

CANBURY AND RIVERSIDE ASSOCIATION (CARA) AGM 2022:

Minutes of the meeting held at Canbury Pavilion on 13th October 2022 at 7.00pm.

In the Chair:

John Parrish, who welcomed CARA members and our post-AGM speaker, Cllr Noel Hadjmichael.

Apologies were received from CARA committee members Kelly Page and Hugh Scantlebury and from members Anneke Ferrier, Deborah Olszewski, Jonathan Rollason, Mike Simpson, Keith Stuart-Smith and Carol Willis.

Tellers: Charles Roscorla and Liz Poole volunteered to count votes if required.

Minutes of the previous CARA AGM, on 20th October 2021, were approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

CARA Highlights 2021/2022 were presented by John Parrish.

He outlined that the last year had begun with a well-attended AGM after which our MP, Sarah Olney, presented Trevor Willis with CARA's Local Hero award for his work in Canbury Gardens. During the year our local hero was helped in the gardens by local residents, many of whom were CARA members. Trevor's Saturday morning Canbury Gardeners were a regular feature, with highlights being bulb planting - some 40 volunteers planted about 3,000 bulbs – and the Nature Trail, which was given a bat house, a bug hotel and a wood chip path with some children's wood paintings. The nature trail and gardens were to be the base for visits from Year 9 TKA students, with Elliott Newton, RBK Biodiversity Officer, to learn about biodiversity. In April, CARA arranged for Elliott to lead a Bat Walk through the Gardens, enjoyed by some 50 people. CARA organised a big litter-pick last October and continued to provide occasional support and equipment to individuals clearing litter locally, following the very successful campaign initiated by Len Cowking. It was a difficult year for CARA events, with the barbecue and Christmas drinks cancelled due to the pandemic. However, we helped establish Friends of the Bandstand with a formal organisation and bank account so they were able to run a programme of concerts throughout the summer. CARA kept abreast of local planning applications, with involvement in the North Kingston Forum and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. (There were comments from the audience, thanking CARA for helpful responses to some inappropriate development plans, notably on Lower Ham Road and Lower Kings Road.)

We were delighted that CARA member Jonathan Rollason had agreed to chair the local Police Panel. CARA continued to inform members and residents on local issues, distributing 3 Newsletters and sending out the monthly eNews email, which had been well received. CARA had maintained close links with the Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS), and we were pleased that councillors had re-established formal links with that organisation, and the council was discussing TLS scrub cutting along Lower Ham Road and their rewilding project. A key forum for local issues was Canbury Gardens Working Group, which included the riverside. Run by our councillors, this group comprised council officers, contractors, the police, TLS, CARA and other stakeholders, including the Pavilion, The Boaters Inn, the Secret Café, the Rowing Club, the Community Garden and Canbury Gardeners. The CARA committee is supporting a plan to develop a formal organisation provisionally called Friends of Canbury Gardens, with a constitution and bank account, as a focus for the voluntary activities in the Gardens. The Chair encouraged anyone interested in the welfare of the gardens to attend the Friends of Canbury Gardens drop-in session at the Pavilion between 10 am and 12 noon, Saturday 29th October 2022. It had been a difficult year, but there were many positives, especially looking ahead.

Richard Mobbs added that the Chair was too modest to mention another notable highlight - **John Parrish had been awarded the Mayor's Community Award 2022.**

Treasurer's and Membership Report.

Charles Roscorla presented CARA accounts.

He reported that membership continued to be well above 200, but while this meant subscription income continued to be over £1,000, the year's expenditure - mostly on 3 newsletters - resulted in a deficit of £175. Circumstances had prevented CARA holding a barbecue or other income generating event. This might

have avoided the deficit, but members needed to recognise that the £5 a year subscription (which was unchanged for over 20 years) from existing members would not cover our basic activities. Consideration would have to be given to how to balance the books in future, perhaps by encouraging donations. CARA reserves remained high, but the hope was that this money could be used for significant projects (a tree for Canbury Gardens was suggested from the audience) and go towards plans to improve our income and thus turn from deficit to surplus,

The accounts were approved unanimously.

Elections to CARA Committee

The Chair asked for new nominations to the Committee.

Peter Greenwood proposed Liz Poole, seconded by Clare Francis.

The Chair reported that the following 8 current members of the Committee were standing for re-election: Clare Francis, Sharon Langley, Nic Lewisohn, Richard Mobbs, Kelly Page, John Parrish, Charles Roscorla and Hugh Scantlebury. All nine were elected to the Committee unopposed.

Any Other Business

Alan Pettitt reported that since the last AGM he and his team had given CPR training to some 180 volunteers. He commented that the local equipment had been used for emergencies on 3 occasions.

Alan also outlined the new responsibilities undertaken by the local team of NHS First Responders. They would respond to people who had had a fall but were otherwise unhurt without the need for an ambulance crew to attend. The first responders had received additional training and were equipped with a 'raiser chair' so they could check that the faller did not need medical attention, and get them back on their feet.

The meeting was pleased to hear that Alan had been awarded the Emergency Services Medal.

The Chair thanked everybody for joining the meeting, and brought the AGM to a close.