**Chessington District Residents’ Association**

**www.chessingtondra.org.uk**

**AGENDA**

**For the meeting to be held on the 3rd March 2020**

At St Paul’s Centre, Hook Road – 8pm

1. CHESSINGTON DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NOTICES
2. AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES
4. VISITING MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS
5. MAJOR NEW ISSUES ONLY
6. MINOR NEW ISSUES
7. HEALTH ISSUES
8. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES
9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10.PLANNING NEWS

11. POLICE REPORT 12.ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**MINUTES**

Of the meeting held on the 4th February 2020

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chairman- Colin Punch, Treasurer - Diane Brannan, Francis Brannan, Colin Dance, Brian Ekins, Graham Hedley, Henry Jelley, Rene Piercey, Rob Robb, Peter Shakeshaft, Dick Ware.

**VISITORS**

**APOLOGIES**

Mike Hoare, Colin Suckling, Sue Towner, Sheila Watkins.

**1.CHESSINGTON DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NOTICES**

**2.MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**( a ) Car Park at British Legion in Church Lane** – Previously we wrote that ‘The Chairwoman of the Eight O’clock Ladies Circle contacted us in September as the British Legion car park has large pot holes and the street lights did not work. The ladies hold their meetings in the British Legion and she was concerned that it was an accident waiting to happen. An elderly person stumbling into a pothole could easily break an ankle. As the car park is owned by the Council we put her in touch with Councillor Andreas Kirsch who has been talking to officers to try and get the matter resolved.

The latest in the saga is that in February Councillor Kirsch advised that the contractors have been assigned to do the pot holes. This is good news indeed! However, it is nearly six months since we raised this issue. (Coincidently, our secretary has an 84 year old friend who fell and broke her ankle whilst at home in mid December. After a long spell in Kingston hospital she is still recovering in a nursing home. It has had a devastating effect upon her life.) The Chairwoman of the Eight O’clock Ladies Circle has reported that the lights are again not working. She has also requested that linesto determine each space is painted so as to allow the maximum number of cars to park. Although these issues might seem to be minor they could have a major effect upon anyone who gets injured as a result.

**( b ) Missing White Line on the Leatherhead Road – Last month we wrote:-** In December a visitor raised the issue of the lack of a white centre line  on the newly surfaced length of the A243 Leatherhead Road going south just beyond the zebra crossing ; south of the Bridge Road roundabout, outside number 11 Leatherhead Road.

The centre line was a broad hatched area that kept the traffic separated so it kept vehicles as single lanes coming from and going towards the roundabout.

Residents believe that there is a real safety issue as vehicles try and form more than one lane of traffic without the lines; with the possibility of head on collisions.

On the 3rd of February we received the following email from Councillor Patricia Bamford:-

*Another update for you, and sadly not good news  with regard to Leatherhead Road.*

*Ward Councillors, together with Portfolio holder for Highways at RBK met with TfL and local residents before Christmas to discuss our concerns about road markings and access and egress issues.*

*TfL advised that following resurfacing works the road space had changed in terms of road markings.*

*This was because filter lanes to turn into Ellingham Road had been marked up, which means that there is less road space for centre line markings.*

*Residents have been concerned about getting in and out of their properties and inconsiderate parking. TfL advised they would chase up Lidl about when their Planning Permission gained on Appeal to enlarge their car park would be implemented. This might help in terms of highway space.*

*We also raised the issue of lack of cycle lane reinstatement and were told that previously marked lanes had not been compliant in terms of lane width. They should be 1.5 metres wide but were only 1.1 so would not be reinstated. We said that would be better than nothing but TfL said that would only provide a false sense of security.*

*TfL will look at using the  footways and verges for cycle lanes as they are very wide along part of this stretch.*

*Not very positive I realise but an update nevertheless !*

Thank you for this Tricia. As you say not good news but we appreciate that TfL are a law unto themselves.

**4. VISITING MEMBERS QUESTIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS**

There were none.

**5. SUMMARY OF MAJOR ISSUES**

There were none.

**6.MINOR NEW ISSUES**

**( c ) 20 mph Consultation -** Kingston Council are proposing the implementation of 20mph speed limit on all roads across the borough. They claim to want to make our streets safer, cleaner and greener. The only exceptions would be private roads and those under Transport for London control. There is a consultation taking place where residents can give their opinion on the proposal.

Our committee discussed their individual views. Some members thought that it was a very good idea. Certainly it had been absolutely necessary to make Church Lane safe by imposing a 20mph speed limit. There, are a number of other local roads which some members believe would benefit from 20mph speed limits, such as Chessington Hill Park and Bolton Road, which were specifically discussed. However, they also thought that unless it is enforced it would be pointless. Others claimed that modern cars were not designed to drive so slow. It was suggested that speed limit signs on the side of the road that flash if a car is exceeding the limit was a good idea. One of our members was very cynical about consultations in general. He thinks they are a farce and that the Council have already decided to implement the 20mph.

