

The West Park Chronicle

May 2007

The community newspaper for West Park

Report on the AGM

The 4th April Annual General Meeting was well attended with over ninety present and apologies from many other residents. Hopefully this brief summary will give an insight into the meeting's proceedings for those who were unable to attend.

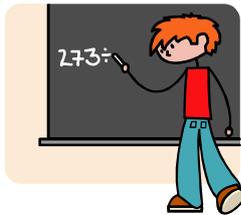
Officers

Doug Kemp (Chair), Nina Foster (Secretary) and Hazel Purse (Treasurer) were re-elected, along with committee members – David Tong, Steve Taylor, Terry Jacques, Marie Glover, Joan Peters and Rita Marshall.

Lawnswood School

Reports were received concerning two recent meetings with the School. Sadly the overall view was that the school could do much more to stop what was considered to be ever-worsening anti-social behaviour by a significant minority of school children.

Vandalism, intimidation and litter increasingly affected residents' lives, especially during lunchtimes. Truancy also seems to be rife, despite the efforts of the local police and the school's education welfare officer.



Further to a lively discussion, a motion from the floor was passed unanimously demanding that the school instigate changes by the end of the summer term to improve matters.

The Association has written to the Headmaster, and further meetings with the school are expected within the next week or so.

The Association is examining the purchase of a video surveillance system that could be loaned out to residents experiencing problems around their property.

Litter

Following a campaign by a local resident and the Association the Spen Lane area has improved as regards litter, although the daily dumping of fish and chip cartons by school children makes any improvement short-lived.



A representative from Streetscene (LCC environmental services) informed the meeting that fines had been issued to three people in the area, including twice to one pupil, and that extra bins were being supplied to the area. Talks were also taking place with local fast-food retailers.

Local Representatives

MP Greg Mulholland along with four of the local councillors for Weetwood and Kirkstall attended the meeting. Apologies were received from the remaining two councillors.

Greg Mulholland thanked residents for the opportunity to hear about the issues affecting them. Amongst other matters, he confirmed receiving a large numbers of constituency complaints in respect of Lawnswood School.



He distributed a letter concerning the new powers from 1st April of a recent Education Act regarding discipline. This Act empowers schools to restrain and discipline unruly pupils both inside and outside the school gates.

He has also written to the Schools Minister about the problems caused by insufficient dining and social space and which are a result of inadequacies in the design of the building. Lawnswood was one of five schools in Leeds built during the first phase of PFI investment in schools.

Planning Issues

It was confirmed that the decking in front of 291 Spen Lane (Butcher Hill) was required to be removed as part of the planning approval. It is clear that sometimes things can take a long time to happen.

One resident questioned the practice of the Association sending out details on local planning applications, along with a specimen objection letter. In response it was pointed out that the Association always made it clear in circulating details that it was up to the individual to decide IF they wished to make an objection. Specimen objection letters helped to clarify the grounds on which an objection might be based. The Association was not against changes in the area, but sometimes, particularly for some in-fill developments, proposals were felt to be “over-ambitious” and not in keeping with the character of the area and this is why the Association brings applications to the notice



of residents.

Almost unanimously the meeting supported the Association in respect of its current practice and asked that it continue to circulate details and specimen letters in the future.

Other issues discussed

- West Park fields – new wooden “fence” to be erected along Spen Lane boundary.
- Traffic and parking – concern over heavy traffic on roads, increased on-pavement parking in the area.
- Conservation Area – documentation with Council, now needs to go through formal process.
- The new Association web-site at <http://www.westparkresidents.org.uk/>.

The Chair thanked local councillors and residents for their support during the past year, and the meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Note: Since the meeting Ken Torode has volunteered, and been co-opted, onto the Association committee.

The West Park Wine Walk

In 2005 to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Edwardian area of West Park, local resident John Richards organised a 'Wine Walk' whereby five volunteers opened their garden and/or house to other local residents. The event was repeated in 2006. They provided a wonderful opportunity to meet neighbours and make new friends and acquaintances while enjoying wine, light refreshments and nibbles. The West Park Residents Association is in the process of organising this year's Wine Walk, open to all members of the Residents' Association.



Further details to follow – but in the meantime why not pencil-in the afternoon of Sunday 27th May (2.30 – 5.30) as an event not to be missed?

Subscriptions

Thank you to all residents who have already sent in their subscription for the current year. If any of your neighbours wish to join the Association, please ask them to send £3 along with their name, address, telephone number, and email address to the Treasurer, 26 Ring Road, West Park, Leeds, LS16 6EJ.

The West Park Chronicle

This first edition of the Chronicle is circulated to Association members in either email or printed form. It is aimed at keeping all members informed of matters that could affect the local community. REMEMBER the Association exists because you as individuals take the time to notice things and to alert us, and hence the rest of the community, about what is happening in the area. The next edition is planned for June and contributions from local residents would be most welcome. Please contact the editor Doug Kemp on.

