



Crowthorne Village Action Group

CVAG protecting our village against
urbanisation

2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 9th Annual General Meeting of The Crowthorne Village Action Group was held on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 starting at 7.30 pm. at Woodmancote House, Crowthorne.

MINUTES

1. Registration and apologies for absence.
 - 1.1 There were 40 persons attending.
 - 1.2 That included 6 Committee Members [John McNab, Eddie Lyne, Carole Doran, John Baster, Andy Holley, Suzanne Hines], plus Janet Rogers, and Steve Bolton who arrived during the evening.
 - 1.3 Also present was Stephen Chown who works for BFBC and is their Head of Parks & Countryside, who would speak after the formal AGM was closed, plus Laura Ashton Planning Manager of Bewley Homes, Neil Montgomery Design & Construction Manager at the Broadmoor development and John Allan Managing Director of L&G Homes (Communities) each prepared to field questions about their respective developments after the AGM.
 - 1.4 The following apologies were recorded via the Secretary: Tina McKenzie-Boyle.

2. Comments by the Chair.

John McNab, the CVAG Chairman for 2016-7 introduced himself and the other members of the committee present, extended a warm welcome to all present and gave a brief outline of how the meeting would proceed.

3. Minutes of the 8th AGM held on 27th April 2016
 - 3.1 Accuracy. With no corrections to note, Anne Oxley moved adoption of the minutes, seconded by Andy Holley and agreed without a vote.
 - 3.2 The Chairman observed that there were no matters arising to be brought forward from the minutes that could not be dealt with under other items on the Agenda but Eddie Lyne noted that in the Public Meeting notes last year:
 - (a) It was reported that it was expected that the Crowthorne local Police Office would likely be closed by Christmas 2016 – no one present knew whether this had happened and
 - (b) It was reported that the final decision as to whether L&G would propose using a modular construction technique for homes in their planning application – Eddie Lyne had recently queried whether this was to be the case but had identified that the decision was still awaited.

4. Hon. Secretary CVAG report of the work of CVAG for 2014/15.
 - 4.1 Carole Doran the Secretary of CVAG read from her annual written report, text as follows:
 - 4.2 During the last year CVAG has been busy as ever really. We have attended stakeholders meetings at Broadmoor and with Quatro for the TRL site. We have a contact for the Bewley Site (Oakham Park) so that breaches of planning agreements can be sorted out quickly. Committee members attend regular stakeholders meetings despite fairly short notice for the dates of these. I also have a contact with McCarthy and Stone and have contacted her on a couple of occasions about the flats that are replacing the Waterloo Hotel. A CVAG representative also goes to meetings with the Parish Council to prepare for the new Neighbourhood Plan and also to help formulate plans for the Community Hub on the TRL site.
 - 4.3 These meetings are always informative and we post articles about them on our web site. We also write articles for the Crowthorne Eye that everyone can read and we post on Social media sites like Crowthorne Gossip Girls, We Love Crowthorne and Crowthorne Chaos.

