

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 7 JULY 2008

### Committee Members Present:

Helen Zammett	Chairman CRA	HZ
Philip Carnelley	Treasurer CRA	PC
Janet Berger	Secretary CRA	JB
Kate West	Membership Secretary CRA	KW
Malcolm Dowers	Webmaster CRA	MD
Naomi Passman		NP
Ron Berger		RB

**Guests Present:** Cllr Burgess and Cllr Chan

**1. Apologies for absence**

Received from Chris and Monica Nelson and Peter Beresford.

**2. Minutes**

Minutes of the AGM held on 4 July 2007 agreed.

**3. Election of committee**

As per the terms of the Constitution PC resigned from the committee. There being no other officers proposed it was proposed and seconded that PC be re-elected to the committee.

**4. Chairman's review**

HZ read out a review of the activities of the committee over the past year (copy attached).

**5. Report from the Membership Secretary**

KW reported that so far 50 households had enrolled for the year 2008/9.

**6. Report from Treasurer**

PC delivered the treasurer's report (copy attached).

**7. Report from Webmaster**

MD delivered the webmaster's report (copy attached).

**8. Chepstow**

Members were asked to complete the questionnaire on what would be deemed acceptable for the future of the site.

**9. Conservation**

HZ reported on conservation.

**10. Any Other Business**

Questions were invited from Members present at the meeting and discussed. Including: Cllr Burgess informed the meeting that the decision on conservation would be political and not decided by officers; HZ explained Article 4 and the demolition of Chepstow; development of Sarum (3 Leicester Road) discussed; a Member proposed thanks for the efforts and hard work of the Committee and this was seconded by another Member.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Cllr Burgess and Cllr Chan for attending as well as the members and the meeting was concluded.

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES FOR THE CRA AGM

7 JULY 2008

All the members of our Committee have worked well together this year, often to tight deadlines, and for this I would like to express my appreciation. Due to the increase in the general workload, Malcolm Dowers, our Webmaster, has handed the role of Membership Secretary to Kate West, who in turn has handed over the role of Secretary to Janet Berger. However, there is always room for more members, especially from the roads which are not represented at present: Buckingham Road, Hereford Road, Rutland Road, Nutter Lane, Reydon Avenue and Preston Road. For example, we would like to have representative to attend our Area One Committee meetings, to work on gaining local or national listing on buildings in our area and we would like to develop links with other residents' associations but at present have no-one available to do this.

Also, I would like to thank the Wanstead Society for their help and support again throughout the year, especially Anne Barlowe, their Chairman, and Billie Figg.

If you look on our website, you will see that we have been supporting our MP, Harry Cohen in lobbying for third party right of appeal, ie the right of the public to appeal against development approval which is granted by a local authority. This is part of the process running to putting a new planning bill before Parliament, which is happening at the moment. Unfortunately there is little hope that this part of the planning playing field will be made even.

Our newsletters have kept you up to date with developments throughout the last year, so I will not repeat this, but merely remind you of the main issues which we have been dealing with.

Chepstow has taken priority during the past year. There is good news and bad news. The good news is that Telford lost their appeal and the Government Inspector denied permission to allow them to build their 18 flats and 6 semi-detached houses on the site. The bad news – which I am sure you are now aware of – is that the house is due to be demolished this week. The Wanstead and Woodford Guardian is to publish an article on this, this week and if anyone is able to join us for a photograph shoot at \_\_\_\_\_, then please do come along.

Again, I would like to thank both our local Councillors and Redbridge Planning Department for supporting us in this fight. The Area One Committee supported us in requesting that Chepstow be given locally listed status, but unfortunately the Cabinet Member responsible

for planning decided against the request of the Conservation Advisory Panel to grant this. I must add that even if Chepstow were locally listed, it would not have saved it from demolition.

Redbridge Planning Department also helped us by stopping Telford demolishing the house last January by imposing an Article 4 Direction on it at very short notice. Unfortunately the Secretary of State decided not to confirm this Article and so the house is now unprotected. I shall be talking about Chepstow in the future, later at this meeting.

The second main issue this year has been and still is, is conservation. As you know, we have been campaigning for the Counties Estate, The Avenue, Grove Park and Grosvenor Road to be given conservation status since we formed, producing a conservation report in January 2007. However, as the number of conservation planning officers dwindled to nil recently, the Planning Department was unable to undertake the work. Our local Councillors again stepped in to help, by agreeing to fund independent consultants to undertake the necessary work. Again, I will talk about the future of this exercise later in the meeting .

You will be pleased to learn that 17 Leicester Road, the property on the corner of Warwick Road and Leicester Road has been restored as one house and we understand it will be up for sale soon. However, the future of Sarum, 3 Leicester Road, is still unknown. It has been sold to developers, who have erected a high fence round part of the site but so far no planning application or application for demolition has been put before the Planning Department. As usual, we are keeping a watchful eye on this.

I now hand you over to Kate West, our Membership Secretary.

### **CHEPSTOW – WERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

By now, you will all have received our newsletter, on the back of which is a questionnaire, asking what you think ought to be developed on the site. If you would like to fill one in now, please go to the desk at the back of the room, where there are spare copies. As the newsletter points out, obviously we cannot guarantee the outcome but it is important that you show your interest in the future of the Chepstow site and by implication, of your area.

