

Orchard Housing Society committee members needed

The Orchard Housing Society is a sheltered housing scheme in the heart of the Suburb.

The Society is a charitable non-profit organisation providing accommodation for Suburb residents, or those with a Suburb connection, over the age of 60. The scheme is run by a voluntary committee supported by two members of staff, and we are currently looking to recruit three new Committee members.

We would particularly like to hear from people with property/housing management, IT, legal or finance skills. We would also welcome applicants who have experience of working with older people or in social care, and good all-rounders with relevant management experience.

Applicants must be able to commit to a minimum of five hours participation per month including one early evening

meeting and a daytime meeting approximately every six weeks, plus occasionally other additional meetings and hands on activity such as interviewing new and existing residents.

If you would like to apply to become a Committee member please e-mail Beatrice Bousard, Tenant Support Manager, by Monday, May 20 at bboussard.orchardhousing@btconnect.com, explaining what relevant skills or experience you have, and how you feel you could contribute to the Committee.

Although these are voluntary, unremunerated positions, you would be playing an important role in helping to provide a high quality housing service to local older people.



RA Open Meeting

(continued from front page)

by heavy vehicles, leaves blown onto the pavement by gardeners then becoming slippery in the rain, and the use of tarmac to replace paving stones.

Rohit Grover told us Barnet had a budget of £50 million over five years for road and pavement repairs, with £3 million to be spent on pavements this financial year. Mike Freer reminded us that Barnet was a large borough with over 500 miles of roads and associated pavements to look after, but it had to live within its means.

There is to be a new system for a £1000 deposit to be taken when development work is being done so that pavements repairs can be paid for when work is completed and damage has been evaluated.

Parking is another Suburb problem and there were questions about why the extension to the Garden Suburb CPZ was so limited, why so many Blue Badges were issued and why there was so little enforcement.

CPZ extensions took place after consultations showed there was a demand. Consequent increased parking in the surrounding area often led to a demand for a new consultation and a further extension.

Gabriel Rozenberg maintained that Barnet took a strong line

on Blue Badge fraud and was willing to prosecute when the evidence was there, and Mike Freer added that he received lots of letters about Blue Badge problems and that it was easy to be mistaken when making judgments about levels of disability.

The final subject to come before the panel concerned crime and policing; police station closures; lack of police on the streets; and recent muggings and burglaries.

Mike Freer said the old police stations were no longer fit for purpose, and in Temple Fortune five officers were needed to man a station that received 40 visits a week from the public.

Gabriel Rozenberg said he understood the concerns of residents and added there were now emergency response teams and high visibility patrols in Barnet. He also suggested attending the regular ward police panel meetings for a better understanding. Emma Howard added that the next meeting was in Fellowship House on May 30 at 7pm.

He also introduced Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz from Brunswick Park ward, who is intending to stand as the Conservative candidate for Barnet and Camden in the next London Assembly elections, and has a

special interest in policing. He maintained that Barnet is short changed as it is the largest contributor to the Metropolitan Police but has the fewest number of officers. He went on to say he did not want to make political points, but then continued by blaming the Mayor of London for not increasing police funding, and all the other political parties in the Assembly for not agreeing to add to the number of police officers in London.

Residents were reminded throughout the meeting that whenever they had complaints about trees, bins, pavements or other matters, they should e-mail their councillors to let them know of their concerns so that where possible remedial action could be taken.

The meeting could not fully cover all the topics put forward, but it ran for well over an hour and could easily have gone on for twice that long. It was the latest in a series of Open Meetings organised by the RA in order to give residents a chance to express their views. Residents can keep up to date with future meetings by looking in Suburb News, reading the posters on our notice boards in Suburb front gardens, or visiting www.hgsra.uk.

TERRY BROOKS

Suburb News

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association

A letter from the Editor

Richard Wakefield founded this paper in the summer of 1983 and created something that is much loved by many Suburb residents. He was in advertising rather than journalism and had doubts about whether a regular paper could be maintained; his doubts were unfounded. This is issue 138, and editing it is a true privilege.

What I have to write is difficult for a number of reasons, but someone who had a better way with words than me wrote about parting being a sorrow, and for me there is a great deal of sorrow in writing that I intend to give up editing this wonderful paper, Suburb News, at the end of the year.

Of course this leaves Suburb News with a problem, but I also hope it will give one of you, dear readers, an opportunity to do something very satisfying, and very useful for the community you live in. Suburb News needs a volunteer to do what I have been doing every three months since January 2015.

