

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Fetcham Residents Association  
held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th April 2018  
Fetcham Village Hall**

- Present:**           **Officers:**  
Susanne Taylor (Chairman), Tim Waller (Vice-Chairman), Alan Pooley (Treasurer)  
Marion Doherty (Secretary), Jen Addy (Membership Secretary),  
James Fairclough (Hon. Solicitor)
- Committee:**  
Richard Bradfield, Margaret Clarke, Sara Gyngell, Patty Harrison, Mike Nash,  
Sylvia Oliver, Mark Robinson, Mark Waddell
- Councillors:**  
Clare Curran, Tim Hall, Lynne Brooks, Raj Haque & Paul Kennedy
- Attendees:**       142
- Guests:**           Daniel Elkeles - Chief Executive, Epsom & St.Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust  
Cllr Colin Kemp - Cabinet Member, Surrey County Council Highways  
Mohamed Ragab - Trading Standards  
Linda Tippelt - Leatherhead & Fetcham Flood Action Group

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and advised that the meeting would follow the same format as last year. She advised that no questions would be taken during the meeting rather the meeting would end in an open forum thereby allowing time for everyone to engage with the organisations, councillors and the committee who would be pleased to answer any questions or discuss any concerns.

The Chairman introduced all the guests, councillors and committee members.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Committee members Jane Merry and Damian Addy, and Tree Warden Betty Williams.

**3. COMMITTEE REPORTS - Presented by the Chairman**

Who reported: It had been another busy year and in many ways a transitional one with things changing and the goalposts moving, both for our community and the Association. The realisation of local budget cuts and the impact that might have on us as an Association being relevant, but also realising that perhaps we need to clarify people's ever-increasing expectation of us. Our role as an Association has naturally changed over time - and needs to continue to do so - if it is to have a valued place within the community. But we are, in essence, a team of resident volunteers that give our time willingly, working with limited resources and, by default, a decreasing minority cannot continue to fully support the majority without growth.

She went on to say that if we all want to be part of a community and not simply live at a location then, we all need to work together in supporting each other. However, in the increasingly insular and fast world in which we live, communication and participation appears to be more remote and electronic rather than physical. Therefore, filling the gaps when members of the committee stand down and finding new people to step in and help us is becoming an ever-increasingly mammoth task but the future lies in the communities' hands.

**Membership** had seen a transition during the year as it is the first year we have operated in essence without a team of Road Stewards - the very good people who used to knock on doors, collect monies and deliver our newsletters. The committee themselves covered this latterly, but it is a huge task for us to fulfil as a small team and one that we simply cannot sustain or commit to moving forward. So with the inclusion of advertising now within the newsletters, we have made them virtually self funding, affording us the ability to outsource their distribution.

The preferred electronic PayPal payments continue to go from strength-to-strength but obviously without door-to-door collections, the onus is very much on the residents' own motivation to join and renew.

It is a great lift to the team to be able to see we are supported and valued and the subscription fee is really the only way we can generally gauge whether the community feels we are doing a good job or not.

The Chairman said we will continue to have the three forms of payment - PayPal, the Drop Box and Post, but with the introduction of new Data Protection Regulations in May of this year, the parameters of the data collected moving forward will change and only email addresses will be captured. In line with this, members will need to clearly OPT IN if they wish to receive the 'members only email updates', otherwise they will remain anonymous donors.

We see emails as a key communication tool and hope to include more and more 'members only' information as time moves on. Switching over to 'mail chimp' last year, which is a secure, industry-approved email platform with no advertising links, Mark Waddell has taken on the mantle moving forward. It is instant, cost-effective and enables us to pass on information easily, most importantly that of our own Join & Renew links at the end of each membership year. To ensure we receive your email details correctly, the Join & Renew PayPal links are the most reliable and our preferred option as it is completely electronic - handwritten forms are often difficult to decipher.

Our Membership Secretary also manages our social media accounts - Facebook and Twitter - and the Chairman asked those residents who are not signed up to do so. This is another growing medium for the FRA where we can reach out and instantly communicate with the community and we are very grateful to Jen Addy for managing this. We are moving with the times and trying to be more paperless and green but, depending on your outlook, not everyone may see this as progress.

