

## **REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF THE GPCA**

**by Irene Watson, Chair of the GPCA, on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

At the AGM in November 2017, Peter Hill gave notice of his decision to stand down from the role of Treasurer – which he had held since 2004 – at the end of the GPCA's financial year in June.

Since then:

- the vacancy has been registered with Volunteer Woking and the details updated twice;
- all the local accountancy firms were contacted to see if they knew of anyone who might be interested in volunteering;
- the local schools were asked to circulate details in the parent newsletter;
- the local churches were asked to give details in their "Notices";
- the vacancy has been advertised in the last three issues of Goldsworth News;
- and through social media on Facebook and Twitter;
- there has been an article in the Woking News and Mail;
- the new Community Matters volunteering organisation in Woking has been contacted;
- details have been on the noticeboards outside Waitrose and the Community Hall for 3 months;
- there has been word-of-mouth canvassing and networking.

To date, there has been only one tentative enquiry which was later withdrawn.

Add to this, Paul Davies, Vice Chair who looked after the building, is relocating to Dorset next week and the new note taker has said she is unable to continue.

The GPCA is a registered charity with a constitution approved by the Charity Commission. The Constitution identifies the Officers of the Executive Committee as Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and such other officers as may be determined from time to time. At least three of the members of the Executive Committee must be Trustees.

For the last 5 years, there has been only a Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. I undertook the role of Secretary in addition to being Chair, although there has been a note take for most of that time. This arrangement ensured that the GPCA had the requisite three Trustees.

Now, within the next few weeks, the GPCA will have a Chair and no other Executive Committee Members or Trustees. George Binyon, Editor of Goldsworth News and Gerry Smeesters, NGP Project Manager, have agreed to be co-opted onto the Executive Committee and can then become Trustees but there will still be no Vice Chair or Treasurer. This is unconstitutional and the GPCA cannot continue like this.

The role of Treasurer is not necessarily a job for an accountant – the number crunching is done with a computer program – but someone numerate who can interpret the figures, report on the finances at meetings and to the Charity Commission at end-of-year is needed. Most importantly, the Treasurer is required to advise the Executive Committee on the Charity Commission and Inland Revenue regulations and ensure that the GPCA operates within them.

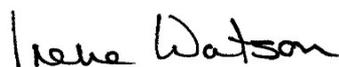
I have to make it clear that, unless volunteers for the roles of Treasurer and Vice Chair come forward within the next month, I will begin the process of winding up the GPCA.

If/when this happens, there are many implications:

- the Community Hall will be handed back to Woking Borough Council which, hopefully, will continue to operate it for the benefit of the community as they do with The Vyne, Lakeview Community Centre, Moorcroft, etc.;
- there will be no more Goldsworth News or website;
- there will be no organisation to campaign and succeed in getting facilities such as the public toilets in the recreation ground;
- there will be no organisation to implement social benefits such as replacing the maps around the park or installing community noticeboards;
- there will be no organisation to monitor planning applications and take action when the proposal is to the detriment of the community, such as when the owners of the shopping centre applied to demolish all the small shops and build a retail park, or when they applied to build houses on the copse behind Waitrose, or when Waitrose applied to install tables and chairs on the walkway under the canopy;
- there will be no organisation to take up issues such as North Meadow with the Council. The demise of the GPCA will impact on the Natural Goldsworth Park project since, without the backing of a Registered Charity, it may prove difficult to source grants and there would be no organisation to maintain accounts. There would be no insurance cover for NGP volunteers. The same goes for the Lake Bank project;
- there will be no more representation at the Act of Remembrance at the Goldsworth Park War Memorial;
- there will be no Christmas Tree and Carols in the shopping centre courtyard;
- there will be no more litter picks;
- there will be no-one to help residents with planning issues or problems with common areas.

In the first instance, the decision to dissolve the GPCA will be made by the Executive Committee but the final decision is down to the residents of Goldsworth Park at a Special General Meeting – but I wonder if anyone will attend such a meeting. Only 11 residents attended the AGM in November, 7 attended the January meeting and there are 5 residents at the meeting tonight.

It is disappointing and disheartening to those of us who have worked so hard and for so many years for the people of Goldsworth Park that, from the 12,000 or so residents, so few can be bothered to attend meetings and not one is prepared to take on a role on the Executive Committee.



Chair, GPCA  
24<sup>th</sup> April 2018