

**EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

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April 2014

Dear Residents,

It is gratifying to report that your committee has welcomed new co-opted members, namely Chris Dick as chairman, Juliet Newton- Smith, who will take over as Treasurer on Roy Donovan's retirement in May, and Peter Mott. There are others who have expressed an interest and may hopefully also join the committee.

In this letter you will find below the agenda for the AGM on 1st May, to which the committee hopes there will be a good attendance, given the various planning proposals which could so greatly affect our village, the Chairman's report and news items.

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and PUBLIC MEETING**

**Catholic Church Hall, Lower Road, Effingham on**

**Thursday 1st May 2014**

**AGENDA**

**1.0 Annual General Meeting**

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1.1 Minutes of 2013 AGM                | 1.6 Election of Secretary            |
| 1.2 Matters arising                    | 1.7 Election of Treasurer            |
| 1.3 Chairman's report                  | 1.8 Election of Committee            |
| 1.4 Treasurer's report                 | 1.9 Election of Road Wardens en bloc |
| 1.5 Election of Examiner               |                                      |
| 1.10 Change of name of the Association |                                      |

Notice is hereby given of a motion by your committee to change the name of the

Association to:

## **EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

On the grounds that the term “rates” has been superseded by “council tax”.

1.11 Any Other Business

### **2.0 Public Meeting**

2.1 Planning matters

2.2 Any Other Business

**Followed by wine and nibbles**

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### **CHAIRMANS REPORT**

Good evening and welcome to our Effingham Residents and Ratepayers Association AGM. I do not propose to read my chairman's report as most of you will have already had the chance to read it in the comfort of your own homes thanks to the excellent voluntary services of our 23 Road Wardens.

I will come onto our proposed new short name for ERRA later in this report. But here I would like to say that I joined this association in February 2014. The good news is that that should mean my report is brief.

That said earlier in the reporting year ERRA went through a period of reflection over its role within the community. The blunt truth of the matter was whether there was still a need for ERRA to exist at all given that Effingham Parish Council were doing a good job and ERRA's profile had slipped.

The decision as you know from the Newsletters was that ERRA should continue. Keith Walker had chaired ERRA for many successful years and his departure had left a void. This void continued as the Executive Committee were short on volunteers and awash with matters needing their attention.

At the same time village issues seemed to explode onto the screen one after the other.

- The 72 bed care home planning application for the old St Lawrence school playing field. Refused.

- The 60 bed amended plans. Refused.

- The Appeal Hearing - GBC decision upheld.

- Then the seminal plan to build a new secondary modern school funded by about 300 housing units enabling development in Effingham - current.

- The KGV problems over firstly the old Management Trustees then the ongoing problems with the KGV users and their Agreements.
- Mole Valley District Council's consultation documents on its draft plans for new developments on the Green Belt
- Guildford Borough's thoughts on taking Effingham out of the Green Belt.

Effingham Parish Council and Liz Hogger our Borough Councillor did a first class job defending the old St Lawrence school playing field. But the recent activity over the possible Howard proposal is a different problem. EPC must remain impartial at this stage over the new school and the possible enabling housing developments on our green fields because there could be significant funding made available for the village from the developer.

This has presented ERRA with something to really get its teeth into. We are not constrained. Yes we can support a new school if the demographic needs assessment really justifies it but we do not have to support buildings on our Green Belt. Please see below for your committee's position on this matter.

To supplement and speed up our communications we have a new Residents Association website. We will have several new email addresses and a new name. From tonight ERRA will no longer be used as our abbreviation. The new acronym will be EFFRA subject to Item 1.10 of this meet.

Our Committee should be at our maximum permitted level with new members bringing a range of business, legal and administrative skills. We will have a new post of Press Liaison Officer and stronger links with EPC. We will not always agree with the Effingham Parish Council and will hold them to account if necessary. But they work hard for this community and we support them whenever it is right for the village. Liz Hogger stays on our Committee and her experience is invaluable to us.

Sadly we have to say goodbye to Roy Donovan.

Roy has served on the Executive Committee for many years in the role of Honary Treasurer and Planning Liaison. He have given massive amounts of his time and effort and I and the rest of our committee thank him.

As is the custom the entire executive committee will stand down after the Treasurer's report apart from the Hon. Secretary David King and myself for the purposes of this meeting.