The Chairman then moved on to **trees**.

Sadly, Mike Nash who has been our tree and transport officer for over twelve years is stepping down. He has been highly regarded in his field by colleagues in MVDC and has done some amazing works for the community over the years, for which we are very grateful. He will be very much missed but I feel he has earned his retirement badge with honours. She wished him a long and happy retirement and the residents gave a round of applause.

Having established a Tree Warden Scheme, Betty Williams, one of our Tree Wardens, will continue his work. The annual Section 106 tree planting continued this year and an additional 17 trees were planted -15 new ones and 2 replacements.

However, due to local spending cuts within MVDC, the onus has now fallen to the FRA to maintain all saplings under two years old, so the tree teams has been very busy checking, tending and staking these young trees to secure their future. Betty will also start working with the new Mole Valley Tree Inspector when appointed, who is set to make an inventory and inspection of all MVDC's some 50,000 trees.

The **Brighter Fetcham** team, Sylvia Oliver and Margaret Clarke, have been equally busy. Growing their team to encompass some additional carers who have adopted other planters outside of the main shopping areas, the team are doing a fantastic job. Inspiring in their unity, they rope in family and friends and get the job done, which was particularly poignant when we unfortunately had some mindless vandalism to the main planters last year.

Their latest recruit has been a lovely young man doing some community service for his Duke of Edinburgh Award, a fantastic testament that they are reaching out to the whole community. Already half way through his commitment, we would welcome more likeminded young people to do the same. The Brighter Fetcham team had recently cleaned the 'Fetcham Village' sign, on the brick wall in Cobham Road by the Mill Pond - just another little job they have just undertaken.

Patty Harrison, our environment officer, too has been instrumental in her initiatives, starting Fetcham's own litter pick group last year, now an established group with all the necessary equipment obtained from the Council. They meet one Sunday in every month at 10am outside Greenwise in the village. It is all very casual with a 'no commitment, just show up when you can' approach. People can simply sign-up to Patty's email group and she then lets you know the dates. She is also working with other groups and organisations towards improving the environment and maintenance of The Splash and island.

The Chairman then handed over to Tim Waller for his reports on Planning and Medical matters.

In response to requests for help with greater visibility of **Planning** Applications throughout Fetcham, last year, Richard Bradfield set up a one-stop-shop Planning page on our website. The page comprises a list, updated weekly, showing all Fetcham applications newly published, open for comment, awaiting decision or under appeal. A three month history of Approved and Refused applications is also included.

For residents who do not have access to the internet, a list of new and open applications is also displayed on our main notice board outside Sainsbury's.

The Tudor Motors site saga continues. The decision in December by the MVDC Planning Committee to refuse the latest planning application is currently subject to appeal. Both the FRA and a majority of Fetcham's Traders have submitted representations to the Appeal Inspector in support of the Appeal. The outcome of the Appeal is expected sometime within the next three months.

During the past year, the FRA has supported and advised a number of groups of residents in their objections to aspects of development proposals. Even when unable to have unsympathetic development refused, concessions and amendments to plans are often won ahead of final decisions to Approve.

We all need to be aware of the pressure that MVDC is under both to provide low-cost housing and to fulfil central government building objectives during the forthcoming years.

A recent application by SES WATER to construct new and replacement buildings on the Elmer Works site prompted a considerable number of responses, principally from Leatherhead residents but did, however, include Fetcham residents. In response, the FRA, objected to the visibility of the buildings. Revised plans seek to better camouflage proposed and existing buildings. Objections by some to the storage of necessary chemicals in close proximity to Fetcham residences are being countered by assurances that no increase of the current inventory is proposed. Objections continue, so an early decision is unlikely.

Although not on our 'patch' the FRA has objected to applications to allow change of use and permanent use of the Gypsy & Traveller site off River Lane.

Moving onto **Medical** matters. As has been reported in the local newspapers, the Molebridge Practice, who have a North Leatherhead surgery and a Fetcham surgery in Cannon Grove, announced their sale to the IMH Group, a larger healthcare organisation. Little information about the change has been provided directly to patients, which has understandably caused patients great concern. Prompted by the Fetcham surgery being contacted by ourselves and others, Molebridge posted a letter on-line because they were unable to fund the cost of writing to all patients on an individual basis. So we have attempted to spread the word by publishing that letter on our social media feeds and placing it on our notice boards for residents who do not use the Internet. We believe that the Molebridge practice intends to work with their Patient Participation Group over the coming months to assist and further the communication links with patients.

