



Fetcham Residents Association

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Fetcham Residents Association
held via Zoom at 7.30pm on Thursday 18 June 2020**

Present: Officers

Tim Hall (President and SCC Councillor)	Alan Pooley (Honorary Treasurer)
Tim Waller (Chairman)	James Fairclough (Honorary Solicitor)
Richard Bradfield (Honorary Vice-Chairman)	Phyllis Avory (Minute Secretary)
Ian Anderson (Honorary Vice-Chairman)	Sue Joyce (Membership Secretary)

Committee Members

Patrick Bisgood	Patty Harrison
Caroline Cardew-Smith	Sylvia Oliver
Margaret Clarke	Dan Phillips
Martin David	Mark Robinson
Sara Gyngell	Betty Williams

Councillors

Cllr Clare Curran - SCC	Cllr Paul Kennedy - MVDC
Cllr Lynne Brooks - MVDC	

Participants: 35

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 88th Annual General Meeting of the Fetcham Residents Association (FRA). He acknowledged that this was an unusual, abbreviated meeting being conducted for the first time on a virtual basis.

This meeting was recorded to assist the Minute Secretary.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from: Cllr Tracy Keeley (MVDC), Cllr Raj Haque (MVDC), Tony Rozier (Committee member), Linda Tippelt (Committee member).

3. MINUTES OF LAST AGM

Minutes approved of the AGM held on 17 April 2019.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR 2019-2020

• CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that this AGM would highlight those principle topics that he undertook to review when he took over from his predecessor in April 2019. They were as follows:

a) **FRA Governance**, and in particular the FRA's website and communications, both within the committee and with the members, together with our membership initiatives. Our two Vice Chairmen, Richard Bradfield and Ian Anderson, together with our local IT firm Tekmate, have re-vamped all aspects of the website to make it both very informative and user-friendly. This upgrade has greatly improved communication with our members and with the local community as a whole. Updates on the website and social media are being posted on a daily basis. The Chairman thanked both Ian Anderson (IA) and Richard Bradfield (RB) for the work that they have put in on this during the last 9 months. IA and RB have provided more detailed information on both Communications and Planning respectively in separate reports to follow.

b) **Membership.**

Following the last AGM, Sue Joyce (SJ) took over the mantle of Membership Secretary and has doubled our membership numbers during the past twelve months. The Chairman thanked Sue for all of her efforts.

The FRA's objective is to achieve membership of at least 50% of the residents of Fetcham. The monies raised will help the FRA give more support to projects and causes in the village. Money has been given this year to both the Infant and Junior school in the village as well as to Paul Barker - Community Coronavirus Care and to Mid Surrey Community Fridges (see also (e) below). Both of the latter have been highly involved in helping vulnerable Fetcham residents during the Covid-19 crisis. It remains the case however that membership levels are quite low in several roads and this is currently being addressed. SJ has re-instigated Road Stewards to help raise our profile and win new members.

Subscriptions can now be paid directly online and this is proving very successful.

c) **The Committee**

During the last twelve months FRA has been delighted to welcome new members including:

- Dan Phillips, who works closely with Sue Joyce and Ian Anderson to link all aspects of social media with our website with the result that we are reaching increasing numbers of people in the local community.
- Patrick Bisgood, who is our Norbury Park Liaison member. He also dovetails with Richard Bradfield and Martin David on Planning and Highways.

Additionally, Kate Pocock had to stand down as Secretary for maternity reasons. The Chairman said that he would like a volunteer to step forward from our Membership to assume this post which today is seen as a co-ordinator's role (see also (f) below).

The Chairman recorded his grateful thanks to all of the committee for their support during the previous twelve months.