- 4.4 Some things have really annoyed me. For example, I was extremely saddened by the loss of the historic Waterloo Hotel. I was furious to discover that McCarthy & Stone had flattened the whole building before obeying the laws for mitigating against harm to the bats. That was why work was stopped and a new application had to be put in. I have now learnt from our contact at McCarthy & Stone that 9 bat boxes have been dotted around the site and were put up before the coach house was demolished. The roof and hanging tiles to the coach house were stripped by hand with their ecologist present- the idea being that if any bats were found they would gently be caught and placed in one of the bat boxes in the trees. They didn't find any bats - no surprise after their roosting sites and food areas were taken away - but they hope bats will be attracted to the boxes now in place.
- 4.5 Some things have cheered me up. Due to going to the stakeholders meetings about the TRL development site, I met someone who works with the archive material at the TRL laboratory, and although this is not strictly CVAG business, I was invited in to see material he had found about the years that my Dad worked there. It was very kind of him and it would not have happened if I had not met him at a meeting concerning the development. As some of you know my Dad and I started CVAG, and we were only here in Crowthorne because we moved when the TRL came here from Harmondsworth. Dad would have loved the new, spacious building that is on the TRL site now.
- 4.6 Some things have been great fun. We had a chilly CVAG stall at the carnival last year although as I recall the sun did eventually put in an appearance. Those of you who know me also know that I don't do cold!!!! It was lovely to meet lots of people from the village and also to see what a fabulous event the Carnival is now. We were lucky enough to receive a donation from the Carnival Committee to assist our CVAG work. It is a shame that the Pinewood Festival has been cancelled this year due to a lack of volunteer helpers.
- 4.7 Some things have been helpful. We have updated our web site. A member of our committee has met with the CPRE (the Campaign to Protect Rural England) to learn that they work hard and effectively to influence change at Government level - so we have decided to remain affiliated to CPRE. We have been attending various exhibitions about planning in the village and also making sure that we have a map showing the overview of both current and possible future plans for development in both Bracknell and Wokingham, since our village is split between the two Boroughs. We have kept people informed via social media and our newsletters and a map is on show for you here tonight. We asked for and received a copy of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA); that is all the sites that Bracknell may use as development sites. As you can see here it is a comprehensive, complicated large document available for scrutiny on the BFC web site. Wokingham are in the process of compiling theirs. Taken together they represent a really scary document for us.
- 4.8 Some things have amazed me. For example, when I learnt that a resident who lives near the traffic lights on Dukes Ride was putting in an application to demolish one house and replace it with 3 houses, I voiced concern to BFC about contractors parking, should it receive a PA. I suggested that this would need to be addressed should planning permission be given. My concern was passed to the Highways department and I got an email requesting more information. Since I know beyond doubt that any parking near the lights would be a hazard, I pointed this out. Where upon someone from Highways came out very quickly to look at the problem and phoned me to tell me that he had been to check and there were no vehicles parked in a dangerous manner! When I explained that the site does not even have planning permission yet, let alone any work starting, he said that he couldn't see a problem anyway as Dukes Ride is a long straight road and parking along it would be OK. You have been warned!That was from a man who works in the Highways department.
- 4.9 Some things are extraordinarily frustrating. We remain deeply concerned about the lack of plans for additional health care given the amount of development planned in Crowthorne. I think we all know how hard it can be to get a doctor's appointment now, let alone after they finish building all the new homes. Despite this Bracknell seem to be adamant that Health Care has nothing to do with them. CVAG will continue to raise this issue when ever possible and hope to learn about future plans within Bracknell for health care provision. I am also the chairman of the Heathhill Surgery's PPG (Patient Panel Group), so I know a little more about discussions that are taking place if anyone is interested in hearing more!

- 4.10 Some things are beyond belief. We learnt at the latest meeting of the Broadmoor stakeholders meeting that Barratts are still having discussions with BFC about the number of homes to be built on Cricket Field Grove. It is now to be 130 which is down from the original 145 but this proposal is on hold because of the viability of building affordable homes or rather NOT building affordable homes on the site. This can't be ratified until BFC's viability officer gives the OK. The problem is that BFC don't have a viability officer!
John Baster interjected that he had identified a need for a Heritage Officer to deal with the possibility of granting the Waterloo Hotel some minimal protection – guess what ... BFC has no Heritage Officer to discharged this task !!
- 4.11 A strike of luck. Whilst responding to a resident who is concerned about the loss of trees in the village, I happened upon a Stephen Chown who works for BFBC as head of Parks and Countryside. I asked him if he would come and talk to us today and here he is! Our very own tree expert. I am sure you will find what he has to say is interesting and you may ask him any questions.
5. Hon. Treasurer's Financial Statement for 2016/17
- 5.1 The Treasurer, Eddie Lyne, presented the accounts for the year 2016/17. He gave the Chairman and Secretary each a copy of the independent examiner's report, declaring that the presented accounts were accurate and satisfactory, and confirmed that the original had been placed in his files.
- 5.2. Copies of the Treasurer's written report had been distributed around those present and no additional comments were necessary.
- 5.3 There were no questions on any of the detailed figures of the accounts. John Baster moved adoption of the Accounts seconded by Jean McNab, and agreed without a vote.
6. Amendments of the Constitution.
It was noted that there have been no proposals for amendment of the constitution.
7. Election of Committee for 2017 - 18
- 7.1 On the closure date for nominations, 9 nominations had been received for 12 vacancies and therefore in accordance with the constitution no ballot was required. The following members were duly elected as the Committee to serve for 2017 - 18.
- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Andy Holley | Carole Doran | Eddie Lyne | Suzanne Hines |
| John Baster | John McNab | Graham Elliott | Steve Bolton |
| Janet Rogers | | | |
- 7.2 The Chairman explained objectives of CVAG in an effort to convince members why we need additional help on the Committee.
- 7.3 The Committee would welcome more new blood. If anyone considers that they would like to contribute to relieve the workload of the elected Committee then just contact a Member of Committee to commence procedures. Also if anyone knows of someone that they think would be a useful recruit then notify a Committee member so that we may consider making advances to the nominee.
8. Appointment of the Independent Examiner of Accounts for 2017 - 18.
- 8.2 Alison Holden has indicated to the Treasurer her willingness to serve for a 4th year if requested. Formally, her nomination is at the bottom of the Treasurer's report. Barrie Searle seconded the proposal. There were no other nominees. It was agreed nem con that Mrs. Alison Holden be asked to serve for 2017-18.
9. Any other business.
There had been no prior notification of any other business.