Last year also saw a question mark raised in the community over the future of the hospitals under the Epsom & St Helier NHS Trust. We subsequently hosted a well-supported presentation by Daniel Elkeles and his colleagues from the Trust at Fetcham Park House. We are very pleased that Daniel is here again this evening to provide us with an update on the various issues and to give those residents who perhaps missed that meeting an opportunity to hear the proposals and ask questions later.

Mr Waller reminded everyone that since several Practices in this area are under tremendous pressure for appointments, we still have the ability to book an out-of-hours appointment at the Leatherhead Community Hospital for weekday evenings (6pm – 9pm) or weekend mornings (9am – 1pm). These appointments can be booked either through your own surgery, or by phoning 01372 738373 during the allotted hours.

The Chairman then continued reporting on **Community Events**. New for last year was a new style Christmas event with no road closure, Fetcham's first Santa's Grotto, an elf trail, best shop window competition, stalls, tombola and much more. A great success that was well supported by residents and traders alike. Staging this event takes an inordinate amount of work as it is not simply the Christmas Fayre. It also encompasses putting up and taking down the Christmas trees and lights, which requires many months of preparation from ALL the ladies of the Christmas sub-committee. But steeped in the history of our village community is the arrival of the village tree which is to be celebrated so we endeavour to continue this tradition.

The Chairman formally thanked Associate Members Geoff Underdown, Rob Dempsey, Alan Clarke, Olly Oliver and Diana Morgan as well as all the other committee members for their tremendous help and support in making this event a success.

The **mill pond**, was an enormous project for the FRA which had been started but was not completed by the AGM last year. It was fantastic to see not only the finished product but also the many congratulations and thank you's we received from residents who have clearly enjoyed the new space. She thanked Richard Bradfield who dealt with all the administration from environment to planning and

contractors, without whose tenacity she was not sure the project would have been completed. Our **next project** has not yet been decided and funding options have yet to be applied for and utilised, but we are working on it. As is always the case, the administration trail and application for such things is ten times as much work as the physical project itself.

We have continued to **support the schools**, with the purchase of a new outdoor toy storage unit for the infants school as they had two units vandalised in short succession. Patty Harrison and the Chairman enjoyed a delightful afternoon at Oakfield school to participate in our annual **Bursary** presentations, and the Chairman also had the pleasure of presenting the **Community Award** last year to 'Kim', the wonderful pharmacist at Boots.

**Road parking** continues to be a contentious and ongoing issue in the village, often by non-residents but also by residents themselves in some cases. It seems some driveways and roads are simply not big enough to absorb the amount of cars we all have. We have had issues from commercial vehicles to family cars and residents were asked to use their own drives as a priority, if they have one, communicate and adopt good old fashioned neighbourly attitudes.

The village is now set to encompass a total 1.5hr parking restriction, with the inclusion of Orchard Parade. The parking issues opposite Sainsbury's on the kerb outside Tudor Motors has been well documented and repeatedly highlighted. We are also too well aware that our close proximity to Leatherhead and the Station also makes us a viable road parking destination for commuters, conscious also that this coupled with the proposed increase in car parking charges, may have a negative effect on us. She asked residents to continue to send their feedback. The MVDC parking review is an annual occurrence, albeit working 12 months in arrears, but we will continue to put your concerns forward.

**Grass verge cutting** was also a bone of contention last year with many complaints. MVDC has now passed the contract back to Surrey CC who have in turn have awarded the contract for this year to Bill Kear. However, urban cuts will be reduced from 7 to 4, so be prepared. On a positive note, SES Water have, at our request, cut back the hedgerow along Cobham Road which relinquishes the pavement back in favour of the pedestrian. With various reports last year from dog walkers and parents with pushchairs struggling to use the pavements by overgrown hedges from peoples' properties, residents were urged to play their part and trim back any trees and shrubbery to their boundary. They should not be overhanging or obscuring the public highway.

