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181 SUMMER
2008

THE NEWSLETTER

CIRCULATION
3,800

DORRIDGE & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman: DAVID GLANFIELD ~ 779635 • Secretary: MALCOLM SHEPHERD ~ 773374

e-mail address: dorridgeresidents@googlemail.com • www.dorridge.org.uk

GLAD TO MEET YOU

We were pleased to welcome an encouraging turnout at our AGM in March; it really gives the Committee a boost when so many residents come along to support us. The decision not to invite a feature speaker this year was clearly the right one, as a much larger number remained for the second half of the evening and a number of important issues were raised.

The event was also something of a turning point in the history of the DDRA, and we are moving rapidly into a new phase in our development. So it was.....

.....GOODBYE AND HELLO.

Goodbye first of all to five committee members, Margaret Johnson, Bridget Trangmar, Nest Overend, Pam Nunn and Peter Radnall, who leave us with our thanks for their loyal service and our best wishes for the future. And it's 'Hello' to Jane Holt and Paul Day. Both are particularly welcome additions to the committee as they live in Bentley Heath and our regular readers will know that we have been trying hard to find Bentley Heath residents who could keep us up to date on the needs and desires of that part of our patch. Apart from reporting on Bentley Heath issues Jane will also be helping to feed our notice boards, and Paul is our new Treasurer, having contacted us following the recent appeal in the local press. Changing faces means changing roles so the Committee felt it would be useful for us to publish a revised list of Committee Members with their various responsibilities.

Here it is

NAME	CONTACT	ROLE(S)
David Glanfield	779635	Chairman, Police, Newsletter publication.
Glennis Portsmouth	77 5032	Vice Chair, Youth, Police.
Phil Smith	77 3332	Vice Chair, Community development.
Malcolm Shepherd	77 3374	Secretary.
Paul Day	77 3936	Treasurer.
Ian Spencer	77 0813	Planning applications, Community development.
Helen Bragg	77 5358	Membership Secretary.
Martin Lambert	77 9259	Rail Transport (SALRUA), Education.
Diane Waldron	77 8954	Newsletter distribution
Chris Haswell	77 8954	Newsletter distribution
Alan Holder	77 8652	Committee Member
David Bell	77 5920	Committee Member
Jane Holt	77 9235	Committee Member

You can contact the committee via any of the above, but we have decided to introduce additional ways for you to become involved in local matters. Henceforth we will publish the dates of all Committee Meetings. If you wish the committee to discuss a particular issue you can have it included on the agenda, but please help us by notifying Malcolm Shepherd of the item at least two weeks before the meeting. You may also, if you wish, ask to introduce your own topic, which will then be placed at the top of the agenda so that you



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can remain during that particular part of the meeting. Finally, we will publish a brief report on each meeting on our Notice Boards.

All Committee Meetings take place at Hogarth's Hotel at 7.30pm and the dates for this year are : Mondays 16 June, 1 September, 3 November, 12 January 2009, 23 February 2009. The Annual General Meeting is at Bentley Heath Community Hall on Thursday March 5th 2009.

FOREST COURT NEWS

In the Autumn of last year we asked a sample cross section of residents to complete a questionnaire designed to illustrate people's perception of Dorridge as a place to live and to suggest ways in which it could be improved. We are grateful to all those who responded and their views have been very helpful to the committee members working on the regeneration of the village centre. Predictably, Forest Court remains at the core of the problem and the working party has now produced a professional looking brochure with text and photos designed to attract potential developers to the area. This has been sent to a small number of carefully selected developers and architects with an invitation to meet us in Dorridge to examine the site and discuss options. The package has also been sent to our three ward councillors and to the Managing Agents, Freeholders and Leaseholders of Forest Court. Moves are also afoot to put Dorridge on the agenda of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) consultations. We will continue to do all we can to keep the focus on the village centre and will, as ever, keep you informed of progress.

HOW DO WE SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE

.....holes in the road, dangerous crossings, speeding.... We met recently with Kerry Mountjoy, our Neighbourhood Coordinator, and handed over a number of issues that Kerry has taken back to the Council. On the Bentley Heath list were parking problems, speeding, obstruction, and the lack of pedestrian crossings, and in Dorridge the state of Arden Drive leading to the park, the

redundant green notice board and parking time limits in Arden Square, and the need to improve awareness of the pedestrian crossing by the railway bridge. Kerry has already acted to have the drains in Arden Drive cleared as a first step towards making some improvements there. We anticipate a site meeting shortly in Bentley Heath to look at the problems there.

