



**MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on WEDNESDAY, 19th October 2022 in The Lodge**

Present

Trustees and Postholders

Irene Watson – Chair
Celia Young – Secretary
Tina Hartley – Treasurer
George Binyon – Trustee
Bob Challoner – Project Manager, NGP
Bob Cowell – Communities Officer
Chris Taylor – Editor, Goldsworth News
Christina Candey – Advertising Manager

Corporate Members

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker – WBC
Cllr James Sanderson – WBC
Cllr Saj Hussain – SCC
Seanne Hunter-Hill – WBC
Hilary Harris – GP Cubs
Rev Scott Smith – St Andrew's Church
Patrick Coad – St Andrew's Church
Gary Rimap-Muranyi – Dianthus Trading
Roger Westcott – GPAC
Richard Sadler – GPAC

Apologies - Corporate

Sandie Bolger – SCC Youth Development Officer

Individual Members

Hilary & Michael Addison
Wanda Binyon
Jesse Boon
Dueyna Chinere
Martin Clark
Maryel Cowell
Steve Davies
Peter Eggleton
Aenne & Roger Hayman
Jim Mackay
Pamela Marshall
Ian Rickard
Royer Slater
Pam Taylor
Liz Wilkinson
Steve Willson

Apologies - Individual

Sarah Abbott
Jill & Chris Arthur
Gill Brookling
John Covus
Holger & Valerie Marsen
Julie Newsam

1. Opening and Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the third Annual General Meeting of Goldsworth Park Community Association CIO, her last Meeting as Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Will be listed in the minutes (see above).

3. Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes of the meeting on 20th October 2021 had been distributed. They were agreed as an accurate account of the Meeting.

4. Trustees' Annual Report

The annual report to the Charity Commission for the year July 2021 to June 2022 had already been circulated, along with the accounts, so the oral report could be kept short.

The purpose of the Annual Report is to show the Charity Commission that the GPAC CIO is meeting its objectives by summarising its achievements.

The key points are as follows:

Goldsworth News was published quarterly, and all four editions were in print rather than by email and are available on the website. The magazine was delivered to almost every house in Goldsworth Park so is a valuable way of communicating with residents. The interruption of normal service resulted in the loss of a few deliverers and it has been difficult to replace them. The GPCA is seeking more volunteers so, if you don't get a copy delivered, please think about taking on deliveries in your road – half an hour or so each 3 months isn't much to ask.

The Facebook Group continues to grow, and now has over 1,400 members. It is also a very good way for the GPCA and local Councillors to communicate with residents and for residents to communicate with each other, with Councillors and the GPCA.

Meetings were back to normal, with all four Meetings being held in person. The idea of having speakers at the quarterly meetings continued and there interesting talks from Ollie Walker, the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Officer, and Sue Wales from Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals Trust, who introduced a project called TRIBE, which aims to improve residents' access to services and support, and to information about local activities. Goldsworth Park is a pilot area for this project, along with Sheerwater. Although the TRIBE team had been supplied with a number of leads, there is very little information about what is available for residents of Goldsworth Park. Sheerwater has done better. The number of people attending our Meetings has steadily increased from 23 in July 2021 to 33 in April 2022, maybe as people became more confident in going out. A greater number had attended the meetings on Zoom where they did not have to leave home.

Our activities in the Community also returned more or less to normal.

On **Remembrance Sunday**, George Binyon, one of the Trustees, laid a poppy wreath at the Memorial outside the Health Centre, on behalf of the GPCA and residents. The uniformed youth organisations paraded at a shortened Act of Remembrance.

The GPCA organised the **Christmas Tree** for the shopping centre courtyard for the sixth year, and there were carols round the tree again when the lights were switched on. Thanks are due to the Church, the shops, the pub, the gym and the Angling Club for their donations and practical help.

For the first time, the GPCA organised a **Christmas Market**, the idea of Hannah Bowler, who did most of the organising. It was a "boutique" affair which attracted a range of stalls selling gifts, jewellery, toys and more. There were entertainments in the form of carol singing led by SingGold, the Community Choir, a Nativity enacted by the Open the Book team, and games for the children run by the Guides. St Andrews Church is planning to run the Christmas Market this year.

Another first was the **Goldsworth Park Calendar** featuring pictures taken around Goldsworth Park, sent in by residents and sold through local shops. The dry cleaners especially did a sterling job. There will be another calendar for next year, if enough people submit pictures.

The GPCA also supported the Hospice by managing the indoor coffee and cake stall at the Dragon Boat Fun Day.

Two **Litter Picks** were held, one in September 2021 and the other in April 2022. Both were well-attended. Some residents now regularly go litter-picking on their own.

