

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Manor Primary School – 13th May 2025

1. Welcome and introductions and apologies

The Chairman, Paul Sparks opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Apologies for absence (in the order received):

Cllr. Angie Smith
Cllr. Chris Macve
Simon Tuck
Kenneth Robinson
Dorothy Sparks
Julia Brown
Norman Mayer
Pam and Keith Baker
Jenni Povey-Meier
Frank Phillips
Cllr. Mike McClafferty
Val and Ian Lavendar
Anna Elliot
Cllr. Dan Manvell
Sally Major
Penny Barnes

2. Presentations

The meeting was preceded by two very interesting presentations given by: Lorraine Kirkwood, Project Manager at the Uckfield Foodbank; and Laura Taylor-Innes, Director at the Uckfield Community Fridge.

The Association can provide information about these two valuable services for those that missed the meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last AGM held on 29 February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising.

4. Report from the Chairman of the Association

Paul Sparks, Chairman of the Association, gave the following report:

"I am very pleased to report that it has been another very successful year for our Residents' Association thanks mainly to our wonderful volunteers and officers. The Surgery Car service continues to provide a valuable service to our residents, and I would like to thank our 11 drivers for their contribution.

We also provide a Good Neighbour Scheme supported by 9 volunteers and this has proven to be of real value to many of our residents.

Both of these services are supported by our telephone call handling service and again we have 5 call handlers providing a valuable service to our residents.

A new service we formed in response to the cost of living issue was the Warm Welcome held every Tuesday morning in the Luxford Centre. This has proved to be very popular so has continued as a year round service and not just for the cold winter months. Again, this is mainly as a result of the input from our volunteers providing a very warm welcome to all those attending and I thank them all.

We are currently considering an afternoon excursion service for those residents that are not able to get out much. This would be a car trip to some of our wonderful countryside in and around Uckfield and we already have 6 drivers willing to provide this service so we are now trying to obtain the funding.

Some volunteers support more than one activity but we have over 30 in total and I would like to thank each and everyone for their support and enthusiasm.

I am delighted that our various benches around the estate are being well used by residents and visitors and very pleased that the one outside the new development of Coronation Place has been reinstated and is looking very good.

I attended a tour of Coronation Place with other Association members and we were impressed with this new development particularly with regard to energy efficiency. We look forward to welcoming new residents to our Association.

We also receive many good comments regarding our flower planters and thanks to Dorothy, Stuart and others for their involvement with these.

Hope to see you around and look forward to another successful year for your Residents' Association."

5. Report from the Treasurer:

Gabriella Paterson-Griggs, the treasurer, gave the following report:

End of Year 2024/25

The audited accounts show that as at 31st March 2025 the Residents' Committee account had a balance of £2283.19 (excluding allocated funds)

The Association has two bank accounts – a current account and a savings account so that some interest can be made on the funds it keeps.

Grants Awarded 2024/25

Donation received from the Midsummer Festival Committee of £500 towards the cost of the Big Lunch in June 2024.

Awards for All - £6700 for continuing the Warm Welcome for a further two years taking us to December 2026. This was the total amount applied for.

Allocated Funds unspent as at 31 March 2025

Warm Welcome donations - £580 to be used for warm welcome only

Awards for All - £5680 for the continuing Warm Welcome project.

Income 2024-2025

Subscriptions continued to be the main source of income @£5 per household followed by funds from the Wealden Community Lottery as well as a small amount from Easy Fundraising. Grant funding continued to be achieved for the Warm Welcome project and the Big Lunch.

Payments 2024-2025

The usual website hosting costs, insurance premium and phone charges for the surgery car service and good neighbour scheme were paid. Other admin costs remained low.

Monies were also used for installing the new flagpole on the estate and for the verge welcome sign. Unfortunately, we are now being charged when we pay cheques in to the bank so we will be revisiting that before January when the subscriptions are next due.

Wealden Community Lottery

Without the Wealden community lottery we wouldn't have been able to make the enhancements to the estate that we have such as the welcome sign and flagpole. It is more straightforward than having to apply for grants for these kinds of items so please do join up if you haven't already. For each lottery ticket you buy for a £1 the association receives 50p and you get a chance to win cash prizes up to £25k.

6. Report from the Secretary

Peter Griggs, the Secretary, gave the following report:

These are some of the Association's activities that have taken place since the AGM last February, not including our ongoing Surgery Car Service, Good Neighbour Scheme and Tuesday Warm Welcome.

