



PSRA

Park Street and District Residents Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 21st April 2021 19.30 Via Zoom

Present: 31 members including committee

1. Chairpersons Introduction

Joy thanked everyone for attending the AGM.

2. Apologies

Sam Cottingham	Stella Nash
Laurie Kanka	Linda Crocker
Di Churcher	Sue Featherstone
Jon Williams	

3. Approval of 2019 AGM Minutes

Chair Joy Mendelsohn sought approval. The minutes were available to view on PSRA website.
Proposed Heidi Patterson Hewson **Seconded** Lorraine Giles.

4. Chairperson's report.

Joy said the committee has increased in size and we now have 16 members she then introduced the team - Chris Matson Secretary, Lucille Hurley Treasurer, Heidi Patterson- Howson Website & Social Media, Christine Lambert & Lorraine Giles Events Coordinators, Julie Glass Membership Secretary. Other committee members include Jon Breen, Dennis Cowen, Laurie Kanka, Stewart Mann, Pam Miller, Jemma Matthews, Luke Selzer, Barbara Vernon, and Dee Youngs our President who she thanked for her 3 years as Chair and for leaving a strong ethos, sound basis and vision for her to build on. Joy thanked everyone for their support throughout the year. Andy Edmunds and Simone Roback have stepped down from the committee but continue to help with events.

Looking back to March 2020 Joy wanted to help the community and through liaison with the local schools set up the PSRA foodbank. The committee agreed to donate £250 from our funds. Raj at Twinsco agreed we could have a food donation point at his shop and a Just Giving Page raised £850. Barbara Vernon raised another few hundred pounds from cake, plant, and book sales. Grants were received £300 from SADC and £1,200 from HCC but the rest of the £3,300 spent so far was donated by extremely generous residents. Several people regularly turned up on Joy's doorstep with a car boot load of supplies. Wenzels donate a weekly supply of bread, cakes, and sandwiches which Christine kindly picks up each week and Pam has helped with deliveries to shielding residents. Joy thanked everyone for their thoughtfulness in donating saying it meant a lot to the families in need.

As many of the parents are now returning to work our support will end in July. The families still in need will be referred to the Vineyard and St Albans Foodbank for future help.



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We finally installed our new 'Welcome to Park Street' signs on the white gates on Park Street Lane entering the village from Bricket Wood and arranged for extra barriers to be installed at the railway bridge on Park Street Lane to protect pedestrians.

We held our Best Kept Front Garden competition last summer and will be holding it again this summer. Details to follow - so keep weeding!

In August last year we held a joint tabletop sale in Oliver Close with Rachael Temple from OSPA (dog rescue charity) which boosted our foodbank coffers.

We were determined to support Macmillan Cancer in September and despite the windy weather we set up a table by the cricket pavilion on the Recreation Ground. With donations of mainly homemade cakes, we raised £550 for Macmillan.

PSRA laid a wreath at the war memorial in November and in December, thanks to help from Cllr Stella Nash, we were able to hold a muted Christmas lights switch on at How Wood shops. We also established a new Christmas Best Decorated House & Garden competition when some cheer was needed. The winners in Orchard Drive were presented with a hamper of Christmas goodies.

On Easter Monday this year, despite freezing temperatures including snow showers, we held a very successful Easter trail arranged by Lucille our Treasurer with free entry for over 115 children under 12 yrs. Every child received an Easter Egg. Lucille bought 140 eggs and those left over cheered up some older members of the community.

We have supported Park Street Pickers with a donation for more equipment as unfortunately litter has increased with more people taking their exercise outdoors.

Park Street News is becoming increasingly popular in the village and is a medium which reaches everyone. Lockdown meant it was read by more people. Thank you to the Advertisers for their support and of course to the dedicated and loyal road agents who have ensured the continuity of the magazine by delivering to 2,500 homes.

Joy thanked Chris for her efficiency and for keeping everyone in touch while we are unable to meet face to face. Jon for his hard work on the Neighbourhood Plan and Heidi for doing a fantastic job re-launching our website and Facebook page. She has kept our profile up to date and doubled our site views from 5,232 to 10,856.

Looking ahead:

We are participating in St. Albans Sustainability Programme in May through activities for children which will be available on our website.

On 4th July this year, we will be holding an afternoon tea party at the village hall for our older residents 70+ who have been shielding. They will be entertained with live music.

We will also be launching a monthly afternoon get together session at the village hall for our older residents on the second Tuesday of each month from August 2021.

We hope to hold our Macmillan Coffee morning inside this year in September and return to our Wellbeing Day in October both in the village hall.

Heidi is busy planning a Halloween event for children.

Thank you for joining us this evening and ensuring Park Street continues to be a caring community.

5. Treasurer's report

Lucille shared the Statement of Accounts as of February 2021. The total income was £6,927.30 which was less than usual due to subscriptions: £2,289.43 down from around the £3,500 normally. There has been an increase in online payments of subs. £3,659.00 was received from PS News advertisers. The £895 received for the Foodbank does not include the cash donations which were accounted for separately. Expenditure of £11,199.18 was higher than normal due to the (one- off payment) for the gates. We have £13,643.38 in the bank so we are currently in a healthy position.

There were no questions for Lucille.

6. Guest Speaker: Sue Hake, St Stephens Parish Council (SSPC) Clerk

Sue gave a power point presentation on her role as Clerk and role of SSPC. She began with the tiers of government.

Herts County Council (HCC) responsible for: - Highways, Education, Social Services, Bus Passes, Registrations of Births, Deaths, Marriages, Benefits Advice, and Blue Badges.