Finally, on **Membership of the GPCA CIO**, there are currently 6 Trustees (4 after this evening), 110 Individual Members and 29 Corporate Members from 19 organisations. 3 Members have left, having moved away.

There were no Questions arising from the Trustees' Annual Report.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer circulated copies of the accounts (attached) and highlighted the key points. The first section described Income and identified approximately £6,000 from advertising in Goldsworth News, £1,000 from the calendar, and £200 donations for the Christmas Tree. Natural Goldsworth Park (NGP) benefitted from a £1,000 donation from Waitrose and £100 from the GPAC for an Owl Box. The second section covers expenditure; approximately

£5,000 on printing and distributing Goldsworth News, £570 on printing the calendar, £60 on community events (mainly printing posters), £250 on the Christmas Tree and £600 by NGP on the Owl Box, wildflower seeds and equipment for small mammal surveys. Donations of £250 each were made to the Hospice, Your Sanctuary and Andy's Café at St Andrew's Church from the profits of the Christmas Market and the Calendar, and small donations were made to three medical research charities in memory of long-term supporters of the GPCA. Finally, there are the insurance premiums for Public, Employers and Trustees Liability, and administration, mainly bank charges.

Overall, the GPCA made a small profit of £69 and assets amount to £29,000 which is satisfactory; as income is limited, the reserves will enable the GPCA to operate for as long as possible.

Questions Arising from Treasurer's Report

Q. – GB: There is no mention of the annual £1,000 donation from Dianthus Trading.

A. – TH: This has not yet been paid. GR-M added that it would be paid when resources permitted.

RW (GPAC) said that the community owed thanks to the GPCA for what it has achieved this year; the meeting concurred.

Members formally received the Trustees' Annual Report and the Accounts.

6. Natural Goldsworth Park

Bob Challoner, Project Manager, reported that it had been a busy year for NGP, with a good working relationship with Woking Borough Council (WBC) and Thames Water's Biodiversity Team (TW). NGP agreed a management strategy for the Meadow with WBC which involves a cut once a year with some areas left uncut to provide over-wintering habitats for insects and small mammals. TW has produced a management plan for their woodland focussing on removing the invasive cherry laurel and some of the weaker trees. It is hoped that WBC will produce something similar for their woodland.

The new BMX Track was completed this year after extensive work which resulted in a significant loss of plant diversity over the area. WBC will assess the situation in the spring and take any necessary remedial action.

Last year, two very rare species of moths were found on the Meadow, leading to a nomination for SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Interest) status a year ago. However, the authority has not met since then so there has been no progress.

There have been discussions with WBC about a joint application with for a grant from Network Rail for tree planting. The Council has devised a plan for a screen of native trees between the recreation area and the meadow which has been agreed after a consultation exercise. A further application involves the removal of the cherry laurel "hedge" from the north bank of the Lake and its replacement with hedging of native species. Both the Network Rail and the TW funding is for Community Projects so it is hoped that volunteers from Goldsworth Park and elsewhere will come forward to help with the planting.

The new Facebook Group for Natural Goldsworth Park now has 174 followers.

BCh ended by saying that he would be stepping back from NGP in due course but would see the tree planting exercise through and hoped to be able to find new volunteers for the role.

Questions Arising from Project Manager's Report

RW (GPAC) apologised for the delay in installing the Owl Box; this needs a contractor with appropriate equipment and one should be available in the next few weeks.

7. Retirement and Election of Trustees

According to our Constitution, one third of the Trustees must retire each year, but may stand for re-election for up to three terms of office. As there are currently 6 Trustees, 2 will retire this

year. Bob Challoner, Project Manager for Natural Goldsworth Park, and Irene Watson, Chair, have both decided to retire and not to stand for re-election.

There are currently no candidates for election as Trustee.

There followed an appeal for anyone present to consider helping GPCA – not necessarily as a Trustee, but as a volunteer. DC expressed an interest in volunteering.

8. Thanks and Presentation of Gifts to Irene Watson

There followed a presentation of gifts from the GPCA by Cllr Ann-Marie Barker who thanked Irene for her fantastic contribution to the community of Goldsworth Park over many years. Cllr Saj Hussain praised the wonderful job that she had done as Chair since 2013. The Trustees also presented her with a gift.

