

Leomansley Area Residents Association

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 7th November 2015 at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane, Lichfield at 11.30am.

Present: LARA Executive Committee :- G J Lusher (Chairman),
P Ledbury (Vice-Chairman), D Hayward (Treasurer), B Lusher (Secretary)
V Birkett, J Bryan, J Fry, M Gallagher, A Morrison

Members of Public: 28 Residents were in attendance

Guests: Cllr Terry Finn , Cllrs Norma & Brian Bacon, Dan Stredder and Watch Manager Alan Kimber (Lichfield Fire Station)

Apologies: - Cllrs Andy Smith, Iain Eadie, Bob Awty, Auditor Ian Jackson.
PCSO Elaine Ford & LARA members Mr & Mrs Beecher and Mr & Mrs Whittaker, LARA Executive Committee Members P & G King, D Mosson

The meeting was opened at 11.30hrs by Chairman Geoff Lusher who welcomed all those present and introduced the guests and present Committee, and gave a short indication of LARA's objectives and plans for future Community projects.

1. Minutes of the 2014 AGM held on 22nd November 2014

1.1 The minutes of the AGM for 2014 were agreed as a true record of the meeting. Proposed: P Ledbury Seconded : J Fry

2. Financial Report

2.1 Treasurer Dawn Hayward gave her report & presented the LARA accounts for the financial year ending 30th June 2015 and a financial analysis comparing this year with the previous years.

	£
• Income	1512.01
• Expenditure	555.17
• Surplus (Deficit)	956.84

Exceptional Items

• Balance of Grant b/fwd	807.50
• Bulb for Projector	256.56
• Speakers for Darwin Hall	550.94

Reserves

• General reserve	1141.81
• Balance of LDC Grant	0.00
Total	1141.81

Cash at bank 30th June 2015 **£1141.81**

2.2 Chairman asked for proposals that the accounts be adopted.
Proposed: P Ledbury Seconded: S Booth

All agreed and accounts were duly adopted.

2.3 DH went on to explain items that need to come off the bank balance were to costs involved with the AGM itself, being the printing of AGM cards, hire of the Hall, printing of Posters and leaflets, cost of £230.51. She also confirmed that as of 1st November LARA had 76 paid up members and that the balance in the bank as of 1st November was £1142.36, deduct the £230.81 costs for the AGM and the balance was now £911.85.

Mr Henshaw queried the cost of the light bulb for Darwin Hall , and it was explained that when the projectors were purchased a bulb came with it and that this was a back up bulb. Jeff Fry explained that it was just in case someone had hired the room and it blew. However from now on the responsibility of replacing any future bulbs lay with the Committee of Darwin Hall.

2.4 Dawn Hayward then informed all those present that our Auditor Ian Jackson was retiring and therefore we were looking for another independent Auditor to check our Annual Accounts for the AGM in 2016. She explained that we had asked if anyone was interested via the email membership and also on the LARA website but had no success, so if there was anyone in the room willing to take on this role then please see a member of the Executive after the meeting.

In the absence of anyone coming forward the Chairman asked for a vote of confidence from the floor that in this event the Executive Committee would have the power to appoint an independent Auditor after this AGM had been held. This was agreed unanimously.

3. Election of Officers

3.1 The Chairman advised that the present Officers were prepared to stand for a further year. No one had notified the Secretary prior to the meeting that they wished to be considered for any of these roles and therefore asked for a proposal that they be elected 'en bloc'.

Proposed by: V Birkett Seconded by: A Morrison

Accordingly the Officers for 2015/2016 would be Geoff Lusher (Chairman), Paul Ledbury (Vice Chairman), Dawn Hayward (Treasurer), Barbara Lusher (Secretary)

3.2 The remainder of the Committee were also all prepared to stand for another year, those being, V Birkett, J Bryan, A Morrison, D Mosson, M Gallagher, P & G King, S Booth, and J Fry.

These too were all proposed by Geoff Lusher, seconded by P Ledbury and were duly elected en bloc.