The Chairman also thanked our President Tim Hall (Surrey County Councillor) as well as our other Surrey and Mole Valley District Councillors who have attended the majority of our monthly meetings. All give good advice on many issues that affect the Local Community and the FRA is very grateful to them for this.

d) The past 12 months

- (i) The Association has been very active (together with our neighbouring residents' associations) in highlighting the serious flaws contained in **Mole Valley Council's Draft Local Plan**. This is the blueprint document for planning matters in our area for the next 15 years, so it is vital that the Association influences the process and protects Fetcham's interests as far as possible. The FRA submitted a detailed written response to the Council and organised a public meeting on 01 March in the Village Hall. Key decision making figures from the Council were present and went away in no doubt as to the strength of feeling against some of the proposals. In particular, the Local Plan process has highlighted the concern in the community that the undeveloped land at Fetcham Springs, between Cobham Road and the railway line, is protected and enhanced for the public good. The FRA is now committed to doing all it can to support these efforts.

The Association is also deeply concerned at the weight of development planned for the north of the district, much of it on Greenbelt land, which will severely impact our already stretched infrastructure.

The revised Draft Local Plan is expected later this year and the FRA will continue to monitor the process closely. All this work has been in addition to the ongoing monitoring of all planning applications as they arise.

- (ii) The Chairman reported that he was pleased to see the progress at the Molebridge GP practice in Cannonside, which was taken over by new partners last summer. This Practice now enjoys the financial backing of the Epsom & St Helier Hospital Trust, and the Cannonside surgery has been refurbished.
- (iii) As mentioned above the Chairman is delighted with the progress made on our Membership subscriptions, and the action taken on the FRA website. The Association was also pleased once again to host a Christmas event in the village, and the Chairman thanked our village traders for their support.
- (iv) The FRA has been lobbying continually on the state of our roads in Fetcham. Also together with our Councillors, the Association achieved the speed zoning in Bell and School Lanes with associated bumps to slow traffic flows, thereby protecting our children from potential accidents.
- (v) The failure of developers to make progress on rebuilding the Tudor Motors site continues to be a drag on the trading prospects in the village. The FRA will continue to lobby the council and the owners of the site for a resolution.

e) Covid-19

There has been an amazing community response to the crisis caused by this disease and the committee is doing its best to play its part. The website is being used to regularly update residents on help and services available locally, including the services being offered by Fetcham village traders.

The FRA has also been delighted to make cash donations to the local volunteer help group Community Coronavirus Care, and to Mid Surrey Community Fridges.

The FRA committee continues to hold monthly committee meetings, but these have moved online.

f) The next twelve months.

In these challenging times the FRA requires more input to its existing committee structure. As mentioned at item 4(c) above there is a requirement for a Co-ordinator/Secretary to assist with the internal and external communications. That person should have good computer and digital skills and be able to assist with the collation of the bi-annual Newsletter.

It's expected that for the foreseeable future the monthly FRA committee meetings will continue online via Zoom.

The Chairman asked for members' help to communicate effectively with ALL of our Fetcham residents.

Meanwhile the FRA committee will continue to push forward with its priorities of growing the membership and making sure that the Community's voice is heard on the matters that affect quality of life, such as planning, roads and health.

In concluding the Chairman again took the opportunity of thanking every member of the Committee for their support and ideas and added that he looks forward to representing the Community in the future.

- **PLANNING REPORT**

The following report was prepared by Richard Bradfield. It could be found on the FRA Website prior to the AGM and is currently still available there. It was not read out during the AGM:

Planning Applications

Buildings' development within Fetcham continues to be monitored by the FRA.

During the past year (Apr 2019 – March 2020) there have been some 240 Planning Applications for sites within Fetcham published for consideration by MVDC's Planning Department. Of this total, 66 were specifically applications to manage, reduce or fell trees subject to TPO's (Tree Protection Orders).

These headline numbers suggest a significant 40% increase of proposed property development within Fetcham over the year, much of which has been approved. As reported at the FRA's 2019 AGM, there were 'only' 170 applications in total during the previous 12 months.

Much of the increase in building activity appears to have been in extending existing properties sideways, rearwards, upwards and even forwards as owners seek alternatives to finding and moving to larger houses. This form of development does create its own issues by gradually altering street views, increasing building density, reducing green space, and increasing paved areas, overlooking, noise and light pollution ... all eventually impacting upon the residential character and ambience of Fetcham.

There is some lessening of infill proposals, due perhaps to an ever-dwindling availability of sites commercially suitable for development. Those infill developments that we are seeing, are typically seeking to build either large high-end executive housing or high density multiple units.

During the past year, we have actively supported residents' objections to 8 applications. 1 was subsequently WITHDRAWN, 4 appropriately REFUSED, 2 were still APPROVED and 1 is yet TO BE DECIDED. We also followed 2 Appeals against REFUSAL of applications, about which we had already objected, reiterating those objections to Inspectors. 1 Appeal was ultimately DISMISSED and 1 was ALLOWED.

Traffic Calming

When initial proposals for Traffic Calming in the vicinity of our schools on Bell Lane and School Lane were first notified by Surrey Highways, there was a mixed response from residents and parents. In conjunction with our District and County Councillors we met with Surrey Highways 'on-site' to discuss the plans. Concerns about the locations of some of the measures proposed in School Lane and of the need to maintain surface water run off to drain gullies were aired and addressed in the final details later implemented.

We also asked during the meeting for consideration to be given to extending the 20mph zone to along the full lengths of The Street and School Lane, as well as along the interconnection stretch of Cobham Road. We have been considering that the calming of traffic along that length of Cobham Road, particularly at the bend outside the Orchard Cottage Dental Surgery and where it passes between the parades of shops would be significantly beneficial for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.

Regrettably funding even for the required monitoring and surveying of those roads prevented the idea from being considered further. We did also ask that the centre line road marking in Cobham Road, outside the Dental Surgery could be very readily off-set to help avoid head-on encounters of traffic at that location. Unfortunately, no action on that either.

Potholes

We have in the past few weeks been suggesting to SCC Highways a change in the criteria for filling potholes occurring within 1 meter of the kerb of all highway carriageways that do not have separate designated cycleways. We are proposing that potholes reported in these zones of 2cm or more in depth should be promptly filled, just as they would be if occurring in a designated cycleway, and not have to be at least 4cm deep before being prioritised for action as applies to the main carriageways.

The FRA would be interested in residents' views on such a proposal.

Tudor Motors

The site continues to be a source of extreme frustration to residents, traders, the FRA, as well as to MVDC Planning Officers.

With the current unlikely prospect of an early start of work to actually build out the approved plans for the site, we have in conjunction with and the support of both County and Local Councillors, been applying pressure on the site owners to improve the appearance and safety of the site, as has MVDC also been imposing Enforcement Notices. As we have seen in the last few days, some improvements have been achieved. We are now lobbying to have the redundant signage taken down that remains outside the hoardings.

Local Plan

The Public Meeting which the FRA arranged on 01 March to discuss aspects of the Local Plan affecting Fetcham directly and indirectly was extremely well attended. Our MP, Councillors and Planning Officials present all went away with no doubt about residents' very clearly expressed and strongly held views on the protection of our Greenbelt in the north of the District and particularly in the preservation of Fetcham Springs as a natural habitat.

It is the FRA's intention to establish and lead a team of representatives of relevant bodies to consider how Fetcham Springs might be secured from any threat of development.

Meanwhile we await MVDC's response to the relatively significant level of responses they received during the consultation. Significant amendments to the Local Plan as presented may be expected...we certainly believe they are needed.

Planning Issues and the FRA Website

As part of the relaunch during the year of our website, a more visual presentation of the Planning Applications has been attempted. We hope that these are useful. We have also provided scope for posts about particular planning issues of note to be available and readily located within an altogether busier, broader and hopefully useful range of content.

