

## **Downshire Hill Residents' Association**

### **Annual General Meeting**

**Wednesday 10 May, 7.00pm**

#### **The Freemasons' Arms**

1. The Chairman welcomed Downshire Hill residents. (Several residents from Hampstead Hill Gardens and Keats Grove also attended, in view of the Abacus Free School discussion.)

Residents were informed of the sudden and untimely death of Tim Pigott-Smith, who had been an appreciative and popular resident.

#### **REPORTS**

- i) **Freemasons' Arms**. (Mark Dennis). There were problems with the pub's rubbish collection disturbing neighbours but changes were in hand which should remedy matters. Noise had been occurring in the forecourt due to customers congregating there after 10.30pm. The manager was aware and would keep on top of the problem. MD reminded any residents encountering problems to notify him, Julian or John, and keeping a careful note of the time and date of the incident.

- ii) **ERUV**. (Stephen Ainger). Stephen reminded everyone that a planning application for an ERUV round Hampstead village was currently being considered. (The application relates to around 82 poles, almost all 5.5 metres in height, linked by nylon wire, in locations from Platts Lane down to Chalk Farm and Swiss Cottage. Of these 82 poles some 40 were around Hampstead. These are identified as being on sites in the following streets:

West Heath Rd; Branch Hill; Redington Rd; Templewood Avenue; Judges Walk; Lower Terrace; Heath Street; Cannon Place; Holford Rd; Well Walk; Christchurch Hill; Willow Rd; Willoughby Rd; Pilgrims Lane; Keats Grove; Downshire Hill; South Hill Park; Parliament Hill; Nassington Rd").

They are designed to form a linked chain around the area, to permit Orthodox members of the Jewish faith to carry on with aspects of their lives at certain times.

For Downshire Hill it would mean 5 ½- metre poles with twine at the lower end of DH. Camden Council had informed us that it was still considering the application for each pair of perimeter poles on a location basis, and was apparently minded to grant approval if it could clarify these issues for all pole locations. It would finally be decided at a public planning committee meeting. The chairman asked for a show of hands as to agreement or not with non-residents not allowed to vote.

By a count of 15 to 7 the meeting did not agree to the ERUV proposal and S D Ainger said he would reflect these views to the Council.

**iii) Recycling.**

Sophie Marple made a careful explanation of the new rubbish collection arrangements for DH. The system was complicated and teething troubles were being experienced. But the system is designed to encourage recycling and to save money. She noted that speed of rubbish pick up is crucial; the dustbin men work to a tight timetable and will henceforth leave behind any bags/bins etc. about which they are uncertain. General non-recyclable rubbish must be in orange bags or correct dustbins which can fit on the back of the lorry. Rubbish must be put out by 7am. Only 3 bags of green waste may be left each week. The cost is £75.00 for a year, March-March so if anyone joins the scheme now they get less than 12 months collection..

SM is happy to advise any residents who are unclear about the new system. Residents who want reassurance about how to compost food and garden waste were invited to inspect the compost system at number 27 (Patricia Morison).

**iv) Hampstead Forum** (Nickie Sinclair). The Forum and Hampstead Plan had been four years in gestation. NS is the street's representative on the Forum. A draft Plan was now about to be submitted. Residents were urged to become members by signing up, which is free, at [www.hampsteadforum.org/join](http://www.hampsteadforum.org/join). The draft Local Plan can be seen at Keats Library and at the Freemasons Arms. It is important as numerous issues relate to DH. Votes from members would be vital. Importantly, plans to alter traffic arrangements in South End Green would see a major increase in traffic, as north-bound traffic would be sent up DH. This is an important issue and all residents were encouraged to be involved.

**v) Swiss Cottage Cycle Highway** (Stephen Ainger). The London Mayor has approved the plan. It appeared that TFL would not consider measures to mitigate the harm of rat-runs spilling over into local streets and this was causing real concern at Church Row and other nearby streets. DH would probably feel the impact.

**vi) Basements** (Stephen Ainger) A new policy had been introduced as a result of the street's action over number 9.

## **2. Old Police Station/Abacus Free School planning application**

Andrew Neale (AN). The first planning application for a 420-pupil school had been comprehensively refused. Most objections identified by DHRA had been upheld. After no revised appeal was submitted by the due date, the committee thought the School had given up. In February, the School wrote that minister level support for a 210 place school had been obtained and a new proposal would be submitted for a 210-pupil school. [Copies of the letter and reply were circulated at the meeting.]

AN told the meeting that, in the DHRA committee's opinion, all the issues which had led them to oppose the first application for a 420 pupil school remained in the case of a 210 school, only somewhat diluted (playground noise, traffic, disruption, pollution, damage to a listed building). The committee also believed that it would be impossible over time to hold the School to remaining at 210 pupils. Given that DHRA had been assured that the Education Funding Agency were adamant that the school needed to have 420 pupils to be economic, it was mysterious that 210 was now deemed viable. Therefore the DHRA committee unanimously opposed the proposal.

Funds had been generously contributed to the first appeal. If a second campaign were necessary, contributions would be requested again. There would be a new political dimension to the campaign, in view of public criticism of the allegedly costly and unsatisfactory Free Schools initiative.

Todd Berman (Hampstead Hill Gardens and not a DHRA member) confirmed that residents of surrounding streets which will feel the impact of the School were opposed to the scheme. The School will be very costly. If the building reverted to the Metropolitan Police, perhaps there was a possibility it could become housing for nurses or police families.

Other residents made forceful objections (noise, traffic, pollution, damage to the EH listed magistrates' court).

A vote by show of hands was taken:

- A. Would the meeting support a proposal for a 210-pupil school which did not grow beyond that? Defeated
- B. Would the meeting support a proposal for 210 on the understanding that in time, it would increase to 420 pupils. Defeated.

## **3. Email addresses.** Mark Dennis asked residents to check with him that they had submitted addresses.

4. **Treasurer report. (Mark Dennis, Treasurer)(MD)**

Contributions had been generously subscribed to the first campaign against the School. £26,000 had been raised, £18,000 spent and details had been circulated to the street earlier in the year. The residue would be refunded on contributions over £1,000, as agreed, and a new campaign started if required. The AGM and Summer Parties were where the bulk of usual membership contributions was spent.

5. **The Summer Party** would be held probably in July, the date had yet to be arranged.

6. **DHRA Committee**. Anyone who wished to join the committee should give names to Stephen. Stephen gave notice that he intended to step down as chair in the near future and encouraged anyone that was interested to let him know.

Signed by S D Ainger (Chair) and

Sec Patricia Morison