The Chairman asked all those present if there were any residents who would like to join the Committee they would be very welcome to join us, and to approach any member of the Committee after the meeting if this was the case.

4. Police Report

PCSO Elaine Ford had visited both the Chairman and Vice Chairman to inform them that unfortunately this year there would be NO police representative available to attend the LARA AGM, but promised she would email the Chairman a full report on crime figures for the Leomansley Area to report at the meeting.

Sadly not only were we disappointed not to have a representative present but more concerned that the promised report from PCSO Elaine Ford never arrived!

However in the absence of any police representative Executive Committee member Sandra Booth (who worked previously for the Police for 30years) had scoured the internet with a view to being able to give some indication of the crime figures in Lichfield.

She managed to find that within the UK the Isle of Scilly was the number one place to live for the least amount of crime, London was listed as number 348 and Lichfield number 36, so we are in a relatively safe environment here in Staffordshire. However there are always the worries of residents for Anti Social behaviour, Drug activity, Theft, Burglaries and criminal damage.

Darwin Park listed no burglaries, no robberies, 1 vehicle stolen, no drug activity, criminal damage 2, anti social behaviour 7 and 1 public order offence.

However she did say that she felt that these figures did not reflect a true perspective but that this was what was stated on the internet.

Christchurch Lane, however had no listings whatsoever!!

Sandra was also able to report on a number of thefts from the public by a few Romanians who approach members of the public (usually women) when they are at cash machines, supermarkets and local shops in Lichfield, if any such situation occurs please inform the police direct by ringing 101.

One resident reported that a set of number plates had been stolen from a VW Beetle car in Darwin Park by two asian looking lads. Another reported on eggs having been thrown at houses during the Halloween Festivities.

Mr Roger Hartley asked why the 'Cuppa with a Copper' was no longer taking place and Sandra assumed that this was due to lack of resources.

5. Fire & Rescue Report

Dan Stredder from Staffordshire Fire & Rescue attended along with the Watch Manager of Lichfield Fire Station and gave the following report. He reported that a lot of fires they attend are due to loose refuse, overflowing bins which could catch fire simply by someone dropping the nub of a cigarette, and house fires whereby people leave pans of oil unattended, where an elderly person has turned the microwave up to high (say for 30 mins instead of 3 mins) and its contents have exploded and caused a fire. He informed us that he had attended 7 of these such fires in the last month alone.

Alan Kimber the Watch Manager also explained the danger of leaving white goods on while you are out of the home, e.g dishwasher, tumble dryer, washing machine, items where filters can get clogged up and if not checked and replaced regularly could cause a fire. He advised only to use these items when you are at home and keep an eye on them.

He informed us that anyone who would like a free home check to contact the Fires Station and a date and time to suit the individual would be agreed and they will come and check any concerns you may have regarding smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and any security concerns you may have.

Its a free service and they can even replace your smoke alarms free of charge as long as they are not hard wired.

Ann Morrison suggested we put this on the LARA website to advise people that this service is available, and Sandra Booth said it was a reassurance not just for the elderly but also those who have young families where distractions can easily occur.

Alan Kimber handed out a leaflet with the telephone number on for those who would like to take up the offer of a visit to discuss any issues you may have.

6. Parking Issues

6.1 Councillor Finn began by announcing that Darwin Park was now finally adopted, but not so for the open space green areas. He reported that although markers had been put on kerbs within the Darwin Park Estate, the completion of any yellow lines would not now be completed until early 2016. Unfortunately as he stated the completion has to adhere to the Highways timescales.

6.2 He informed the audience that he was currently trying to get pedestrian lights installed at the crossroads from Birmingham Road and Davidson Road, just under the railway bridge going out of town, as this would be beneficial and has been a safety concern for children travelling to school in Cherry Orchard.