The Chairman declared the AGM closed at 7.55 pm.

PUBLIC MEETING

Following the CVAG AGM there was a talk from our visitor followed by brief comments by representatives of the three current main developers in the village, and finally an open discussion of matters concerning development in the village that are of interest to residents.

1. TREES

- 1.1 Stephen Chown, BFBC Head of Parks & Countryside addressed the meeting
- 1.2 Bracknell rides very high on the national list of communities with very high tree coverage.
- 1.3 Stephen's task is URBAN FORESTRY and this means moving to woodland that is part of a sustainable environment and away from the past, neglected commercial forestry. He promotes active management of the trees so the population has to have mixed ages, mixed species – a balanced solution.
- 1.4 Within his remit he will consider the significance of the trees because he has to be PRAGMATIC. He will resist tree removal [without just cause e.g. to enable development!], protect our vintage trees and ancient woodland, plant new trees as a legacy, protect the growing environment.
- 1.5 He is always severely restricted by funding priorities given that such as social care of humans that must prioritise over trees, and given forestry is a non statutory responsibility. Thus he is always looking for novel ideas for creative funding alternatives. He wants to inspire positive stewardship of tree owners. TPOs are not an answer, they are just a contributing factor of restraining actions.
- 1.6 The above is a very poor report of an impressive description of Mr. Chown's work. The speech was very much welcomed by the audience who now have a much better understanding of the BFC approach to trees in our Borough.
- 1.7 Some discussion followed about the possibility of organising the planting of specific trees "in memoria". Yes they were looking at possibilities. E.g. if someone did not require access they might fund a large tree on a roundabout. There are now technically advanced ways of lifting fully grown trees and replanting [albeit costly].
- 1.8 There was special mention of trees having to be cut down in the middle of attractive avenues with no sign of replacing them [Lower Broadmoor Road]. Stephen is aware and it is an active task to seek the most appropriate solution – if any. Crowthorne Parish Council has a role to play here e.g. use of Section 106 funds.
- 1.9 Enforcement - where there have been violations of TPOs replacement is enforced. Unfortunately trees removed will not be replaced like with like – usually a good point given the move towards a sustainable environment – but the replacement trees will be required to be substantial in the context of the overall stewardship..

2. MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 Old TRL site

- 2.1.1 Mr. John Allan, Managing Director of Legal & General Homes (Communities) explained the current situation. About 6,000 trees have been removed – but about 20,000 replacements have been made particularly on the SANG. The plans for the first 207 homes are well advanced. If they achieve approval for these about July/August 2017 then they anticipate the first home completion about January 2018.
- 2.1.2 Three questions were raised to which Mr. Allan had not been able to prepare answers. He has very kindly answered these questions on 4th May. His response is therefore added here as a "post meeting note" as follows [edited format].

POST MEETING NOTE

- 2.1.3 I am sorry that I was unable, on the night, to answer all the questions asked but always feel it best in such circumstances to own up and agree to ascertain the answer rather than make it up. With this in mind, I left the meeting having noted the need to respond on three specific points.
- 2.1.4 Question <What happened with the possible retention of the classic mural of the old TRL building?> Retention or otherwise of the TRL mural, as highlighted on the photograph you very

kindly gave to me. I have been advised that this particular question was raised at a previous meeting, at which it was confirmed that the mural would not be retained and I can, therefore, confirm that this remains the case. The mural's composition was not robust and our advice was that, whilst it was in theory able to be salvaged, there was no guarantee that it would survive intact and for us there was no obvious place for it to be re-located. It may, however, be worth pointing out that we have decided to name the development Buckler's Park in recognition of the Buckler car which was a classic looking sports car manufactured in Crowthorne in the 1950s.

- 2.1.5 Question <Can Legal & General Homes liaise with Bewley Homes to produce a composite plan showing the location of both developments cycle routes in relation to each other and the wider Crowthorne area?> I can confirm that I have been in touch with Bewley today and requested they provide us with a copy of their layout and cycle route with a view to us preparing a composite plan
- 2.1.6 Question <Do you have to comply with the Social Charter> Basically, no. This is a Local Authority requirement. However assuming a role of good care L&G are looking at this voluntarily. It is complex as you will find in the brief summary attached of the thinking, methodology and purpose which drives the Social Value Portal [Appendix to these notes] and if you access their website on www.socialvalueportal.com you will be able to look at actual case studies where financial value has been calculated.