My sincere thanks again to all our Road Wardens, our out going Treasurer my fellow committee members and of course to David for keeping us, and in particular me, in line and all of you for reading this far. Your prize awaits you at the end which is free wine, nibbles and the chance to meet the new committee.

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

### **1.0 Mole Valley Housing and Traveller sites Plan Consultation**

The “handsoffthegreenbelt” petition which was handed in to Guildford Borough Council (GBC) in January, as reported in the February Newsletter, had sufficient signatures from Effingham residents to trigger a debate at an Extraordinary Meeting of GBC, held on 26th Feb. Eight representatives from Effingham, including the writer, were each allowed three mins. to address the Council. For your interest, the proceedings may be seen on the web cast on GBC website.

As a result, GBC passed a motion to ensure that Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) properly co-operate with GBC, as required by the National Planning Policy, in producing a viable and coherent plan for the Effingham/Bookhams boundary area.

Your committee also submitted a strongly worded response to the MVDC consultation in defence of the Effingham/ Little Bookham and Little Bookham/Great Bookham Green Belts.

## **2.0 Guildford plan**

The draft plan is due out for a consultation period in May/June this year. The major issue for Effingham will be the joint proposals by Howard School and Berkley Homes. See below.

Your committee will be closely monitoring progress in order to make timely and representative responses.

## **3.0 Re-location of Howard School and enabling development**

A joint presentation by Berkley Homes and Howard School was made to a packed KGV Hall at Effingham Parish Council’s (EPC) meeting on 25th Feb.

Your committee has since discussed this proposal and their opinion is set out below.

Your committee does not support any development on Effingham or neighbouring green field sites that are currently protected by Green Belt status. This position would remain regardless of whether at some later time that status might be removed.

However in the event that all reasonable alternative solutions have been properly considered against realistic criteria; then, provided that a detailed coherent needs assessment that by definition would include a demographic survey has been carried out to Effingham Residents and Rate Payers Association satisfaction, ERRA would support a new school build project on Lodge Farm. Lower Road.

If the above were to take place ERRA would support enabling development on the brownfield site of the current Howard School. Development would need to be restricted to the same footprint and not extend beyond the current building line to the East.

Your committee understands that Berkley Homes/Howard intend to hold a “Drop-in” session around end April/early May. Once residents have had the opportunity to see that, the committee may consider whether there needs to be further canvassing of opinion from all residents of the village.

The committee's view on the Green Belt is supported by the recent revised planning guidelines issued by the Government. The following is an extract from a report on the front page of Leatherhead Advertiser, 20-3-14:

“The instructions issued by Nick Boles, Planning Minister, in a letter to the Planning Inspectorate, state that the need for new homes should **not outweigh the damage** their construction would cause to the Green Belt.”

#### **4.0 Cherkley Court**

The judicial review of the Appeal decision, which rejected the application, took place on 10 and 11th March. The outcome is expected to be announced before end March.

At time of writing this outcome is unfortunately not announced.

#### **5.0 Protection of Home Farm Coordination Committee (PHFCC)**

This committee was set up in 2008 with members from ERRA, the Parish Council and the local Home Farm community to protect and enhance Home Farm for its residents and to liaise with GBC with regard to the running of the area. ERRA members will have seen articles in the local press regarding GBC's need to substantially increase the number of Gypsy and Traveller plots in the Borough. Until they meet these targets they are not able to oppose planning appeals when caravans are illegally parked on land within the Borough.

As part of this process GBC planned to build additional plots on land within Home Farm. PHFCC have liaised with GBC on this and have been able to restrict the planned number of plots to six and furthermore have agreed that these plots, when built, would only be available for the extended families of those already living on Home Farm. GBC are in the process of appointing consultants to design and position these plots and PHFCC will contribute to this process.

#### **5.0 Website**

The Association's website is currently under construction and should be in use around **mid-May** namely:

**[www.effinghamresidents.org](http://www.effinghamresidents.org)**

And also an e.mail address to enable residents readily to communicate with the Hon. Sec.

The e.mail address is:

**[info@effinghamresidents.org](mailto:info@effinghamresidents.org)**

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The committee looks forward to seeing you at the AGM and to enjoying a glass of wine with you afterwards.

For and on behalf of the Association Committee,

David J. King (Hon. Sec.)

iss: 04, 23-3-14