St Albans & District Council (SADC) responsible for: - Planning Applications, Enforcement, Fly Tipping, Waste & Recycling, Verge cutting, Housing, Council Tax, Benefits, Tourism, and Leisure Centres.

St Stephens Parish Council (SSPC) responsible for: - Community Centres, Allotments, Play Areas x6, Sports Pitches, Woodlands, Bus Shelters, Seats & Benches, Planning Consultation, and Community events facilitated with the community.

Role of the Clerk – Sue has a certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) and is the responsible Financial Officer overseeing the finances. Has HR responsibilities, management of property & grounds, administration of contracts and holding/attending meetings.

Council Funding- The Parish Council does strategic planning in the Autumn setting a budget to cover expenditure less other income to establish what Precept (share of council tax) is required to carry out its responsibilities. This is approved in in January and requested from the District Council. The money is collected for them via council tax bills. The other income received by the Parish Council is largely from venues and grounds hire. SSPC lost around £80,000 of hire income due to Covid. For 2021/2022 the Precept is £569,373 and they forecast a reduced income from the 2020 – 2021 budgeted figure of £190,000 to £123,478 for 2021 – 2022.

SSPC has 3 allotment sites, St Julien's and Blackgreen woodlands to maintain and complete H&S checks using an external contractor. Six play areas, they are hoping to obtain section 106 monies working with the District Council to replace some play equipment. Maintain parks, open spaces, and

sports pitches. Litter has been a problem and Sue thanked the litter pickers for their work. The Neighbourhood Plan is close to a referendum.

Future Plans- SSPC is reviewing how they work and manage their resources to improve efficiency and engage more with the community.

Sue asked if there were any questions.

Q. Jon Breen asked why as a larger Parish we received fewer revenues than others?

A. Sue said the revenue received is based on properties not residents and they receive more income from other sources such as hire of facilities. Finances were stable going forward.

Q. Frances Smith asked why there were no longer any benches in the woods at How Wood. Twelve years ago, there were 3 benches, two were vandalised and not replaced, and the remaining one was sawed through when the paths were being re done?

A. Cllr David Parry answered saying those woods were managed by the District Council and not the Parish Council. Cllr Syed Abidi SADC said it was in hand and he would follow it up.

Q. Winston Bothwell asked as the Grounds Maintenance team had been significantly reduced how did they propose to continue the upkeep?

A. Sue explained one of the team had reached retirement age, a second retired early and the third was on long term sick. Leaving the Groundsman Matt who is being supported by Josh who does maintenance who will now work on both grounds and buildings. Grass cutting is being contracted out as a trial.

Q. Christine Lambert asked about a change in relation to the Parish Centre in Bricket Wood?

A. Cllr David Parry answered saying the Parish Centre was not fit for purpose and the building could not be converted if they had a disabled staff member or Councillor with mobility issues. They are looking to build something with improved community facilities elsewhere. It has been put forward on the District Council's Call for Sites. He couldn't say anymore as to where it would be built as not yet in the public domain. In 6 months, they may be able to consult residents.

Q. The Chair Joy asked what was happening with the Barn?

A. Cllr David Parry said no decision had been made but could possibly stay as a centre for maintenance or be converted to offices.

Q. Christine Lambert asked what the relationship was between the Village Hall and the Parish Council?

A. Cllr David Parry said the Parish Council was not responsible for the Village Hall and did nothing in relation to it.

Q. Simon Mostyn asked how many staff were at the Parish Office?

A. Sue said there was 1 part time admin member of staff on long term sick, Dani the Bookings Officer, Isabel Assistant Clerk and herself who can and have also been working intermittently and



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seamlessly at home with phones diverted during Covid. They no longer have anyone working on events and hoped in the future to facilitate working with local organisations to run events, by providing venues and help with grant funding.

Cllr David Parry added that they were changing the name to Community & Leisure and recruiting representatives from the 3 Residents Associations. The aim is to support residents with the events they wanted.

Q. Jon Breen asked about the cutting of grass verges. The contractors cut the grass but did not trim the edges or sweep the cut grass off the verges so not value for money.

A. Cllr David Parry said Parish only cut the grass in the parks. The grass verges were the District Council's responsibility. Cllr Syed Abidi asked Jon to bring examples to his attention. Jon said the corner of How Wood and Park Street Lane was one example. Syed asked him to email him with others.

Dee Youngs commented, whilst recognising the need to keep the village nice and tidy some grass should be left longer for biodiversity. Dave Parry agreed and added that some green areas were being and will be left.

The Chair Joy thanked Sue Hake for her presentation.

Sue, in turn, thanked everyone for their support since moving here and PSRA for setting up the Foodbank.

7. Election of Officers.

The Chair sought a vote of the following officers standing for re-election:

Chair- Joy Mendelsohn

Proposed Jon Breen **Seconded** Pam Miller

Treasurer- Lucille Hurley

Proposed Heidi Patterson-Howson **Seconded** Jon Breen

Vice Chair currently remains vacant.

President - Dee Youngs

Proposed Jon Breen **Seconded** Sandra Constable

Honorary Auditors

Retain the current Auditors for a further year: Ian La Riviere and David Prince.

Proposed Sandra Constable **Seconded** Jon Breen

8. AOB

Cllr Syed Abidi asked when the results of the PSRA survey would be available?



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Christine Lambert said 19 people had responded and it would be available to view shortly on our website.

Sandra Constable the previous PSRA president wrote a message thanking the Committee for being a great asset to the village raising our profile with new signs, the Foodbank, and Easter Treasure Hunt etc.

There were no other questions.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.35pm.