**Transform Leatherhead** continues to forge forward with outline planning being sought for Claire House and James House. Short-term works to the Swan Centre have been approved for replacement lifts, refurbished toilets and improvements to car park access, alongside potential new retail units and viability studies to evaluate further investments and improvements.

The FRA will continue to be part of BLeAF, a joint action group of local Resident Associations, namely Bookham, Leatherhead, Ashted and Fetcham, working together exchanging information between the villages on the best ways to try and tackle common issues.

As mentioned on our 'What We Do' report, we will continue to try and maintain our village traditions going, keep the village in bloom, be an information source, pass on your concerns and keep Fetcham on the map - endeavouring to ensure we receive the services and funds available to independent communities

#### 4. **GUEST INTRODUCTIONS**

Mrs Taylor introduced **Mohamed Ragab from Trading Standards** who gave a brief introduction on "Friends Against Scams", as under:

I am a volunteer speaker with Trading Standard of Bucks & Surrey work on the "Friends Against Scams" initiative. The main aim of the initiative is to spread the word and awareness about the danger of scams. Of the shocking figures that everyone needs to know are that 53% of over-60's are targeted, £5 - £10 billion is lost every year because of scams. No matter what is your education, social status or age, we are all vulnerable to be targeted by one or more of the ways of scams. No matter what type of scam, all those who practice this activity are criminals.

The four main ways of scams are via post, phone, face-to-face and on-line. As we are all online most of the time, the big advice would be not to open emails from anonymous senders. If it happened and you opened the email and the sender is still unknown to you, please do not display attachments or open provided links because this is how they plant viruses, so when you display the attachment or open the link they can cause damage to your computer or cell phone and steal important information and details.

Top tips to protect yourself and others:

1. Never disclose security details
2. Don't assume that everyone is genuine
3. Don't be rushed
4. Listen to your instincts
5. Stay in control

For more information on the "Friends Against Scams" initiative, visit [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk) and for advice or to report suspicious activity, please call Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline 0345 404 0506.

The Chairman then introduced **Cllr Colin Kemp, Cabinet Member, Surrey County Council Highways**. A summary of his talk is set out below:

Colin Kemp gave a very information talk on what is happening within Surrey Highways, explaining how they are struggling for enough funding to do the job and he naturally took some flack on the subject of potholes. But positively he informed us that an extra £5 million had been pledged to try and address the short term repair of some major roads, with Councillors gathering information and lists of the priority roads. So although the Association would naturally put roads forward for Fetcham, as a community, the Chairman urged all to also highlight the roads in Fetcham they felt needed attention.

#### 5. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer, Alan Pooley, presented the annual accounts, as per attached, and said he would be happy to answer any questions in the open forum afterwards.

Mr. Pooley proposed Barry Jones to be appointed as Examiner to undertake the audit next year. This was Seconded by Tim Waller and carried unanimously.

#### 6. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2018/19**

The Chairman announced that Damian Addy was standing down as a full committee member, Mike Nash, as mentioned previously, was retiring and standing down as well as Jane Merry who was retiring after more than four years service. Marion Doherty, Hon. Secretary was also sadly standing down. She went on to say that she had been a superb secretary, stalwart supporter, and her organisational skills had made her invaluable to the team as well as to her personally. She thanked Marion and Mike for all for their support and went on to present them with farewell gifts.

Cllr Tim Hall proposed Susanne Taylor as Chairman. Seconded by Mr Waller and carried unanimously.

Mrs Taylor thanked Cllr Hall and then continued with the election of Officers, as under:

Tim Waller as Honorary Vice-Chairman.  
Alan Pooley as Honorary Treasurer  
Jen Addy as Honorary Membership Secretary  
James Fairclough as Honorary Solicitor

The following existing committee members were willing to stand for re-election:

Richard Bradfield  
Sylvia Oliver  
Margaret Clarke  
Mark Waddell  
Patty Harrison  
Mark Robinson

Additionally, during the course of the year, Sara Gyngell was co-opted onto the committee and she also stood for election.

The Chairman recommended and proposed them all for re-election. This was seconded by Cllr Raj Haque and all nominations were carried unanimously.

