funding model. Results are seeing attracted new funding from companies.

Action Point - Paul to add Community Funding link to Website

Broadwater Green - van parking overnight is a real problem. Police have checked road tax and insurance - two people living in vans.

Q please can we do something - it's not a car park.

Elizabeth - options include: no overnight parking, time limit, but worry if not on that side of green the concern is they will park elsewhere and residents would prefer it there than outside their house.

Dutchman van - councillor has spoken to the owner who used to live in B&Q car park, but his caravan was attacked with an axe. Been there three or four years. All reported to Trading Standards if using them for work.

Worthing Town centre - regeneration. Worthing Borough and West Sussex council - shift from retail to leisure so they are looking to bring to life to change to reflect modern living and help housing. £10 million regeneration fund. Neville Gate knocked down £4m - for car park until.

Teville Gate House not owned by same owners as the car park area.

Old Police station - housing and new leisure

Grafton Road - aim to sell but redevelopment is complicated trying to solve those issues.

Town centre streets - funding to improve

Town Hall car park - health hub two new GP surgeries etc on part of the car park.

Digital services - ultrafast Broadband. Deal to invest in Worthing starting in Worthing centre.

Check WBC website for latest updates

Theatres audiences growing and subsidy reduced. Increase investment - aiming to release to third party i.e. charitable trust for cultural regeneration.

Portland road will be pedestrianised and could become more restaurants with outside seating - possibly covered.

Montague quarter may return to shops.

Post AGM- Dan Humphries update on the town centre (given by Elizabeth) can be read in full on our website.

Neighbourhood watch

Need to re-register on their site to get updates. AGM at 24 Oct at Broadwater Methodist Church.

Fraud document distributed to every house and "Little book of scams" on our website.

Worthing Counselling Service

Chris Corin, the chair of Trustees kindly spoke.

Rooms are hired at Offington Park methodist church. A charity that has provided a service for 35 years. They do charge a fee for the service, but they take into account the persons' ability to pay.

Action Point - Paul to add to Website

Worthing Churches Homeless project

Name changing to Turning Tides - community led service. Aim to end homelessness. Finance is under threat. New host 38 beds in Lyndhurst road to help hard to reach rough sleepers - has made a difference but some people just want to stay on the streets - but much lower.

Speed Watch

David Wakefield - very few in Offington Ave but Offington Lane still a problem.

Q - Could Hall Avenue be checked? Martyn will ask

Q - One motorbike in Offington Drive often in the night is very loud and one very bad speeding by one particular car.

A27

Arundel bypass - challenged by neighbourhood committee.

Social events

DogsTrust talk on 10 May by Pia Alford was brilliant. The remit of the charity is vast. Locally it provides a system to look after dogs who have lost their owners to bereavement. Sadly the talk was attended by very few members. Was the first combined social event with the Charmandean RA (CARA).

Next social event is on the 22nd November at the Exhibition Hall Worthing College at 7pm. Rob Fergusson will talk about the history of Offington, based partly on his new book about the Broadwater Parish.

AOB

Paul highlighted the new Worthing Greeter service for tourists.