NEWS FROM THE NICK

Sergeant Ann Strachan reports that once again end-of-year crime figures for across the Borough show an overall recorded crime reduction, down by 11.77%. In human terms this means 2293 fewer victims, with robbery 33% down and criminal damage down by 19.47% (822 fewer incidents). Vehicle crime fell by 23.32%, meaning 772 fewer victims.

We are pleased to welcome PC Colin Jewell to the Dorridge and Hockley Heath team. Colin will be working alongside Simon Harrison and PCSO Roger Downes and should already be a visible presence on our streets.

Speeding continues to attract the attention of The Law, and the Speed Watch scheme will shortly be launched in Tidbury Green. Community volunteers will monitor and record speeds at known hotspots and offenders will receive warning letters from the police. Persistent offenders will be identified and the police can then use enforcement devices to bring prosecutions. We look forward to the arrival of the scheme on our own patch!! And should anyone doubt the need, Simon Harrison reports that speeds of up to 80 miles per hour have been recorded on 30mph roads.

And finally – how to talk to the police. The next Dorridge Surgeries will be held in Forest Court between 10.00am and noon on Tuesdays 3 June and 1 July. There will be no surgery in August and PC Sharon Williams is reviewing procedures from September. She is concerned that there is a lack of privacy at her Forest Court pitch and it is very uncomfortable if the weather is chilly. If anyone has any thoughts on improvements or a different location you can e-mail Sharon at sharon.williams@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk.

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We do not have a date for the next Dorridge and Hockley Heath Priorities meeting but will publish this in Notice Boards and on our website as soon as we have it. The contacts are :

knowledorridge@west-midlands.police.uk

Crimestoppers	0800 555 111	
Sgt Strachan	0845 113 5000	Ext 7928 6666
PC Harrison	0845 113 5000	Ext 7928 6264
PC Jewell	0845 113 5000	Ext 7928 6264
PC Williams	0845 113 5000	Ext 7928 6264
PCSO Downes	0845 113 5000	Ext 7928 6264

FANCY A TRIP TO THE NICK?

Solihull Police Station in Homer Road is planning an Open Day on Sunday 22 June so if you have ever wondered what the inside of a Police Station is like but don't wish to commit a crime to find out, put the date in your diary now then keep your eyes open for more details later in the local press and on our website and Notice Boards.

OUR MEMBERSHIP FIGURES ARE LOOKING GOOD.

As at April 14 we had 709 paid-up members for the new year, 104 up on the same time last year. Of these 216 were new members, but 485 existing members had not renewed. We have no doubt that they will in due course, but now is perhaps the time for a reminder of why we need your cash. In the year 2007/8 we spent money on landscaping and gardening at the station and on Station Approach, two new benches on the edge of the spinney at Avenue Road and Dorridge Road, Christmas lights, prizes for competition winners at the Police drugs awareness week at Arden School, and a whopping £5800.00 as our contribution towards new play equipment in Hanbury Park. We also have to pay Public Liability insurance and purchase sundry consumables such as copy paper and ink cartridges. Income from members' subscriptions is essential to our continued (and meaningful) existence and we reckon that £1 per head per year isn't a bad price for what you

get. There is a payment slip at the end of this newsletter and membership is open to all over 18s living in our area. And the area is clearly defined – if you receive a newsletter, you're in it!

TALKING OF WHICH.....

The Newsletter is delivered by a loyal band of volunteers and they are always ready to welcome a new pair of feet. If you don't mind a walk and would be willing to turn out four times a year to take over a round, contact Diane Waldron on 77 8954.

IT'S NOT OVER UNTIL.....

Well actually there are no fat ladies at the Motorway Service Area Public Inquiry but we'll know it's over when the Inspector rises and declares that he wishes to hear no more. For various rather boring reasons the event has dragged on much longer than planned and there are still two more sittings, one in May and another in June. DDRA gave its Proofs of Evidence in March and we did receive a bit of a kicking from one of the barristers. However, we included all the views we received from residents; some very valid points were made and we thank you for your support. Now the waiting begins.....again!

PETITION FOR PROTECTION

We reported in the last newsletter that we were concerned at the Council's rather leisurely timescale for change in planning guidance and we are still disappointed by the Council's contention that a quick response was not possible because work needed to be done on the next major plan, which will not be implemented until 2010. We disagree with this approach, so, having taken stock and with the elections out of the way, we will be looking to work with our councillors to address some specific failings. Without addressing these we have local policy that the planners say cannot be imposed on the applicants, leaving the public interest unprotected. An example is the Environment Policy which SMBC knows is

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