#### 7. **GUEST INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman introduced **Linda Tippelt, Chairman of Leatherhead & Fetcham Flood Action Group**, and her talk was as under:

The Flood Action Group had its beginnings in 2014 when the residents who were flooded in Fetcham & Leatherhead on Christmas Eve 2013 met regularly in the aftermath, to give each other support and we also held a number of meetings with the agencies to help to understand why we flooded.

It was clear from our discussions that building good communications between the agencies and residents was going to be a key factor in helping to protect residents in the future, especially in providing early warnings and resilience.

During 2016 the National Flood Forum made contact with the residents who had been affected in the area and suggested that a Flood Action Group be set up. The NFF is a charity, their website describes them as "... works to support the recovery of victims of flooding, to improve resilience of communities to future flood threat and speaks out to highlight the plight of flood victims and the need for adequate flood prevention investment."

At a meeting held by The National Flood Forum for local residents in November 2016 the Leatherhead and Fetcham Flood Action Group was formed. 13 residents represent Fetcham & Leatherhead, most of whom were flooded in 2013. Our aim is to be a focus for residents on Flooding & Resilience and to improve and maintain communication between residents and agencies.

The Group, including our Surrey County Councillor Tim Hall, holds regular meetings both as a group, and at quarterly Multi Agency Meetings (MAMs) held with representatives of the Environment Agency, utility companies, SCC, MVDC and other relevant agencies, to ensure that the views of local residents are heard and to foster good relationships with the agencies.

Up until now we have had the help of the National Flood Forum Community Flood Resilience Officer for Surrey, who helps us put together a Flood Action Plan, although she will be leaving us to go it alone in May. The Flood Plan comprises about 15 questions which are sent to the agencies ahead of meeting with them. The questions are wide-ranging and represent concerns that have been raised since we flooded. At the Multi Agency Meeting we pose each question to the relevant agency or agencies and they provide information on actions or solutions to each issue. After each MAM the Flood Action Group reviews the Plan for items that have been resolved and replaces them with new questions on issues that have arisen or been brought to our attention by local residents. Unresolved issues stay on the Flood Plan to prompt agencies to continue to work on solving them and remain until the Flood Action Group is satisfied with the outcome.

We have held 3 Multi Agency Meetings so far, the next being in July. The main issues that we have been involved with that affect Fetcham are the proposals for building a Middle Mole Alleviation Scheme, the flooding of the tow path between Cannon Grove and Mill Lane this winter and the maintenance of drains and sewers.

If there is an issue that you would like to talk with us about, please come and see us on our stand here tonight. You can pick up our contact details and our website address. We also have leaflets on obtaining insurance for homes affected by flooding, so do come and have a chat with us.

Contact details for Leatherhead & Fetcham Flood Action Group:  
Email: [lfagrp@gmail.com](mailto:lfagrp@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://leatherheadandfetchamfloodgroup.wordpress.com/>

Mrs Taylor then introduced the final guest, **Daniel Elkeles, Chief Executive of Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust.**

Daniel Elkeles gave a brilliant update on all they had been up to in the past 12 months, an update on the procedures and application for funding, a host of information, all of which are on the website site for reference.

<https://www.epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk/epsom-and-st-helier-2020-2030>

## 8. CLOSE

Following the conclusion of the formal part of the evening at 8.45pm, the Chairman reiterated that the FRA has key vacancies for a Secretary, and individuals to help uphold and manage our information sources. Someone with IT skills or someone who is willing to learn, who can help manage the website and publish and produce the newsletters twice a year.

Mrs Taylor went on to thank the team for their continuing support and hard work again this year, she thanked the guests for attending and supporting the FRA and, finally, thanked the residents for attending the meeting. She then directed everyone to the John Rumble Hall to enjoy a drink kindly donated by Sainsbury's and have a chat with Mohamed Ragab from Trading Standards, Colin Kemp from Surrey Highways, and Linda Tippelt from the Flood Action Group. Daniel Elkeles remained in the main hall for a Q&A session. The committee members and Councillors mixed between both halls to answer any questions or queries. She advised that the committee's details are all available on the FRA website should anyone wish to make contact at a later date.

Susanne Taylor (Mrs)  
Chairman