On the whole it was an interesting discussion but with no consensus agreed.

**( d ) Angus Close Footpaths -** At an SOTB Neighbourhood Committee meeting in October 2018 Diane asked when the footpaths in Angus Close would be re-laid. The pavements in Chessington Hill Park had been beautifully done and we had presumed that the workers would then move on to Angus Close. Especially as the state of the Angus Close footpaths were in a far worse state than those in Chessington Hill Park had been. Diane explained that in the 36 years that she had lived in Angus Close the footpaths had been dug up for crossovers and cable laying on numerous occasions. They were now in a very poor state and dangerous to walk on at night . It is far safer to walk in the road. Anyway at that date which was October 2018 the answer was **NO** it was not on that year’s planned works. However, Angus Close was on their five years priority list.

In January 2020 the Angus Close footpaths were on the agenda for discussion at the SOTB Neighbourhood Committee. Diane sent an email to Councillors and explained that the footpaths were in an even worse state of disrepairthan they had been in 2018 and particularly dangerous for mothers with pushchairs and elderly or disabled residents and to treat our request for immediate attention as a matter of urgency. Photographs of the uneven and broken footpaths were provided.

Rob Robb attended the meeting and on behalf of Angus Close residents asked for priority to be given to Angus Close. The Council then wrote to Diane advising that Angus Close had been included in the highways maintenance programme for 2020/21. The East Committee would be deciding the order of the programme at a meeting on the 11th of February. Unfortunately, from reading the minutes it would appear that Angus Close will still not be done until 2021. The comments made above about elderly people breaking their ankles equally apply to the footpaths in Angus Close, except that you do not have to be elderly to trip up in Angus Close.

**( e ) Mount Road ‘Rat Running’ -** There is a great deal of ‘rat running’ in Mount Road which is causing problems and near accidents. The Council are trying to find a solution. CDRA fully support them in their efforts to help the residents of Mount Road.

**( f ) Speeding on the A243 and A3 -** One of our members spoke of his concerns about cars speeding on the A243 and commented on the lack of cameras. It was pointed out that there is a camera near the Hook Centre. However, we wonder if it is working. There are very serious problems, especially in the evening when there is less traffic, with vehicles travelling at excessive speeds. It is common place to see vehicles travelling on the A243 in both directions at speeds of between 50 and 60mph, and driving irresponsibly by under passing. Shortly before our meeting there was, one evening, a four car shunt just to the north of the Lucky Rover. The fourth car in the shunt was a BMW saloon car travelling at such speed that when it crashed into the three cars in front of it they were all seriously damaged and the BMW itself had its engine forced back into the passenger compartment.The great danger would be that if an accident took place near to the North Star pub, vehicles spinning out of control could crash into the front of the houses which at that point are built directly onto the footpath

With regards to speeding on the A3. When you drive towards London from the Ace of Spades roundabout, you pass exits to Tolworth and New Malden. Those exits are arranged so that even if you are driving in the left hand lane you can end up in the centre lane. Although this part of the A3 has a 50mph speed limit it is seen by many as a 50mph minimum speed limit! In the centre lane you get passed by cars on both the inside and outside lanes!

We know there are cameras but wonder if there are a sufficient number. It was pointed out that although cars speed, they tend to slow down as they approach a camera. It does not help that many sat nav’s advise when the car is approaching a speed camera which cause them to slow down and prevent them from receiving tickets for speeding.

A little over a year ago the Police Officer in charge of Kent County Police said that he thought speeding on main roads in Kent were at a very dangerous level. He made a proposal that the number of speed cameras be increased and that speeding tickets should be issued to all those breaking the speed limit. Unless such radical action is taken drivers will continue to ignore speed limits.

**( g ) Traffic Tail Backs from Chessington North to Ruxley Lane -** Most mornings and evenings there are long ‘tail backs’ along Moor Lane and Chessington Road heading towards the Ruxley Lane traffic lights. We believe this is caused by the sequencing of the lights. Our members are of the opinion that a roundabout instead of traffic lights would help to ease the traffic queues. There is plenty of land that could be purchased to enable a reasonable size roundabout to be built. Rob will write to the Surrey County Council Highways department to make the suggestion.

**( h ) Trees along Bridge Road** Our members commented on the new trees that have been planted along the Bridge Road. We are very pleased with the Council’s initiative.

**( i ) State of the Borough meeting -** On Wednesday 29th of January Kingston Council held their State of the Borough Debate at Chessington School. Towards the end of the debate questions were asked by the audience

These are just a couple of issues that particularly interested our members.