Thanks

My personal thanks to **Patrick Bisgood & Martin David** for their increasing input and involvement in planning issues, to **Betty Williams** for the tlc administered to Fetcham's public trees, and to **Mark Robinson** for the weekly insertion of the latest Planning Application lists into the FRA's noticeboard outside Sainsbury's. Thank you all.

• COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The following report was prepared by Ian Anderson. It could be found on the FRA Website prior to the AGM and is currently still available there. It was not read out during the AGM:

Summary

Significant progress was made in the past year on the objective of improving our communications with Members. Regular communications are also vital for raising awareness of FRA activities among residents in Fetcham who are not current Members, but may be persuaded to join in the future.

The FRA communicates with Members in a variety of ways and many of these channels were enhanced in the past 12 months.

Website - fetchamresidents.co.uk

This was relaunched in the summer of 2019. Agreement was reached with Tekmate in Fetcham village to carry out the work of ending the relationship with the previous supplier, securing the domain name and email addresses, and redesigning the site on the widely used WordPress platform.

The website is now an effective 'public face' for the FRA.

- It explains the purpose of the FRA to existing and new residents.
- It carries news items which we believe will be of interest to residents, such as public consultations on local planning and healthcare.
- It features a bespoke mapping tool which allows residents to locate and view planning applications in their immediate area.
- It acts as a 'noticeboard' for local groups.
- It allows residents to easily contact, or pass comments to the FRA Committee, via email.

At time of writing, the website has had more than 3,400 visitors and is clearly achieving its aim of reaching many residents on a regular basis.

It has been especially useful during the Covid-19 crisis as a way of passing to residents essential public messaging regarding help for vulnerable groups, and the status of local services. We have also been posting the public messaging from our local authorities.

Social Media

The FRA maintains a Facebook page. This carries links to items on the website and greatly extends our reach into the community. This again raises our profile, and the comments it attracts gives us an insight into community thinking.

Newsletter

This is published in Spring and Autumn and is delivered free of charge to every household in Fetcham, more than 3,000 homes.

The Newsletter was redesigned in 2018, with 16 pages of news, features and information about the village. Editorial input is provided free by FRA members and printing and distribution costs are fully covered by advertising from local traders.

We are indebted to the strong support the Newsletter receives from local business.

As a printed publication with a wide distribution, the Newsletter is intended to raise the profile of the FRA, especially among non-members, and to raise residents' awareness of issues which will affect them, such as the Local Plan.

The Newsletter is also the primary link with residents who do not have access to our website or social media feed.

Email updates

Members who choose to supply us with their email address also receive regular email updates alerting them to matters we believe will be of interest.

This has proven to be a very useful tool, especially where the FRA wants to relay information to Members quickly, such as in the present Covid-19 emergency.

Analytical data suggests that more than two-thirds of members are opening the emails and at least a quarter of recipients are following links through to our website.

We will seek to build on all of these communication channels in the coming year.

• TREASURER'S REPORT

The following report was prepared by Alan Pooley. It could be found on the FRA Website prior to the AGM and is currently still available there. It was not read out during the AGM:

For 2019, the Association had a satisfactory financial year ending with only a slight deficit of £69. The Statement of Accounts is available on the FRA Website.

One significant item of expenditure, the manufacture and installation of the Display Board at 'The Splash', was covered by a Mole Valley District Council grant. Another one was the cost of preparing and distributing the two Newsletters that was covered this time by the income from traders' advertisements obtained by the Chairman's strenuous efforts and liaison with them.

Partly due to the uncertainty as to when the redevelopment of the garage site would commence, the Christmas Tree festival was a much lower key affair and the expenditure correspondingly considerably less than on previous occasions. The Association did however benefit from a grant of £449 from Mole Valley District Council and an unsolicited grant of £500 from the Leatherhead Chamber of Commerce, both of which were much appreciated.

The normal regular expenditure in running the Association is broadly similar to previous years and we again provided Oakfield School with the Bursary of £260, part of which originated in memory of the late John Piper, Chairman in the early 1990's.

