

Barden Residents Association AGM Wednesday 30th November 2016

# In Attendance

Mark Hood (Co-Chair), Debbie Burkin (Co-Chair), Lucy Athey (secretary), Fran Long (treasurer), Molly Zimmerman, Mary Stevens, Julie Hadaway (Lane), Harry Elliot, Helen Kirk, Clive Ashdown, Jon Sidaway, Megan LeGoubin, Greg Fox, Robert Cronin, PCSO William Fisher, Alan Watson (Speed Watch)

# Approval of Minutes & Apologies

Mark Hood (co-chair) called the meeting to order and welcomed all residents attending. The previously circulated minutes from the meeting on 27th April were approved. Apologies from Laura Fox, Fred Long, Jo Young, Julie Bowie, Warren Nel, Gill Sargent, Averil Langridge, Cindy Parkhurst

# Presentation from PCSO Fisher & Speedwatch’s Alan Watson

Alan Watson, from Kent Community Speedwatch gave a presentation about the scheme that helps volunteers to record the speed of passing drivers using a portable speed indication device. Usually parish councils fund the equipment needed but it is possible we may be able to borrow some if our area is deemed suitable. Volunteers would also be given training to use the equipment. A risk assessment will be carried out to see if Barden is suitable however it may not as usually the equipment cannot be placed too close to a junction or parked cars (something we have plenty of!). See [www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk), Facebook: kentspeedwatch or Twitter @kentspeedwatch for more details.

PCSO Coe (our community police officer for Barden area) was unfortunately unable to attend but PCSO William Fisher (who covers the town centre, among other areas) attended in her absence. He informed us about the Section 34 dispersal area around McDonalds as DB was concerned about the crowds of teenagers who regularly block the pavement and can appear intimidating to those passing; the order allows the police to ban an individual from the area for 48 hours if behaviour warrants it. PCSO Fisher also stressed that residents should call 101 if they witness any anti-social behaviour. MH asked if the council and police could liaise to improve the lighting in the river lawn area and use the flood lights on the football/basketball cage in the park as he believes this would help draw youths away from the high street and make residents feel safer when walking in this area. A discussion was also had regarding the alcohol-free zone in this area; can the signage be improved? PCSO Fisher said he would pass these suggestions on to the council.

# Election of Officers & Committee Members

Mark Hood stepped down as co-chair and was immediately re-elected as chair (proposed by Greg Fox and seconded by Fran Long). Debbie Burkin has decided to step down as co-chair due to increased work commitments and was thanked for all she has done in our first year as a residents association. Jon Sidaway kindly offered to step up for the new vice-chair position. Lucy and Fran were both re-elected as secretary and treasurer respectively. Greg Fox, Julie Lane and Megan LeGoubin were all voted on as committee members.

# First Year Round Up

*Just over a year ago after witnessing the way a planning meeting dismissed the opinions of a group of residents over the Enterprise House Project we embarked on setting up the Barden Residents Association.*

*Myself and Debbie asked for some guidance from our friends in the Slade and we called our first meeting. Fran Long and Lucy Athey kindly agreed to stand in as Treasurer and Secretary*

*We have had an interesting first year, we have helped highlight the appalling treatment of Tonbridge and District Properties Tenants in Norfolk Road when they discovered their street was up for sale. We have highlighted the pressure on many residents to afford rising rents and having to move away.*

*We have received an Environmental Champions Award from TMBC and held three litter blitzs to improve our corner of Tonbridge. We held a Christmas Window Competition and Barden in Bloom Hanging Basket Competition.*

*Despite some challenging conditions we successfully held our Party in the Park summer social in the sportsground, complete with a Spitfire and Hurricane flypast. This was achieved courtesy of Tonbridge Juniors and the Hardcastle Family and with musical accompaniment from Gez Gold and Uplift with the Widdecombe family.*

*We have put up our first three noticeboards thanks to donations by Wood and Pilcher and Tonbridge Juniors FC and with the kind permission of Claire at Barden Stores and Tonbridge Station.*

*We have had a long running consultation over parking which has been controversial to say the least. We have collected a 530 signature petition to support our campaign to reduce the speed limit to 20mph and continue to press for this.*

*By next year we will have a functioning website to keep everyone updated and we will push for an increase in members and for more residents to be involved in our association. We will continue to look after our friends and neighbours and the corner of Tonbridge we call home. M. Hood*

# Save Our Boatyard

Helen Kirk and Jon Sidaway gave us an update; they are still resident but currently in limbo. They have received more letters from the land owners threatening eviction but said that if they attempt to touch their boats or cut off essential supplies like the water supply then the boat owners will have police protection on their side.

# Making Barden Area a Conservation Area

Mark has been in touch with the council and Slade Area Residents Association after this was raised at the last meeting (with a view to protecting the boatyard). He will continue to research this and feedback at the next meeting in January.

# Nelson Arms & Enterprise House

The Nelson Arms public house is up for sale, and the current landlady has given her notice in. Mark has been in touch with the regeneration officer with a view to protecting the existing building by making it an “asset of the community”. It was agreed that the Barden Residents Association would apply to have the pub designated as an ‘Asset of the Community’ as a matter of urgency.

Our Christmas party will be held there on the 11th December, there will be a raffle and residents are invited to bring a plate of party food. Enterprise House – any issues with the site are passed on to the builders by Sarah Brown and quickly dealt with.

# Speed Restrictions and Parking

We submitted a “freedom of information” request to Tonbridge & Malling Council regarding the number of permits allocated, percentage of business permits etc. They were unable to inform us how many parking spaces there currently are in Barden. The council are reviewing the new parking scheme after 12-18 months.

## AOB

ML queried the amount of heavy tankers currently travelling up and down Barden. Lucy to pass on information about who to contact about overhanging trees to JL.

## Next Meeting

**Tuesday 31st January 2017** (a different night than our usual Wednesday so that our Neighbourhood Watch representative can attend).