POST MEETING NOTE END

2.2 **Broadmoor**

- 2.2.1 Neil Montgomery Design & Construction Manager at the Broadmoor development explained that current plans and matching progress are targeting a February 2020 completion date for the hospital work.
- 2.2.2 Neil is aware that there is an ongoing problem with regard to material around the hostel.

2.3 **Oakham Park** [previously referred to as "the Charities Land"]

- 2.3.1 Laura Ashton Planning Manager of Bewley Homes is currently progressing a number of amendments to the agreed plan e.g. concerning the required improvements to the Nine Mile Ride/Old Wokingham Road junction – basically it makes no sense for Bewley to do their work and then find L&G coming along and digging it all up for them to do their required improvements.
- 2.3.2 On site they have completed a lot of piling, provided the basic groundwork for utilities and mains drainage. They hope to be able to allow first access to the north end of the SANG by end May and the first 6 houses including the show house to be built by end June. First sale say November 2017 and complete the project October 2018

3. OTHER MATTERS

- 3.1 Will Brexit affect the protection requirements for the SPA and conditions required for the SANGS? The future – we don't know, however we shall note that at this time the government is progressing to move all the conditions/limitations of EU legislation into UK Law.
- 3.2 Mention has been made of improvements to the junction of Nine Mile Ride and the Old Wokingham Road - what are they? – will there still be a roundabout? Bewley Homes required work is to widen the access roads – the roundabout stays.
- 3.3 No one could provide a rational answer of plans against further deterioration of dangerous noxious gas levels in Crowthorne high street. Alarming given the expectation of awful increased traffic levels
- 3.4 Thankfully no one was aware of plans to provide vehicular access direct from Great Hollands south across Nine Mile Ride

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20 pm.

APPENDIX to CVAG AGM Minutes 2017

Social Value

The Social Value Portal is a social enterprise and the UK's first geospatial meeting place for Business, the Public Sector, Social Enterprise, Third Sector Providers and Communities.

The Social Value Portal has been designed to bridge the gaps in our collective knowledge, to become 'the place' where Business comes to learn about social value; understand public sector targets; listen to communities and meet third sector providers in order to promote better business and community wellbeing. The Social Value Portal believes that it is only through the integration of Social Value into day to day activities that Business will be able to truly make a difference and fulfil its proper role in Society.

How can Social Value be measured and reported?

There is no one way to measure and report social value and measurement and reporting strategies should be tailored to specific business and reporting needs. However, measures may be broadly broken down into two categories being financial and non-financial.

Key issues that need to be addressed in developing measurement strategies include:-

Measuring what matters is fundamental to capturing social contribution

Understanding context and stakeholder needs through the mapping of the Social Impact Value Chain is central to impact analysis

Core inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts should be identified, measured, monetised and valued across all services

In reporting impact and the 'value' created it is important to understand context. Whilst it is in some cases possible to put a financial value to many social outcomes and impact, for example using UK Government Data sources, ultimately value is subjective. For instance, whilst a job created may have value to the State, it plainly is worth more to an individual who may have struggled to find work for a long time or is an ex-offender, rather than a university graduate who has recently applied for a job.

Metrics and KPIs

There are over 1,150 social and environmental impact metrics presently being used across the world, including specific metrics such as carbon emissions, jobs created, the happiness index, through to sentiment analysis and whilst they all have value they have been developed for a specific purpose. Hence, it will take more than one metric to report upon impact and in order to decide the most appropriate solution it is necessary to consider the following questions:

Is it objective and verifiable – will an independent audit arrive at the same answer?

Does it use financial proxies – is it reliant on attributed financial values and if so are they universally agreed?

Is it scale-able and is it feasible to use to measure say 50,000 organisations?

Is it sustainable or is it too costly to undertake?

Can it translate into other metrics for comparison purposes?

Can it be benchmarked in order to compare performance between organisations?

Is it compliant to legislative and industry frameworks?

Is it easy to communicate?

Does it cover all aspects relevant, for example, the environment, people, monetary value or hyper locality?

Is it applicable across public, private, third and community sectors?

Is it equally valid regardless of the size of the industry?

Does it produce empirical results with absolute values so that decisions can be made for procurement?

Can it be backed up by evidence that may be independently assured?