The Brighter Fetcham expenditure includes the stocking and maintenance of the various planters around the village plus costs associated with the monthly Litter Picks. Further work on the maintenance of trees in our locality is on-going and necessitated further expenditure of ca£400.

The Chairman and committee decided after consultation that an upgraded Website on a new template was needed to improve both internal and external communication amongst our members and the Community as a whole. TekMate in the village undertook to produce this in conjunction with the Vice Chairmen and the arrangement with our existing provider was eventually terminated. In the changeover there were initially technical problems associated with the access to PayPal to pay a subscription so income from that source was reduced during 2019 – now rectified. Furthermore, a facility to pay by bank transfer was made available early in 2020 and in future will be the first option on the FRA's Join/Renew page on the website.

The Accounts have been accordingly signed and I recommend that they be approved and adopted.

End of the Treasurer's Report.

The Chairman thanked Barry Jones (FCCA), Hon Auditor for examining and agreeing the Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2019.

The accounts are available on the website.

The Treasurer proposed that the accounts be adopted. Seconded by Betty Williams. Carried unanimously.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2020/21

A list of committee members showing their roles within the committee was provided prior to the meeting.

The Chairman proposed Councillor Tim Hall as President. Seconded by Claire Curran and unanimously carried. Tim Hall thanked Alan Pooley for all of his work as FRA Treasurer for well over 30 years. Alan will be retiring from his role at the end of December 2020 when it is anticipated that Tony Rozier will take over.

Tim Hall also thanked Tim Waller as Chairman. Tim Hall said that the Chairman has worked tremendously hard in a variety of fields, for example - in raising the profile of the Association and getting others to assist; innovations including the Newsletter and raising the sponsorship for this; and in all of his work on the NHS which is ongoing.

Tim Hall proposed Tim Waller as Chairman. Seconded by Margaret Clarke. Carried unanimously.

Election en bloc of the following to the FRA Committee:

Richard Bradfield as Honorary Vice Chairman	Betty Williams
Ian Anderson as Honorary Vice-Chairman	Tony Rozier
Alan Pooley as Honorary Treasurer	Patty Harrison
Phyllis Avory as Minute Secretary	Mark Robinson
Sue Joyce as Honorary Membership Secretary	Linda Tippelt
James Fairclough as Honorary Solicitor	Caroline Cardew-Smith
Sarah Gyngell	Martin David
Patrick Bisgood	Dan Phillips
Sylvia Oliver	Barry Jones (FCCA) Accounts Examiner
Margaret Clarke	

Tim Waller as Chairman proposed all of the above for election. Seconded by Tim Hall. A zoom poll was taken and carried unanimously by the members present.

6. AOB

- a) Ian Anderson confirmed that no questions had been received from residents by email.
- b) Mr Layton asked for an update on the Tudor Motor's site. The Chairman replied that after considerable pressure and with the help of Tim Hall, the new hoardings were up. The property has been twice removed from auction. The Chairman added that he has been in touch with a developer who would aim to bring a constructor in. TW hopes to meet with this developer in the week beginning 22 June but he needs to get Mr Hinds of Stonegate/Littleworth Properties along to the meeting. The development had full planning consent in October 2019 but Stonegate then decided to alter the planning to get some of the residents of The Grange (in Bookham) into the ground floor. The Chairman agreed to update when more is known.
- c) The Chairman again asked all participants to think if there was anyone they know who might like to join the committee in the role of secretary/co-ordinator. Help would also be welcome by Ian Anderson for the Newsletter.
- d) Ian Anderson thanked the Chairman for chairing this meeting and thanks to Richard Bradfield for setting up the Zoom meeting including the pop up voting.
- e) The Chairman thanked Ian Anderson and Sara Gyngell for the excellent article and photos on the website about the recent re-opening of various shops in Fetcham following easing of lockdown restrictions. A good way of saying 'welcome back' to our local traders.

7. CLOSE

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the AGM meeting ended at 8.15pm.