One good thing which has come out of the Chepstow situation is that the Head of Planning, Marc Dorfman, has offered to hold a meeting with the CRA and the Wanstead Society to discuss what residents feel ought to be developed on the site, so that we can reach general agreement. He will then meet with Telford BEFORE they make their next planning application. This is a significant move, in that residents are being consulted at an earlier stage in the planning process. Therefore it is important that we show that we want this to

continue in the future by responding to the Chepstow questionnaire. I gather that a new architect has been commissioned, so let's hope the standard of design is higher this time.

If anyone wishes to ask any question on Chepstow please do so.

### **CONSERVATION AREA STATUS FOR THE COUNTIES ESTATE**

At present, the independent consultants are preparing their initial report which will go to the Planning Department, which we will be allowed to see. A questionnaire which will be sent out to residents on the roads in question, is being drafted and again we have been given the opportunity to input our comments on them by both Allan Burgess and the Planning Department. The next stage will be that the CRA, the Wanstead Society, the Planning Department and the Consultants will have a meeting, to discuss the next stage in the conservation assessment.

As part of the exercise, everyone will receive a questionnaire, probably in early September, asking your opinions on various aspects of your neighbourhood. Whatever your opinion, I urge you to respond, as lack of response would be very damaging.

There are many reasons why conservation status is to be prized, from preserving our historical heritage, to keeping the attractive atmosphere in our area, with its vistas and open spaces, to raising the value and selling potential of our houses. Simon Thurley, the Chief Executive of English Heritage said: *"I don't believe that heritage is somewhere you visit, like going to a stately home. It is all around us, it is where we live. And for many of us that is a suburb."*

The Planning Department's position has been that current legislation is sufficient to protect the distinctive character and atmosphere of our area but when we look at the Higgins development, we know that it is inadequate.

Conservation status does not give us full protection against creeping development but it gives us the strongest defence we can have: if Chepstow were in a conservation area it would have been harder for them to demolish the house and we could demand a higher standard of design in a new development, making it more in keeping with the character of our area. Mr Dorfman came to look around our area last Tuesday as part of his work on our conservation application, during which he said that as most of the areas around us have conservation or residential precinct status, we do not need conservation status. We replied that if we are the only area without any such protection, then all the more need for us to get conservation status!

If anyone wishes to ask questions on Conservation, please do so.



# The Counties Residents' Association

*Protecting the interests of the community*

## Webmaster's Report Annual General Meeting 7/7/2008

*We recently moved our website hosting from a company called Teltivo to one called Fasthosts. This has provided approximately 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> times the available webspace which was being utilised at an increasingly fast pace and many more functions and facilities for our email system.*

*There was no financial cost of the move as it was timed to coincide with the renewal of both the CRA website name (two yearly) and its annual website hosting. The cost of the new service was comparable to that of the old, in fact the new service is slightly cheaper.*

*During the transition, whilst the website wasn't "down" it was inaccessible to some users whilst the new DNS entries (effectively the website's telephone number) was updated around the world. Those attempting to access the CRA website from AOL accounts or international corporations systems were the worst effected with a lack of access of about four days. The capacity of our current provided is believed to be sufficient for the foreseeable future.*

*A collective decision by the committee earlier this year did away with the need of passwords to access the member's only information and we take it on trust that those who find the information useful will do the decent thing and join the CRA.*

*The breakdown of our website capacity is more or less as that for last year:-*

*20% by the various historic documents*

*35% by the ever increasing amount of correspondence*

*10% by the conservation report*

*35% is utilised across the financial reports, newspaper cuttings etc.*

*Following its low usage, the member's forum was dropped.*

*Whilst we are able to keep the website up to date with the latest correspondence etc, we have not had the time to make it as user friendly as we would like. We therefore repeat our request made last year, for anyone with web experience to lend a hand, possibly even for just a one off maintenance task of tidying up.*



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## *Treasurer's Report FY 2007-2008*

In 2007/8 we had a quieter year financially than the prior year, as some of the early “start-up” costs were over – e.g. there were no new purchases of documents for the website in the last 12 months.

One thing to note when comparing this year to the previous year is that many people paid their subscriptions early, falling into the 2006/7 financial year. These early payments totalled £176, thus overall we had a similar level of membership subscriptions in this year to the prior year (£346 compared to £376). To make things clearer this year, we have decided to “hold” subscriptions this time and enter them into the books in the financial year to which they relate, and so subscriptions received for the 2008/9 year do not appear in this statement.

This level of membership, plus a generous level of accompanying donations enabled us to finish the year with £201 ‘in the bank’ to support future activities.

I would like to mention with thanks the contribution from Malcolm Dowers who has kept our printing costs very low through the use of his office facilities.

*Philip Carnelley*  
*Hon Treasurer*  
*5 July 2008*

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### **CRA Accounts summary statement**

**1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008**

		2007-8	
	<b>Balance Brought Forward</b>		<b>£ 157.64</b>
2006-7		2007-8	
	<b>Income</b>		
376	Membership subs - 2007/8 year	£ 170.50	
91	Donations	£ 92.50	
		<u>£ 263.00</u>	
			<b>£ 420.64</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>		
129	Website - hosting etc	£ 58.50	
56	Documents purchased - website etc	£ -	
265	Printing & Stationery	£ 136.10	
35	AGM	£ 25.00	
		<u>£ 219.60</u>	
	<b>Balance at 30/6/2008 Carried Forward</b>		<b>£ 201.04</b>

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