

Blackhorse Action Group (BAG)

MINUTES OF 2009 AGM

on: 1 December 2009, 7.30pm

at: Pavilion Centre, Douglas Eyre Playing Fields, E17

Organising Committee Members present

Sue Grant – Secretary

Peter Harms – Planning & Development Lead

Irina Hoss – Communications Lead

Michael Leigh – Chair

Neil Meads – Webmaster

Caroline Molloy - Treasurer

Ortrun Peyn – Membership Secretary

Nuria Rodrigues – Sustainability Lead

Peter Taylor

Others present

Local residents

Guest speakers

High Street Safer Neighbourhood Team (Metropolitan Police): Sgt Phil Steedman and colleague.

Neighbourhood Watch: Andrew Hawkin

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair – Michael Leigh – welcomed all to the meeting.

All local residents are welcome to attend Blackhorse Action Group (BAG) meetings and events. Those resident in the BAG area - ie the area bounded to the North by Forest Road, to the East by Blackhorse Road, to the South by Coppermill, Elmfield and Salop Roads and to the West by the West side of 'Reservoir Number One'- are de facto BAG Members with full voting rights. A map showing the boundaries is on the BAG website at: www.blackhorseactiongroup.org.uk/index.php/about/maps/. Others living in the general locality can become Associate Members.

All BAG events and meetings are advertised on the website. Forms were available for those attending the AGM to give contact details so they could receive directly addressed notices.

2. BUSINESS MATTERS

2.1 Presentation of constitution and amendments

The constitution was on the BAG website. It had been adopted in February 2008 and was in need of some amendment.

The Chair presented proposed amendments which were all agreed. The amended constitution would in due course replace the original on the website.

2.3 Treasurer's report

The accounts were tabled for inspection and would be made available on the BAG website.

The Treasurer – Caroline Molloy - confirmed that the general fund opening balance was £81 and the closing balance was £113.

BAG was also in receipt of restricted funding from O-Regen for gardening activities. The closing balance of this restricted fund was £4,000.

The report under item 2.4.3 would include information about past and future activities which had been/will be funded from the O-Regen grant.

2.3 Membership Secretary's report

There were currently 156 'signed up' members (those providing contact details) and the membership forum on the website receives an average of 450 'hits' pcm.

2.4 Organising Committee – resignations and elections

Would take place and be reported under item 4.

2.5 Chair's report on activity to date

2.5.1 Relocation of Willowfield School

In 2008, BAG had organised a meeting for residents to hear from representatives of Waltham Forest Council and the school; this, and subsequent lobbying, had successfully achieved abandonment of plans for towerblock residential accommodation. Latest news was that the school would relocate to the 'goods yard' adjacent to Blackhorse Road station – probably in 2011. Although towerblocks were now ruled out, it was evident there are plans for some housing to be on upper storeys of the new school building. BAG would continue to monitor developments and keep local residents informed.

Unfortunately, the headteacher of Willowfield had not responded to an invitation to attend/speak at this AGM.

2.5.2 Walthamstow West Community Council (WWCC)

This part of the Chair's report was to give news of particular relevance to residents in the BAG area – ie the High Street Ward.

The total 2009-10 budget for the High Street Ward was £10,000 and proposals had been received at an October 2009 WWCC meeting.

A proposal to fund development of the old St James Street Library building as a community centre for use by local groups had been turned down. BAG would continue to pursue this. Meanwhile, as £5,000 had been awarded to the Scouts for refurbishment of their meeting hall in Stephenson Road, BAG would be contacting the Scouts to ask if the hall could be made available to other local groups.

2.5.3 Gardening activities

An early 2009 activity had been planting spring bulbs round trees and in other public areas (including the playground by Coppermill School and the Stoneydown green area on Blackhorse Road).

Funding received (see 2.2) had been used, to date, for two gardening activities – a container planting event and a harvest celebration which had included building a community compost bin on the Douglas Eyre Playing Fields. The next event – planting fruit trees – would be on 5 December 2009.

A new project was to establish a community garden – which would be reported on in more detail under item 2.5.

2.5.4 Other activity

A 'Fun Day' in 2008 had been highly successful and enjoyed by many residents.

A number of local campaigns had been and continued to be supported – incl EMD Cinema, St James Library, and fielding independent candidates for the 2010 local elections.

2.6 Community Garden

Plans to establish a community garden were being progressed. Space had been made available on the Douglas Eyre Playing Fields (DEPF) and an application for funding had been made.

The headteacher of Coppermill School had been contacted with an invitation for the school to be actively involved in this project.

The next event would be planting fruit trees – 5 December 2009, on the DEPF site.

2.7 Other gardening/environmental activity

Suggestions from those attending the AGM included contacting other groups already active in setting up events – eg Tottenham Marshes, Leabridge Volunteers and Rangers.

3. CURRENT LOCAL ISSUES

3.1 Neighbourhood Watch

Andrew Hawkin (Edward Road Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator) and Sgt Steedman explained the role of Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Further information was available in printed form at the AGM, and there was also a website:

<http://www.mynhw.co.uk/>

3.2 Tyre slashing in Edward Road

Questions and comments from those attending confirmed that this was a continuing problem. In response, Sgt Steedman explained the logistical problems – eg impossibility of setting up covert surveillance. All attending were advised to be vigilant and to report any incidences of tyre slashing to the High Street Safer Neighbourhood Team – 020 8721 2035, 07843 291115, highstreent.snt@met.police.uk

3.3 Other issues

There was discussion of a number of issues raised by those attending – including:

- Noise nuisance from the goods yard adjacent to Blackhorse Road tube station.
Recommendation – to contact LBWF's Noise Nuisance Team (via wfdirect)
- St James Street Library Campaign. Advised that it now had to be accepted it was highly unlikely this would be re-established as a library. BAG, and others, continued to lobby for the building to be made available for purchase by one or more local groups for use as a community centre.

4. BAG ORGANISING COMMITTEE

4.1 Resignations and elections

Chair: Michael Leigh tendered his resignation. There were no candidates for election as a successor.

Secretary: Sue Grant had been co-opted for the past year, was the only candidate, was seconded by Jo Biggs, and elected by the majority of those present.

Treasurer: Caroline Molloy stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Sue Grant, and elected by the majority of those present.

Communications Lead: Irina Hoss tendered her resignation. Simon Thomas was the only candidate, was seconded by Nuria Rodrigues and elected by the majority of those present.

Membership Secretary: Ortrun Peyn stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Peter Harms, and elected by the majority of those present.

Planning & Development Lead: Peter Harms stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Michael Leigh, and elected by the majority of those present.

Webmaster: Neil Meads stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Peter Harms, and elected by the majority of those present.

Sustainability Lead 1: Nuria Rodrigues stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Neil Meads, and elected by the majority of those present.

Sustainability Lead 2: Chloe Herington stood for election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Nuria Rodrigues, and elected by the majority of those present.

General member 1: Peter Taylor stood for re-election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Michael Leigh, and elected by the majority of those present.

General Member 2: Mohdammed Chaudhri stood for election, was the only candidate, was seconded by Peter Taylor, and elected by the majority of those present.

4.2 Guest members

Andrew Ufondu (Wetherby Street) expressed interest in becoming, and would be welcomed as an associate member.

5. Close of meeting

The Chair thanked those attending, and invited donations for funding this and future meetings (venue and material costs).