



Minutes

Meeting: Hills Amenity Society
Committee

Date: 17 January 2012

Present:	Wendy Fisher	(WF)	Chairman
	Parag Shah	(PS)	Deputy Chairman & Community focus
	Brenda Harris	(BH)	Planning
	Peter Wynn	(PW)	Honorary Treasurer
	Lisa Godsalve	(LG)	Neighbourhood Watch
	Lawrence Gray	(LGr)	Neighbourhood Watch
	Stephen Cohen	(SC)	Community focus
	Marcus Warren	(MW)	Committee Member & Support
	Martin Margrie	(MM)	Honorary Secretary

Apologies:	Ian Locks	(IL)	Newsletter & Character Appraisal
	Will Hambling	(WH)	Neighbourhood Watch
	Lee Lubbas	(LL)	Committee Member & Support

1. Minutes of the last meeting on 29 November 2011 and update of actions

The minutes from the last meeting were agreed with an amendment being made to the reference that the Committee would make the arrangements for the organisation of the removal of the Cypress tree at Four Winds, Stony Path. There is no need for any action to be taken.

2. Apologies

Received from **IL, WH** and **LL**.

3. Planning update including Foresters Arms

Contact had been made with Chris Pond regarding the on-going concerns that had been previously raised about the levels of noise emanating from the air conditioning unit and the drinkers who congregate outside the Foresters Arms in the early hours of the morning. It was agreed that an update would be provided to the Committee at the next meeting and if there had been no improvement, agree a plan as to how best to address this issue.

The Committee was also informed the of an update in relation to community support from the police, which may help residents who live close to the Foresters Arms, particularly in relation to the high levels of noise from outside drinkers. This is detailed under item five.

15a Pump Hill (April Cottage)

This was discussed at the last meeting. The original application to raise the roof of the cottage has been superseded by a new application which is seeking permission to re-develop the whole site.

Previously the Committee had not objected to the original application but the revised application caused some concern particularly due to the proposed size and height of the new property. One of the main concerns raised by the neighbours who are adjacent to the property is the considerable loss of light and restriction of views in and from their properties as a result of the proposed height and front extension.

The Committee has written to Epping Forest District Council to express these concerns and is awaiting a response.

36 York Hill

This was discussed at the last meeting. A revised application had been submitted in respect of the first floor gabled extension. The application includes considerable changes to the property, which if approved, would result in the severe loss of light and 'cramping affect' to neighbouring properties. Concerns had been raised by the neighbours who live close to the property and the Committee were also concerned by the application as the property is Grade II listed.

The Committee has written to Epping Forest District Council to express these concerns and is awaiting a response.

42 Queens Road

This was discussed at the last meeting. Planning permission has now been granted.

22 Stony Path

This was discussed at the last meeting. To date no retrospective planning permission had been received for the erection of a two storey extension. This had been required by the end of November 2011.

The Committee had written to Epping Forest District Council on 3 December 2011 confirming their concerns in relation to the erection of the extension and the removal of a tall hedge both of which had not had planning permission.

Epping Forest District Council had responded on 20 December 2011 and confirmed that the matter had been investigated and that planning permission had not been granted prior to the commencement of the work. The owner has been asked to submit a retrospective planning application and it is believed to be his intention to do so. Once received, a decision will be made which will determine whether permission is granted or granted with modifications or whether permission is refused. If permission is refused then enforcement notice action could commence.

The letter did not indicate if a further response will be provided to confirm the decision made.

56 York Hill

An application has been submitted for the removal of the existing conservatory and the erection of a single and two storey rear extension.

Objections to the application have been submitted to Epping Forest District Council by two neighbours with clearly laid out concerns.

The Committee has written to Epping Forest District Council to express these concerns and is awaiting a response.

4. Financial update

PW confirmed the Committee funds at the time of the meeting. **PW** informed the Committee that he is in the process of changing the Committee's bank account and is proposing to open a new community account. This type of account allows access to cheque books and online banking. **PW** will be one of the three authorised signatories. **LG** offered to be a signatory and the Committee agreed that **WH** should be the other signatory (unless **WH** objects to this).