6.3 Weight restriction along Walsall Road - Cllr Finn informed the attendees that this was still ongoing, and as the cost of 11 new road signs (which is what would be necessary to advise drivers of the change) , it was decided in the interim to now the neck of Walsall Road at the island by Lomburg Avenue to make it more difficult and hopefully deter lorries from turning onto Walsall Road.

It was not just a matter of erecting new signage but positioning of sewers under the roads have to be taken into account. Eventually the bypass will have to run underneath the railway line where at present it is in between Birmingham Road and Falkland Road, not only should a roadway be provided but also the canal which runs along this stretch of land.

Resident Mr Whittenbury asked for clarification from Cllr Finn on the proposed waiting times for parking in Christchurch Lane as he had been given conflicting information. He also asked if it were possible to provide a map showing where the restrictions would be once fully agreed by LDC. Cllr Finn agreed to meet with our Chairman and the Highways officer to obtain this so everyone has a clear vision of the planned notifications.

Geoff Lusher agreed to contact the Highways Officer and along with Councillor Finn to discuss and obtain a definitive map of exactly what would be the parking restrictions along Christchurch Lane and for Darwin Park and once this had been achieved they would be posted on the LARA website for all to see.

7. Hallam Park Development

No date was yet available as to when this development would commence.

8. Friarsgate

Chairman Geoff Lusher raised the issue of the new Friarsgate Development, and explained that LARA had made their concerns known on the initial proposals which incorporated the Tempest Ford Garage and the Bus Station, prior to the development and plans being submitted.

9. Deanslade Farm

Chairman Geoff Lusher then reported on another development where Deanslade Farm is, for those unsure it is the grass and field areas on the right of Falkland Way leading to the island at Birmingham Road. So far LARA have not got involved and the proposals are still in the early planning stage.

10. LARA's Pools Project

Geoff explained that this was the brainchild of one of our members Veronica Birkett and one fully supported by LARA. He introduced Veronica and then she gave a short presentation on what LARA are hoping to achieve.

Pool One (by Waitrose) Remove or cut back the reeds
Remove the Koi Carp
Erect a dipping pool for children
Display a Nature Board explaining what wildlife they
May find in this area

Pool Two (the Duck Pond) To display a Nature Board informing children what
birds are here, bees, kingfisher (yes one has been
seen)

Pool Three So far we would leave this as it is, perhaps erect
some bat boxes or bird boxes

Pool Four (the Swan Pool) Keep the Reeds at an acceptable level so as not the
detract the swans from returning, as they have done
over the past few years.

Carp are very dangerous fish in respect that they endanger everything else within the same pool. Their spawn multiplies and kills any other fish in the same pool, kills toad life, crayfish, etc and we need to get them removed in the safest way possible.

One idea from a resident was to suggest we have an Angling day and get as many anglers to catch the Koi Carp and get rid of them to an environment more suited to their needs.

It was also LARA's intention to perhaps plant some wild flowers on the area at the bottom of Cathedral Walk, and perhaps make it a sensory garden type area for all to enjoy.

To conclude all LARA is trying to achieve is a safe, wildlife haven for numerous animals, birds, fish, bats, etc for the whole Community to enjoy and somewhere educational for the children to go with families at the weekend.

11. Social Event

LARA announced that its next social event would be a Skittles Evening to be held in Darwin Hall on Saturday 6th February 2016. Further details will be emailed to all members.

12. The Future of Darwin Hall

Ann Morrison, member of the LARA Executive Committee who is also involved with Darwin Hall explained that it was opened in 2010 and although owned by Lichfield County Council it is run purely by a group of volunteers.

She announced that there are at least three vacancies for anyone who would be willing to join the Committee of Darwin Hall who could spare perhaps a couple days a month to help with the running and upkeep of the Hall. The Committee only meet three times a year so commitment is not too onerous but the more volunteers they have the better. She informed those present that their next meeting was to be held on Saturday 14th November 2015 at 2pm should anyone like to attend.

The Chairman thanked all those who attended and the meeting was closed at 13.30pm but welcomed an open forum for residents to approach any member of the Committee.