- Big Lunch in June - raised £250 for KSS AA
- Walking Car Boot Sale in September - £200 for Chestnut Tree Hospice for Children
- Question Time in October - discussion dominated by car parking problems
- Remembrance parade in November - a wreath was laid on behalf of the Association
- More recently in a desire to create more of a community focus:
- A welcome sign attached to the planter at top of Browns Lane installed in March 25
- Flagpole installed in April 25 - flag with our logo always flown plus flags for key national events plus Sussex Day in June

Topics for the next 12 months include:

- New dropped kerbs project:

Phase one will see four junctions in Downsview Crescent, as follows –

- Junction of Birch Close and Downsview Crescent
- Junction of Sycamore Close and Downsview Crescent
- Junction of Pine Walk and Downsview Crescent
- Junction of Woodlands Close and Downsview Crescent

Thanks to Cllr Claire Dowling for supporting the Association with this project and also to Tom Crellin who undertook a comprehensive and detailed survey which demonstrated the need and helped us formulate our request to County Highways.

For phase two the Association will be seeking additional dropped kerbs in Browns Lane

- Walking Garage Sale – 29th June 2025 - the money raised will go to a local charity
- Shoppers Discount Scheme – will relaunched and expanded
- Scarecrow competition in August (Cllr French recommended we liaise with another group that is planning something similar)

The Good Neighbour Scheme now has the same phone number as the surgery car service - 01825 578006. This was changed to cut the costs of the phone service for the coming year.

The Association will also be monitoring progress with the High Street's temporary lights at The Maiden's Head and parking at events being held at the Rugby Club

Finally, some thank you's:

- Peter Oliver Homes - for providing signage free of charge for the Walking Garage Sale
- The Uckfield Lions Club - for working with the Association to replace the rusty defibrillator cabinet located outside Tesco Express with a new more conspicuous and illuminated cabinet.
- Ric Mears (Mearsy Services Ltd) – for his help with installing the flagpole and other jobs he undertakes for the association around the estate.

7. Amendments to the Constitution

There were no requests to make amendments to the Association's Constitution.

8. Election of Officers

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were proposed, seconded and voted into office unanimously:

Chair: Paul Sparks

Treasurer: Gabriella Paterson Griggs

Secretary: Peter Griggs

9. Election of the Committee

The following were proposed, seconded and voted into office unanimously

Committee members:

Hattie Camsell

Belinda Da Silva

Sue Fenwick

Phil Paton

Jenni Povey-Meier

Jane Shepherd

Dorothy Sparks

Note:

The constitution provides for a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and nine other committee members.

There are currently two vacancies for committee members.

The Chairman thanked Julia Brown and Jeremy Miller for their past work on the committee.

10. At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman invited questions from the floor

- (1) *Does the Association liaise with other residents' associations in the town?* The Secretary advised that it had in the past, but the Fernley Park, Church Coombe and Grants Hill Court associations no longer seem to be active and the Selby Meadow group focusses on a quite small local area.
- (2) *What can be done about trees and shrubs that are allowed to grow over and obstruct the pavements or twittens?* The Secretary said that in the case of pavements they fell within the remit of ESCC Highways. Instances can be reported online or by phone (0345 60 80 193). Where there is a problem with unadopted twittens then it maybe that

the Brighter Uckfield group could help (email info@brighteruckfield.com or phone 07985 783682). Stuart mentioned that he looks after Tower Ride voluntarily.

- (3) *Coronation Place, is the verge and the kerb in Southview Drive going to be reseeded and repaired?* It was reported that most of the verge had been reseeded, but a small stretch was still to be done. Cllr. Williams said he would pursue this matter with Wealden DC. It was noted that the granite setts had been repaired.
- (4) *What is happening about the Maiden's Head and the delays caused by the temporary traffic lights?* Cllr. Williams advised that this had given rise to a very difficult legal situation and that Wealden DC had employed a barrister to look at every angle and advise on the best way forward to achieve a solution and recover any costs that arise. There have also been difficulties in communicating with the owner of the property. We should not expect a quick solution.
- (5) *Can anything be done to prevent the chaotic parking that occurs when the Uckfield Rugby Club holds large events at the ground?* The Secretary stated that the Association was very much aware of the problem and that it had been in touch with the club's chairman. He had advised the Association of the various actions that the club currently took to address the issues. The club has offered to meet representatives from the Association to discuss the issue further. The Chairman and Secretary will be taking up that offer as it is felt that further measures to mitigate the impact are worth pursuing.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm.