

STRUTT'S PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting
held on 8 April 2014 at S. Mary's Parish Hall, Darley Lane

1 & 2. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the following members: Doreen Evans, Brenda Watson, Rosa Drohomirecka, Richard and Beryl Hughes, Anna Zimmon and PCSO Linda Bell.

Derek Limer was in the chair, and welcomed 28 members of the Association, Cllrs Martin Repton and Jack Stanton, Lucy Care and the Rev Ian Mountford, Associate Priest at S. Alkmund's.

3. Activities at S. Alkmund's Church

Derek Limer introduced the Rev. Ian Mountford, the recently appointed Associate Priest at S. Alkmund's Church, and invited him to explain, as had the Vicar, Jean Burgess, to the SPRA committee a few months earlier, the regular community activities at the Church. Ian Mountford, thanking the Association for the opportunity to address the AGM, said that S. Alkmund's has a desire to serve all of its parish (of which Strutt's Park is a part), not only its worshipping congregation. He drew the meeting's attention to three weekly events that might be of general community interest.

Every Tuesday the *Friendship Group* (for those aged 60+) meets from about 10 in the morning for coffee, followed by lunch at midday (£3 donation). There is an activity after lunch and the event is a chance to chat and meet and make friends. There is a service of communion after lunch on alternate weeks, but participation in this is entirely optional.

Every Wednesday the *Little Nippers* group meets. This is a chance for parents and other carers with toddlers to meet in a safe environment with good facilities, where there is plenty for the children to do and an opportunity for the carers to have a break and to socialise.

Every Friday *Storehouse* runs, aimed at vulnerable people, such as the homeless. This has been operating for 20 years now. It starts at about 10.00 am when breakfast is available and there are washing and other facilities available. There is a store of items of clothing etc from which items can be drawn, and every other week there are bags available containing non-perishable food. Derek Limer commented that the *Storehouse* welcomed donations of usable clothing, blankets etc for distribution.

Ian Mountford said that more details of all the activities could be had of the S. Alkmund's Church office in Kedleston Road (www.stalkmunds.org.uk).

Derek Limer thanked Ian Mountford for his presentation.

4. Minutes of the 5 April 2013 AGM

These minutes, copies of which were generally available at the meeting, were noted and approved.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

None.

6. Chairman's Report

Derek Limer reported that the committee had met seven times since the 2013 AGM and he thanked members of the committee for making their homes available for meetings. He went on to highlight some of the matters that had been discussed and taken forward by the committee:

At the 2013 AGM there had been much talk of traffic-related problems in the area. These matters had been taken to the Neighbourhood Forum and Board where they had also been discussed. While recognising that any traffic control measures required genuine local public support before they could be introduced, he noted that the Little Chester and Darley Abbey neighbourhoods were being considered for 20 mph speed limit schemes. If these go ahead and prove successful there might be an opportunity for introducing a similar scheme in Strutt's Park.

Following on from the 2013 AGM, the level of interest expressed in resuscitating the Neighbourhood Watches in the area had led to the SPRA committee cooperating with the Police in setting up and publicising two public meetings. The first, in the evening of 18 June was very poorly attended and so the SPRA committee suggested a second attempt be made, this time a Saturday coffee morning on 7 September. This was better attended and two or three expressions of interest were provided to PCSO Linda Ball as a result. Unfortunately the SPRA committee has received no further feedback on progress on this initiative, and it was a pity that, despite repeated invitations, there was no Police representation at this AGM. Derek Limer thanked Peter Wilhelm for

passing on *Police Alert* information round the area, and several members had now signed up themselves to receive *Police Alerts* direct.

The SPRA has sought to work as closely as possible with other bodies and organisations in the area. Derek Limer noted with regret that the River Street Community Group (RSCG) had ceased to function and had recommended that an Extraordinary General Meeting be called to facilitate the reestablishment of a function committee, not least so that there is a body to oversee the operation of S. Alkmund's Green. Links with the Friends of Darley Open Spaces (FoDOS) have been maintained, and SPRA and FoDOS are currently working closely together to implement a scheme for 'Welcome' signage to be applied at the entrances to the parks. The first sign is proposed for the Darley Grove entrance, where SPRA has been working for several years with the City Council to bring about improvements to what has been a very shabby principal approach to the parks from the city centre. Resurfacing of the road and path from North Street, and the provision of new footpaths and lighting on the route over Handyside Bridge have already been achieved as a result of this incremental approach. The Strutt's Park Community Group (SPCG) have recently secured Neighbourhood Board funding in support of their street play scheme, and Derek Limer drew the meeting's attention to the SPCG's Easter Egg Hunt to be held on Easter Sunday, 20 April, publicity for which is now being circulated.

The fate of the Grade I listed S. Helen's House has been an issue for SPRA for several years, so it has been a considerable satisfaction to see the restoration of the main house completed in the past year, and now let to commercial tenants as offices. Derek Limer said that a tour of the restored building was really worthwhile and recommended members to avail themselves of the next opportunity to view the building. The restoration of S. Helen's House had served to emphasise the dilapidated state of the buildings, 85-88 King Street, opposite. Representations had been made by both SPRA and the Civic Society to the then owners, the City Council, but Derek Limer was pleased to report that the buildings had now been sold, and the new owner had applied for planning permission to convert them into three lock-up shops with three one-bedroomed flats on each of the two upper floors.

