



Residents can sleep soundly (HGS Trust AGM: continued from page 1)

by the Estate Manager, Nick Packard. He thanked them both for their contribution to the work of the Trust and to the Suburb.

Thanks were also due to the staff, without whose encyclopedic knowledge of the Suburb the Trust would be unable to do its work, and to the trustees who donated an enormous amount of time to attend the meetings of the council and its committees.

Suburb volunteers were given credit too; not just those who helped the Trust, but also those involved with the Community Library, Fellowship House, Proms Concerts, Residents Association, synagogues, churches, Archive Trust and the newly-created Northway Gardens Organisation.

The accounts and report were received with only one question from Valerie Jablon, which concerned the amount of management income owed. This concerned repayments which were due for road resurfacing carried out by the Trust and would be paid when work was completed.

In contrast to last year's unopposed election of David White to replace Dr Saul Zadka, this year's election, following the end of Claire Calman's term, was contested. We heard a short address from her as she sought re-election for her second permitted term, but this was after Varda Aaron had informed us of her reasons for standing for a seat on Trust Council.

Varda Aaron told us of her experience of working in charities and how she would like to pressure Barnet on security, pavements, benches and trees, and also build upon and accelerate the work of the Trust. She was particularly concerned about the state of The Market Place and its lack of character.

Claire Calman talked about her local knowledge from her time in the Suburb and appreciated being able to put this to good use as a member of the collective body that is the Trust. She enjoyed the work and felt she was just becoming a good trustee with the experience of her first term behind her.

There were a few questions and comments from the audience. Some about Market Place from David Littaur and Terry Rand, balancing the books from Jeremy Clynes, pavements from Lisa Shend'ge, and Claire Calman's motivation for standing again from Dr Saul Zadka.

The Chairman then outlined the powers of the Trust through the residue of leases, covenants on freeholds, and the scheme of management. We then had an account of some of the items of interest that had come up during the year, with the biggest item in the postbag being front gardens and how often new stone or a lowered hedge was mistaken for development; he added that there was usually

photographic evidence of the original state.

The different remedies applied to building without consent, or building with a disregard for approved plans, also gave rise to comments from residents. Sometimes owners were told to undo the work, or to alter what had been done and sometimes consent would be given. The usual remedy for breach of contract was damages while injunctions are only granted at the discretion of the court. The recent case in Norrice Lea, which attracted much publicity, was one where damages were sought, and won – to the tune of £180,000.

The Trust was feeling its way on how to deal with the increasing demands for permission to build basements. Recent cases had strengthened the Trust's position and clarified the law. The Trust had recently issued a proposal for supplementary basement guidance, which could be accessed on their website.

Next on the agenda were questions from the floor, which gave a dozen or so residents the opportunity to quiz the Trust. David Lewis, Chairman of the RA, went first and commented that the case brought by Sir Victor Blank had helped clarify the law on basements and the Trust's new guidance was rather good apart from the last paragraph, which should be left out. Richard Wiseman replied that comments on the proposals should be e-mailed to the Trust.

There were more comments with concerns about basements, damages and the setting of precedents, the inspection regime and the disruption caused by extensive works from a number of residents including Terry Rand, Carol Boulter, John Whiting and Susie Gregson and Peter Oliver. Bruce McKay asked if the naming and shaming of offenders had been considered and the Chairman wondered if in fact that would do any good.

Ian Tutton commended the Trust on its renovation of the tennis courts in Central Square and asked about the plans to purchase Central Square from Barnet. The Trust had once owned the square and later gave it to the borough, but would now like it to be given back. It ought to be a nice place to be proud of

and a community hub. Councillor John Marshall said that Barnet was supportive about this and he hoped for a successful conclusion.

Margaret Harris was concerned about the age of the Suburb and whether the Trust had sufficient powers to ensure proper replacement when properties came to the end of their life. David Davidson replied that most properties on the Suburb were not very old and were generally good quality compared to many built in previous eras. The Trust would be happy to advise on preserving the fabric of buildings and had sufficient powers to control change. He encouraged those present with his assertion that we should sleep easy in our beds without fear of our house collapsing around us!

Broken pavements and trees growing over property boundaries were the final topics of the evening. Both are areas where the Trust has little or no power to act. A final lament was heard for The Market Place – a vibrant and attractive place until the development of the road killed it.

TERRY BROOKS

Trust election result

On September 24 Hayes Macintyre, the auditors of the HGS Trust, announced the result of the trustee election held in September after the Annual General Meeting. Claire Calman was re-elected with 340 votes, and the second candidate, Varda Aaron, received 226 votes with 20 voting papers rejected.



Residents demand a quieter Suburb

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association has set up a new committee to deal with the problem of noise in the Suburb. This news has attracted a lot of publicity – appearing in the *Ham & High*, *Daily Mail*, *Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, and featured on the Radio 4 Today and BBC London Vanessa Feltz programmes – although not all of the coverage sympathetic!

Many residents have been inconvenienced and some have become distressed by the high levels of noise associated with leaf blowers, other petrol-driven gardening equipment, and also machinery on construction sites. The new Noise Abatement Committee will look into ways of significantly reducing some of the worst noise nuisance.

Committee Chairman Gary Shaw said, "Noise problems seem to have grown worse in recent

years as garden contractors have moved away from older hand-operated tools. The noise of some gardening equipment can make it impossible for residents to concentrate, work or relax. On many summer days residents can't use their own gardens because of the noise coming from their neighbours' gardens."

RA Chairman David Lewis added, "We held a public meeting for Suburb residents in June which was attended by a large number of residents, including local Councillors, who represented a widely shared feeling that local noise levels are often intolerable. It's not just a question of volume but also of duration. We want garden and other contractors to use quieter equipment and for people not to leave their dogs to bark outside."

The Noise Abatement Committee can be contacted at ranoise@hgs.org.uk.

Suburb to Institute and back again

The Institute recognises that for some of its students the move to Kingsbury is a move too far.

It feels it had the privilege of following the ethos of Dame Henrietta Barnett by serving the Suburb for well over 100 years, and ideally it would have liked to find somewhere nearby but it could not afford to stay in the immediate area if it were to survive.

As its roots are in the Suburb, it is trying to accommodate as many of its longest standing

and most loyal students as it can and help them to continue studying at The Institute.

It has therefore been trying to arrange transport from the Suburb to The Institute's new home, Masons House in Kingsbury at 9am and 1pm every weekday, returning at 12pm and 5pm respectively should there be sufficient demand from the local community.

Anybody interested in this proposal, please contact office@hgsi.ac.uk.





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