And now quickly before you think, "Oh no, that's not for me; I know nothing about..." let me tell you that I had, and still have, absolutely no experience or qualifications in journalism, publishing or anything similar.

When Richard Wakefield died at the end of October 2014 just after he had put issue number 120 to bed, I had absolutely no idea what to do or how to do it! And yet Suburb News appeared as scheduled three months later.

The very professional paper you are holding in your hands is a collaborative effort, but the design and layout, the 'look', is the creation of Trevor Hutton of 1st Impression. I provide him with a bunch of Word documents and jpeg photos from which he creates the paper – I think of it as an infernal jigsaw puzzle – but Trevor works his magic every time.

I also rely on a number of dedicated and resourceful correspondents from the numerous societies and organisations on the Suburb, whose reports you read in each issue. Then there are our fearless in-house reporters, who interview Suburb residents (and pets), and write reports on Suburb events.

I, too, write some of the reports on Suburb events and meetings which you read, and also provide some of the photos; I have discovered that if I take enough photos, at least one of them is probably going to be good enough to print – with a tweak from Trevor.

The editor does not even have to be in the country for the paper to appear, thanks to e-mail. Those of you who know me will testify that I have managed to spend much of my time from New Year's Day to Easter every year in the mountains and on my skis.

I have very much enjoyed producing Suburb News and found it to be a really satisfying job. I firmly believe the paper is an irreplaceable community resource, and plays a vital role in informing residents of what is happening on the Suburb.

If you think you might be interested in giving it a go, why not drop me a line at suburbnews@hgsra.uk, or call me on 020 8458 2248. I will happily divulge the secrets of my success to my replacement, who can then develop their own way to do the job.

As I wrote at the beginning, Richard founded this newspaper in the summer of 1983, and it has been informing our community ever since; it would be a great shame if it were to founder for the lack of a volunteer to come forward and take a turn at producing it. I deeply regret feeling I need to quit.

TERRY BROOKS

RA AGM

(continued from front page)

invaluable contribution to our community. She acknowledged the wonderful work that Terry Brooks had done as Editor, and his incredible memory, always being able to locate past information. Lorna Page was also acknowledged for her unstinting work as co-ordinator of a small army of volunteers who distribute the paper to all Suburb residents. It was also mentioned that Terry Brooks was retiring and the RA was looking for a successor.

There was a mention of future events: the Open Meeting with Elected Representatives at Fellowship House on April 25 (see main article, front page), the Summer Fair on June 16, and a meeting with the Police on Road Safety awareness on September 24.

Next were the traditional questions from the floor with the first question about the policy on the application for expansion of Henrietta Barnett. Emma responded that there would be a meeting with the school for residents to air their views on the two proposed new buildings at a future date.

Then it was the turn of the Tea House in Northway. We were told there was a tenant living upstairs and it was understood that the owner of the freehold was not doing anything to the building at present.

Residents were concerned about rumours that Freshwater were planning to develop flats in Chatham Close and the garages in Denman Drive. Peter McCluskie responded that the owners of the garage had been given notice to quit, but nothing else had yet materialised.

Vans parking in the Suburb and the issue of CPZs were brought up. John Marshall responded that he would support more CPZs if there was a desire for them. Although there had been proposals for a CPZ in Erskine Hill, historically the RA had been anti-CPZ.

Further questions related to parts of Temple Fortune Lane and the issues of bin collection. Emma asked if other residents had problems with emptying of their bins. There was general discussion about problems in placing bins for collection, which was an ongoing issue that Emma and the Councillors were trying to address.

There were questions about security of cars on the Suburb, as many had been scratched, vandalised or stolen. One area specifically targeted was Litchfield Way. Richard Davis, Chair of the local Police Ward Group, said one should report to the Police, and use the Suburb WhatsApp or LCS service, but the police had limited resources. Councillor Rozenberg stressed that it was essential to report even seemingly minor incidents to the Police.

Among traffic problems on the Suburb there were issues with the width restrictors in

Addison Way and speeding in Temple Fortune Lane. Flashing speed warning systems could be installed there and in other roads. Emma and the Roads & Traffic Committee had worked with Councillors to monitor speed using a speed gun.

The fact that less than half of Suburb residents were members of the RA was raised. Emma confirmed that the membership had been in decline, due in part to the lack of interest shown by those in the growing rental sector, and proposed using social media to promote the RA to attract residents in blocks of flats and large houses.

Finally, the results of the ballot were received and all those standing for Council were declared re-elected. This was followed by Emma thanking everyone for attending. The meeting kept to time and was efficiently led, with a pleasant atmosphere.

DAPHNE BERKOVI

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