There had also been progress on three other long-empty houses in the area, all of which had occupied the attention of the SPRA committee over several years. 40, West Avenue (at the Five Lamps), in the ownership of the City Council and boarded up pending possible future road works, had eventually been sold and the new owner is currently restoring the building. 98 Belper Road is now up for sale following a long CPO process. 10 Chevin Place has been refurbished by Nottingham Community Housing Association and is due to be let in the near future.

The empty and derelict block of flats in Duke Street, Britannia Court, has been demolished and the site cleared. Piling work is currently underway for the construction of the new block of 82 flats for older people on the site of the Bath Street Mill. Although some regretted the demolition of the old mill buildings (severely damaged by fire in 2009), new accommodation the growing older population is to be welcomed.

The SPRA autumn newsletter had been distributed to Association members in September and thanks were extended to all involved in the production and distribution of the publication.

Derek Limer thanked all the members of the committee for their work over the past year, and especially Ian Thom, who had decided not to seek re-election. The committee had tried their best to represent the interests of the area. He himself had served on the committee for fifteen years, the last ten as chairman, and he too had decided to stand down now.

Clive Lemmon thanked Derek Limer for his efforts in the Association's behalf, which had been very great, a sentiment that was endorsed by the applause that followed.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Annual Accounts had been circulated by Matthew Scarborough, the treasurer, and these were duly approved.

8. Election of Committee and Officers

Nominations had been received for Clive Lemmon as Secretary, Matthew Scarborough as Treasurer and Brenda Watson, Jude King, Belinda Elliott-Dawes, Bob Knight and Joan Dutton as committee members. The constitution limits the number of ordinary elected committee members to six and Derek Limer sought further nominations from the floor, but none were forthcoming, and the five committee members and two officers nominated were duly elected. The new committee will seek to co-opt additional members during the year, and any Association member interested in helping in this way was encouraged to approach a member of the committee.

9. Other Community Groups

Derek Limer had already noted the SPRA's co-operation with other local groups and he invited representatives of those groups present, who so wished, to introduce themselves. Alison Grimwood, Chair of FoDOS, spoke of their involvement in the restoration of the Darley Park terrace, the maintenance of the Hyrangea garden and the fruitful relationship they have with the Derby City Council Park's team. FoDOS, like SPRA, is a membership organisation and full details may be found on their website www.friendsofdarleyopenspaces.org.uk.

Belinda Elliott-Dawes expressed her disappointment at the grassing-over of the flower beds at the Darley Park terrace. Cllr Martin Repton explained that central government cuts to funding for Derby City Council had led to the need for unpalatable cuts to budgets for non-essential City Council services. Voluntary efforts by individuals and organisations such as FoDOS, coupled with small amounts of funding from the Neighbourhood Board, had allowed some planting and garden maintenance activity to carry on.

10. Any other business

The footbridge over S. Alkmund's Way being currently temporarily closed for emergency repair, there was a question concerning the duration of the closure. Cllr Martin Repton said that he had instigated the inspection of the bridge that resulted in the closure as a result of an urgent enquiry from the SPRA secretary. The problem was a failed holding-down bolt, but a full repair was needed. He expected to hear on 9 April what the plans and timescale for repair and reopening would be and he undertook to let the SPRA Chairman know so that the details could be passed on to members.

Steven Wood, a new resident in the area, said he had had the misfortune to have his motor car broken into twice, shortly after his arrival. Although the Police had responded quite thoroughly, he thought that local residents might be able to help by enhanced vigilance and wondered, as the Police had experienced difficulty in finding out where CCTV recordings from private cameras could have helped in their enquiries, if SPRA could assist in identifying the sections of the roads covered by private CCTV cameras. This suggestion met with support and the SPRA committee will consider the matter. Steven Wood said that the Police had mounted an awareness campaign following the recent car break-ins, but he was not sure how effective it was. Cllr Jack Stanton said that it was surprising how many vehicles were left parked and insecure and urged residents to report any suspicious behaviour to the Police, using the 101 telephone number. Policing campaigns are very much driven by crime statistics, so it is important that all crimes are reported, even if there is nothing for the Police to do over any one particular incident, so that the complete picture of criminal behaviour in a particular area can be built up.

Action: SPRA committee

Mike Wheeler asked if anyone knew why the bells at S. Mary's were no longer sounding. Derek Limer undertook to investigate.

Action: Derek Limer

The collapse of the Otter Street garden retaining wall into Darley Grove was raised. The owner of the house whose wall had collapsed was present and pointed out that this was the same wall that had collapsed some months ago and had subsequently been rebuilt. The builder of the rebuilt wall blamed the severe weather for the second collapse, whilst their insurer's loss adjusters blamed the standard of the reconstruction. Work to rebuild a second time was scheduled to begin on 22 April.

Derek Limer thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting formally at 8.25 pm.