She thanked everyone for the lovely gifts and said that she had been asked to talk about her time with the GPCA. She started by quoting a recent article in the local paper about volunteering which said, “continuity is all very well but people cannot be expected to carry on year after year – they don’t get paid for it.” and reflected that there may not be any pay but it is rewarding when a plan comes together, when you achieve something for the community or an individual. It is also rewarding when they thank you for what you have done – like tonight. Thinking about how things had changed over the years, when she was first elected in the 1990s, the GPCA Committee had 12 members and a social sub-committee. The GPCA managed what is now The Lodge, for which they had raised money to build. On the social side, the GPCA ran barn dances, quiz nights, skittles evenings, senior citizens’ and children’s Christmas parties, and dances at New Year, and there were car boot sales, Best Front Garden and Best Hanging Basket competitions. The big event each year was the Goldsworth Gala, later renamed Party in the Park (before the Council took over the name). The event incorporated a funfair and a variety of other attractions over the years including 5-a-side football, tug-of-war, dog show, bungee jumping, marching bands, dragon boat racing, raft racing and even parascending on the lake one year, entertainers such as Punch and Judy or a magician, bouncy castles, laser cave, children’s art show, charity and craft stalls and more. However, over the years, people stopped coming to the evening events and entering the Competitions, a spurious insurance claim stopped the Party in the Park one year and it never got started again through lack of volunteer help, the shops opening on Bank Holidays ended the car boot sales.

Back then, the only meetings to which residents were invited were the AGMs which were mostly focussed on the Community Hall. The way GPCA operates now is much better for the community, with regular meetings to which members are invited, allowing involvement from the community. A lot of what we do now is in response to ideas or questions from the community or in response to outside influences.

An example of an idea which came from an individual was back in 2007, when RW came up with the idea of the Lake Bank Restoration Project, which he brought to GPCA which was able to use its charitable status and financial credibility to raise funds for the Project, while RW used his contacts to provide a lot of the labour. Hence, from a barren area with eroded banks and few plants, the lake is now bordered with plants and a lot of interesting wildlife.

A similar project arose in 2016, when the Council proposed to use the area now known as The Meadow for two more football pitches. A resident of Goldsworth Park started a petition against this proposal and turned to the GPCA for support; the Natural Goldsworth Park project was born, leading to a 10-year reprieve in which to prove what can be done to enhance the flora and fauna.

Another example of a response to an outside stimulus occurred in 2008 when there was a planning application to demolish all our shops bar Waitrose and replace them with 3 super stores. The GPCA and WBC met the developers who seemed surprised at the strength of feeling. The GPCA put a cogent argument to the Planning Committee but the developers did not attend the meeting, and the application was refused.

Another example of GPCA benefitting the community of Goldsworth Park (and beyond!), relates to the public toilets. For many years, GPCA had campaigned for public toilets in the

recreation area. Eventually, WBC provided a much hated “superloo”, which proved to be a magnet for vandalism, and when the maintenance contract ran out in 2014, the toilet was removed, leaving the Goldsworth Park recreation area as the only one in the borough without a public toilet. The GPCA’s campaign involved a petition and coverage in local papers and radio, and even a mention on breakfast TV, a letter to Jonathan Lord, the MP, who spoke to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, and who then phoned to say that Goldsworth Park would get a public toilet - and it did!

Another project by GPCA, based on a resident’s request, was the introduction of the street maps of Goldsworth Park, which are sited at key locations beside the main roads of the Park. The GPCA encouraged two residents to work together on the maps, to find a manufacturer and identify the cost; the GPCA sourced the finance and gained permission from SCC to install the maps.

Other smaller projects have been the Christmas Tree outside Waitrose and regular litter-picks. In addition, there are the frequent questions from residents about “who is responsible for this?” or “Who do I call about that?” and other matters.

The most significant event occurred in 2012 when the Community Hall was closed following a fire and did not reopen until spring 2015, by which time there were only three Trustees. Then, the Facilities Manager moved away and the Treasurer wished to retire. Attempts to find Trustees to take on these roles were unsuccessful and so, in 2018, the GPCA surrendered the lease of the Hall. It was nearly the end of the GPCA but sufficient volunteers eventually came forward to enable it to continue and to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2019. She hoped that people could see that the GPCA made a valuable contribution to the community and that being part of the GPCA can be rewarding.

Irene ended by saying that she had enjoyed her time with the GPCA (well, most of it!) and to paraphrase the columnist in the News and Mail, “No-one can be expected to go on forever” and I am not going to.

Break for Refreshments

10. Questions from the floor

Q = Question: **A** = Answer: **C** = Comment

Q. WB: understands WBC now owns the Goldsworth Park shopping centre. She asked who cleans the area as the paving is filthy. She also asked how often the litter was picked.

A. IW: The bins are emptied and the litter collected every morning. The area was jet-washed a while ago.

C. IW: had heard that WBC was due to meet the shop keepers about what they need from their landlords but it has not happened yet. It might increase the custom for the shops if there were a big sign at the entrance showing which shops there are, as at Lion Retail Park.