* Green Belt - A question was concerning developers applying to build on the ‘green belt’. Liz Green the Leader of the Council finitely stated that ‘green belt’ is protected and is not under threat from development. This was reassuring to hear as we regularly hear contradictory comments on the subject.
* The Council Leader, Liz Green said that the Council assets are here for the community.

The Hook Centre was built and paid for from public money. The objective was to make it a centre of the community. The design of the centre had been arrived at following an extensive public consultation. It has subsequently had a sad history.

A subsequent administration decided that the Hook Centre be managed by an outside body which has funded its responsibilities by charging for the use of the centre. We are sure that more community events would be held if the meeting rooms were free or at a reduced rate for voluntary organisations to hold events. If the Community Centre is really there for the community we should not have to pay to use it.

We accept that commercial businesses should pay the going rate. However, this leads us onto the next point. The building is badly maintained. We do not think that the exterior walls have even been washed since the building was completed. The high level of air pollution in this locality has turned the whole building into a shabby mess. Giving the cafe free reign to plaster the outside of the building with their adverts makes it look an even bigger mess. What was the point of giving the buildings management to an outside body if you are not writing into the contract that the building has to be maintained to a good state of repair? It is a bad advertisement for Chessington and Hook.

* It was pointed out by a resident that there are no longer any Council run youth clubs in Chessington. There is a youth club run by voluntary organisations and held at the Chessington School. However, there are 75 youngsters on the waiting list to join. This demonstrates the need for more youth clubs in Chessington, particularly if we want to keep our youths occupied in worthwhile activities and not hanging around the streets. Unfortunately, Liz Green the Council Leader did not respond to this complaint.

**7. HEALTH ISSUES**

There were none.

**8. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES**

There were none.

**9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**11 – 25, Leatherhead Road 19/02966/FUL** - The planning application was for demolition of eight existing residential dwellings and erection of 45 residential units with 33 car parking spaces and 89 cycle racks! Many residents objected to this over dense planning application. Presumably, as a consequence to the many objections a new application has been submitted to the Council which is for only 43 residential housing units! We do not think this is going to improve the application anywhere near enough. CDRA will still object.

Please note that even if you have preciously objected it is now necessary to object again.

The planning application will then be decided by the Development Control Committee. We do not yet have a date. However, we will need as many residents as possible to attend to support the residents objecting to the application. We will keep you informed.

**10.PLANNNG NEWS**

**( h ) Government plans ‘radical reform’ of planning laws** – Councillor Margaret Thompson sent us an email on the 28th of Jan with an extract of an article which was in The Times and the Sun. She said “this is exactly what we all fear”. The article read:-

‘*The government is exploring plans to speed up planning permission which could lead to councillors losing their powers to veto housing applications. Local authorities would no longer be able to stop buildings in their area or prevent shops being converted into housing, under new rules proposed in a report by the think tank Policy Exchange. Instead, there would be a system in which land was either approved for development or building banned. Developers would follow standardised rules that would be scrutinised by local planning officers. The report is being “seriously looked at” by the No 10 policy unit, according to the*Times*, which added that ministers are keen to pursue an early “radical reform” of the system that has largely been unaltered since the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947’.*

This would be very bad news and totally undemocratic should this ever happen. However, Councils would fight back if their power was threatened in this way. *David Renard, the Local Government Association planning spokesman, responded by saying: “Councils and their communities must be able to oversee all local developments, to make sure they are of good quality, and to help build prosperous places.” It is a “dangerous and misleading myth,” he added, that “planning is a barrier to house building.”*

**11.POLICE REPORT**

There was none.

**12.ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none

**Dates for your Diary –**

**The next Chessington District Residents Association Meeting** will be the the 3rd of March, followed by the 7th of April. The meetings are held at 8pm at St Pauls Church Centre. 280, Hook Road, Chessington, KT9 1PF. All are welcome

**South of the Borough Neighbourhood Committee meeting**  The next meeting will take place on the 10th March at 7.30pm. The Proposed venue: Chessington Methodist Church, Church Lane/ Moor Lane, Chessington KT9 2DJ.

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**I wish to join / renew my membership of the Chessington District Residents’ Association 2019/2020**

I agree that my details may be kept on computer to be accessed only by the committee. I confirm that I wish to receive minutes of meetings together with any other information thought to be of interest and relevance.

Name……………………………………………………………………………………

Address………………………………………………………………………………….

Postcode…………………………………….Telephone……………………………….

Email Address…………………………………………………………………………...

Amount £5 per household, or more if you would like to make a donation.

**Please return to Francis Brannan 296 Hook Road, Chessington, KT9 1NY or**

**Whitford News, North Parade, Chessington, KT9 1QL or**

**Diane Brannan, 38 Angus Close, Chessington, KT9 2BP**

**Sign..............................................................**

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