

# Downe Residents' Association - Annual General Meeting

22 March 2023 – Minutes

7.30pm (village hall).

1. **Apologies for absence (Committee)** – Rev John Musson, Declan Wells, Kwan Phung, Tony Dixon, John Isbell
2. **Adoption of 2022 minutes (the last AGM)** - Vote to adopt 2022 minutes was carried unanimously
3. **Chair's Report** – Steve Barnes report focused on why we have a Residents' Association and the benefits thereof...

**Committee members** - Huge thanks to the committee for their hard work over the last year as volunteers.

## The DRA exists to (from the Constitution)

- To represent and to promote the interests of all residents living in the Parish of Downe
- To seek to improve conditions for residents in the Parish of Downe
- To represent the interests of residents in consultation with Bromley council and other bodies.
- To seek to promote the protection and preservation of the Downe village Conservation Area and the surrounding designated Green Belt land.

## DRA achievements this year...

### Planning

Planning applications reviewed during the year. A number of applications objected to as being against Green Belt policy (looked at 22 applications, 28 decisions, 4 appeals). We have written 12 objections in the past year)

- The most difficult and problematic work we do
- We only object where we believe local or national regulations are not being adhered to
- We often do this on behalf of residents who do not want to upset neighbours or don't understand how to object etc (all residents have the right to object)

**NOTE** - support for Green Belt policy will once again be voted upon at this AGM. This is the basis for the DRA planning sub-committee decisions.

### Council liaison

Transferred outstanding items from retiring Cllr Scoates to new councillor - Jonathan Andrews (eg traffic speeds, HGVs in village, Downe Activity Centre, benches etc)

Liaison with Bromley Council (road closures, planning, etc)

Representing residents on school parking

Arranged for new benches in the village centre

Prevented poor solution to High Elms Rd parking

**Loose dogs** - led attempts to contain "wandering" dogs

**Local election hustings** – held in village hall

**Biggin Hill** - CEO BHAL presentation in village hall

**Broadband** - Fibre broadband - implementation across Downe & Cudham almost complete (now available to 1,000 properties)

**Comms** - Downe Mailing (404 e-mails between Jan and Dec 2022), Downe website, Downe Village Facebook (945 members)

#### **Remember - Achievements by the DRA Committee over last few years...**

- Heritage street lights
- Assets of Community Value achieved (pubs)
- Biggin Hill airshow - residents tickets / access
- Downe information board
- Landway PROW application
- Assisted in setting up the co-ordination team to look after vulnerable villagers during the pandemic
- Thames Water pressure reduction system
- Fast broadband (stage 1) implemented
- Fibre broadband (stage 2) implemented
- Constant involvement in trying to solve stray dogs problems

**Chair's report adoption vote** - Proposed: **Abigail Rutherford**, Seconded: **Julian Benington**, Against: none (unanimously carried)

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Steve Barnes reported (on behalf of Tony Dixon):

The opening balance on 1 Jan 2022 was £465.78. Income was £823.76 and expenditure was £848.20, leaving a closing balance at 31 Dec 2022 of £441.34. The main income for the year was from the sale of Downe tea towels, and the expenditure included Mailchimp (Downe Mailing) costs, Internet hosting and domain name costs, tea towels purchase and hall hire/association membership and RBL donation.

The projection for 2023 was of a deficit of £133.56, therefore support funding would be required. The meeting was thanked for "hat" donations on the evening

**Treasurer's report adoption vote** - Proposed: **Dave Evans**, Seconded: **Kim Durham**, Against: none (unanimously carried)

#### **5. Election of the committee**

The whole committee stepped down. The following were proposing to stand for 2023

Abigail Rutherford, Tony Dixon, Dave Evans, Kwan Phung, Jo Clark, Rev John Musson, Steve Barnes, Nick Cutmore, Simon Farron, Declan Wells, John Isbell.

Chair invited new members to stand for election. None at this time.

**En-bloc vote on election of committee for 2023** – Proposed: **Julian Benington**, Seconded: **Nicky Howard**, Against: none (unanimously carried)

#### **6. Motion to support Green Belt Policy**

Motion – "to oppose development within the Metropolitan Green Belt which is contrary to Green Belt Policy and Bromley Council's Local Plan, and to development within the Downe village conservation area which does not preserve or enhance it's character"

**Vote on Green Belt motion - unanimously carried**

## 7 Motion on Biggin Hill airport (new motion proposed for 2022)

Motion – “The Downe Residents' Association will oppose any applications or development at the Airport which may have a detrimental impact on the lives and amenity of Downe residents, and will at all times seek to remind the council of their obligations to residents to protect them from breaches of the airport lease by BHAL”

**Vote on Biggin Hill - unanimously carried**

## 8 Councillor Jonathan Andrews (JA) presented:

**Biggin Hill Airport** - Application to vary lease refused (to allow fare paying passengers) and likely will be again. Noise Action Plan currently being negotiated.

**ULEZ** - Bromley council one of councils taking action for judicial review as evidence that scheme predetermined and consultation flawed. Outcome depends on court decision and probable that this will only postpone implementation.

**Rights of way** (Landway) - Delay to council decision. Consultant now in place and decision due soon.

**Benches/ church gate** - Action now taken.

There followed a question and answer session....

Q. What was the Shire lane planning appeal status?

A. *Inspector to decide (due in few weeks). JA made representations on behalf of residents*

Q. Parking in borough by phone app only. Objection registered. Will this come to Downe and if so how will inappropriate signage/ machines in our conservation area be addressed?

A. *JA invited concerned residents to write to him and acknowledged / agreed that not appropriate in our conservation area*

Q. What about speeds in the village ?

A. *There are a few facilities the Council could apply (maybe by the school). Might involve flashing light signs- not sure if village would accept this ?*

Q. ULEZ cameras. Not appropriate in our conservation area. Will the council be able to resist ?

A. *Council unlikely to concede unless legally obliged*

The Chair thanked Cllr Andrews for his contribution

## 9 Darwin Safer Neighbourhood report – Jo Clark reported (on behalf of Darwin Safer Neighbourhood Team)

Darwin team currently made up of one PCSO and one PC, form part of group of Safer Neighbourhood Team for Darwin ward. Jo Clark chairs Darwin Police ward panel which includes Cudham, Leaves Green, Downe and Pratts Bottom.

Crime in Downe exceptionally low and police resources are correspondingly also low. Our PC Tom Metcalf is very proactive. Darwin has lowest crime rate in the Met.

Crime in area recently includes burglary, motor vehicle theft and criminal damage.

Our crime watch group on WhatsApp works very well.

Recent issues with loose dogs has been resolved and action taken. The dogs will be returned to owners only if conditions stipulated complied with.

Saddle marking /tamper proof registration plate screws/ catalytic converter marking available from police team.

10 **Any other business** - none

**The meeting closed at 9:40pm, followed by cheese and wine for attendees.**