Q. IW has persistently raised the matter of the trip hazard caused by the difference in the levels of the paving by the post box. Over 6 months ago, the managing agents said that they had commissioned a Health and Safety Survey of the area on behalf of WBC. Has this taken place and, if so, what were the results?

Q. JM: Why are the gutters at Waitrose always overflowing after rain?

Q. CC: The surface of the shopping centre playground is uneven and becomes a paddling-pool after rain. Also, the seats under the trees by the car park are covered in bird poo. Do they ever get cleaned?

A. IW: has reported the flooding. The benches were cleaned at her request but need to be cleaned regularly.

A. Cllr A-MB: will investigate the questions of cleanliness, trip hazards, gutters and flooding and take these matters up with the managing agents.

C. MC: Some streetlights around the Park are orange and others very dim. This is especially the case around the lake.

Q. GB: Can the Councillors report on how the project to refurbish lighting around the lake is going? This has been an ongoing request for months now.

A. IW: on behalf of Cllr A-MB: At present, there is no funding to replace all the lights around the lake but they are being replaced with LEDs as they fail.

C. BCh: The local bat group is in discussion with WBC about replacing lights to the north of the lake with cooler lighting, which is more acceptable to the bats.

Q. DC: Are the recycling bins coming back to the shopping centre carpark?

A. IW: There have been no recycling bins in the car park for a long time. The charity bins were taken away when the car park was resurfaced but will not be replaced, as they had become a magnet for fly-tipping. A Tetrapack bin has been requested, to be sited closer to the shops.

Q. IW to Cllr A-MB: Can Tetrapack be recycled in our blue bins?

A. Cllr A-MB: Tetrapack is difficult to split for recycling, so WBC do not include it in collected recycling at present. However, she will try again to see if it can be done in Woking, as other local boroughs do recycle Tetrapacks.

C. HH: Offered the services of Goldsworth Park Scouts and Guides to distribute Goldsworth News.

A. IW: will pass the offer on to the Hills who manage distribution.

C. GB: The next date for distribution is 2nd December.

C. IW: There is a new Editor for Goldsworth News – Chris Taylor. He will be using the same email address as that used by GB – editor@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk.

C. Cllr SH: The design for the upgraded playground at Oakfield is now out for consultation.

C. IW: This is one of the last two playgrounds to be refurbished in the last round. The main Goldsworth Park playground should be near the top of the list of for the next programme.

C. Cllr A-MB: is expecting the new programme of playground refurbishment to come before the Council in January 2023.

C. IW: is hoping for the playground by the lake to be enlarged to enable there to be a wheelchair swing and other equipment that is disability friendly.

C. SD: raised the issue of the safety of the new BMX track; it was not thought to be an issue.

C. RS: reported questionable behaviour, including mopeds being ridden on the track, and suggested siting an APR camera from a crime-prevention point of view. There was a comment about surveillance affecting mental health but RS said these cameras only recorded vehicle numberplates, not people.

C. GR-M: reported a couple of incidents involving vehicles including one assault. RS said that crime drops if a camera is obvious.

C. IW: asked RS to put together a costed proposal for consideration by the GPCA and WBC.

Q. HH: Is there any news about Lakers?

A. Cllr SH: There should be a proposal coming forward soon for supported accommodation. When asked about youth provision, he said this would not be in the proposal as there was no one to run it. The plans for the building will part of the planning application to WBC.

C. GR-M: Dianthus would be happy to provide accommodation for youth activities but it would need adult leaders – a problem for every youth organisation.

11. Acknowledgements

The Chair said that, before closing, she would like to record her thanks to:

- Her fellow Trustees for their support over the year and for the gifts and the refreshments they provided.
- George Binyon for editing Goldsworth News and to Chris Taylor who has now taken on the mantle of Editor.

- Christina Candey for sourcing advertising for Goldsworth News.
- Linda and Peter Hill and the Goldsworth News deliverers, particularly the brave man who delivers to all the roads where there is no regular deliverer.
- RW and the Angling Club members who keep the lake in such a good state and for their help erecting and removing the Christmas Tree.
- Seanne Hunter-Hill, our Neighbourhood Officer at WBC, who responds so readily to all emails.
- Gary Rima-Muranyi, for his continued support.
- Our Councillors, who support the GPCA, come to meetings and take on all manner of questions.
- And finally, to everyone who attended tonight and for all their kind words and to the volunteers who have come forward tonight.

12. AoB

BCo: The Goldsworth Park Calendar

Only one picture has been submitted so far. The end of the year is fast approaching so please send in pictures now.

There being no other business, the Chair said "goodnight but not goodbye."

The meeting ended at 9.40pm.