5. Neighbourhood watch update

The Committee acknowledged that regrettably momentum had been slow with progressing Neighbourhood Watch. However it was agreed that as the level of petty crime and household burglaries has significantly reduced, the initial work undertaken by **PS**, **LGr** and **MM** (including the articles in two Newsletters) may well have contributed towards this welcomed decrease.

LG offered to support **LGr** and **WH** with progressing Neighbourhood Watch activity.

MM receives various electronic updates from Colin Freeman, Essex Watch Administrator and these will be forwarded to all

Committee members as and when received.

The Committee was informed of an unfortunate incident that took place outside properties 109 and 111 York Hill on Christmas Day evening. A car of youths had been verbally abusive to a family member when asked to move their vehicle to allow access. The occupants of the vehicle had been smoking some form of drug and the incident had been reported to Essex police which had led to follow up action. As a result of this there has been an increase in police patrolling the Hills in the evening and this had led to the police challenging another vehicle of youths who were also sitting outside properties 111 to 115 York Hill on the evening of 14 January 2012. The occupants of the vehicle were smoking Cannabis and the police were able to take the necessary action at that time.

The police are encouraging residents to contact them should they be concerned about any suspicious or antisocial behaviour. In addition to number 101 (the new non-emergency number that should be called when reporting incidents of this nature) the Committee were made aware of an alternative mobile telephone number (07968 354021) which allows direct contact with Kerri Bowden who is one of the Police Community Support Officers. The number can only be used up to midnight (thereafter 101) but is a quicker and more effective method of reporting an incident.

PS and **SC** had met to discuss ways (possibly Facebook) of engaging the younger residents of the Hills, to possibly gauge an understanding of what they like about living in the conservation area and what they would like to see improved. This was an exploratory meeting and both plan to have further meetings with a focus on community issues.

6. Collection of annual subscriptions

The Committee discussed the collection of subscriptions and debated whether they should be called 'subscriptions', 'donations' or 'contributions'.

It was commented that there is a lack of awareness as to what residents subscribe to and there is the belief that it is to allow receipt of the Newsletter; which is not the case as all residents in the Hills receive a copy.

It was agreed that residents should be aware of the purpose of the subscriptions and that ultimately the main purpose is to ensure that the Hills and the conservation area are maintained and protected and remain a unique place to live and visit.

After much consideration and following Committee vote it was

agreed that the word 'subscription' would be replaced with 'contribution' as it was felt this demonstrated a more community focussed approach.

IL to ensure that all reference to the word 'subscription' is replaced with 'contributions' and that a brief article is included which informs residents of the change in reference and what the benefits are to making a minimum contribution of £4 per annum.

7. Defining roles and responsibilities of the group including consideration to appointing a deputy chair

It was agreed through Committee vote that **PS** be appointed Deputy Chairman to support **WF** and **LG** would support **LGr** and **WH** with Neighbourhood Watch. **SC** will focus on community issues and be supported by **PS**. **MW** and **LL** would support the Committee generally as required.

8. Epping Forest upcoming consultation

This item was deferred.

9. Hills area, what needs to be improved

This item was deferred.

10. Damage to small green at the top of York hill resulting in damaged/missing wooden posts preventing vehicles driving onto the Green

This item was deferred.

11. Telephone masts

The Committee agreed that any further action was beyond its jurisdiction.

12. AOB

Information sheet

The Committee acknowledged that an A4 'Hills Information Sheet' should be created which provides vital information and information of local interest to residents living in the conservation area.

It was agreed that at the time of moving into a conservation area some new residents may have limited understanding of the restrictions and need for planning permission prior to undertaking work to their properties or land.

To ensure maximum impact and the avoidance of residents' unknowingly destroying the information sheet it was agreed that the Information Sheet should be ready to be inserted into the next edition of the Newsletter.

It was agreed that **PS** and **LG** would create the first draft taking

into consideration any previously used literature and bringing together information that would be of interest and benefit to residents. This would then be discussed at the February 2012 Committee meeting to allow **MW** to have the final version printed in time for insertion

Signage in the hills

MW to contact Epping Forest District Council to understand where we are with regards to the signage in the hills.

13. Date of next meeting: 8pm on 28 February 2012