

## **JRA AGM 7.00 September 10<sup>th</sup> 2014 at Jesmond Cricket Club**

Minutes taken by Fiona Coleman

### **Tony Waterston in the Chair**

**1. Apologies** Ian Nelson, Annabelle Coakley, Pat Jarrah

### **2. Minutes of AGM 2013**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

**3. Matters arising from AGM 2013** None

### **4. JRA 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Chair outlined how the JRA was founded and gave special thanks to Jean Baty who was one of the founding members and the author of the History of the JRA. Residents were encouraged to read this interesting publication, which was circulated and will be available in the library.

Events to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the JRA have been organised throughout the year and have included:

- Tour de Jesmond cycle ride
- Heritage walk
- Celebration of the shared anniversary of The Beatles and The JRA held at the Jesmond Cricket Club.

A series of talks has also been organised which will take place at Jesmond Library, beginning with Nils Clemmetsen who will be speaking on the topic of planning on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September. The programme of talks was circulated.

### **5. Proposed new constitution for JRA**

The secretary outlined how there have been two main changes:

- The area of Jesmond has been re-defined so that it is the same as the area comprising the Council Wards of North and South Jesmond (paragraph 2)
- A time limit of 3 years has been included for holding office and no officer can be in post for longer than 6 years (paragraph 7)

The changes made were based on the Charity Commission Model of Constitutions.

The re-drafted constitution was accepted as the Constitution of the Association, following a vote.

### **6. Chairperson's report 2013-2014**

The Chair outlined the two main objectives of the association over the last year:

- To reach out to a larger number of residents – numbers on linkmail have risen from 150 to 300 – but this is only a start
- To tackle the roots of some of the issues which the community faces.

### **Communication**

Link mail has been successful as a method of communicating with the local community but the level of participants still needs to increase over the next year. Ron Armstrong, the association's secretary has been instrumental in the effective use of this valuable tool of communication and residents were urged to give their email details if they had not already done so. In addition to link mail Ron Armstrong has also been responsible for the E-bulletin and the JRA Annual Newsletter which has recently been distributed. The association also has a web site which is regularly updated and managed by Ian Nelson. Katie McLeod still operates the Facebook page. Sarah Breakey has also been doing a wonderful job in keeping the JRA notice boards up to date.

### **Comments**

It was suggested that a file of JRA documents (email contact sheet, annual report, e-bulletin) could be kept at the library to further aid communication.

### **Tidy Gardens Scheme**

JRA has initiated a scheme where local landlords would enter into a contract with a gardening agency to work on tidying up the gardens of HMO properties bi-annually. This scheme is still under development

### **Comments**

It was suggested that it was the Council's duty to enforce the maintenance of gardens and landlords could lose their licences if they do not properly maintain the gardens of their property. However it was noted that the council is responsible for problems such as overhanging vegetation which causes obstruction but not for the general appearance of gardens. Furthermore if residents were having problems with invasive weeds, such as Japanese knotweed, they should contact the council who would inform the Environmental Agency.

### **Letting Boards**

The campaign to ban letting boards has been highly successful and as from January 2015 there will be a complete ban of letting boards in Jesmond.

## **7. Treasurer's Report (David Etchells)**

The accounts for the association were circulated. The principle outgoing is for the Annual Newsletter; this is covered by grants from the Ward Committees. However the grants may not be forthcoming in the future and the newsletter funding will need to come from the association.

### **Comment**

The increase on the expenditure on room hire was questioned but was deemed acceptable after it was explained that the JRA were supporting Jesmond Library and having the use of this space was highly convenient.

There was some discussion as to whether it is possible for the association to become a charity. However it was noted that this would be difficult as to form a charity a defined membership would be required. This would not be possible as under the constitution, all residents of Jesmond are deemed members of the association.

## **8. Activities Reports**

### **Acorn Rd (RA)**

Sustrans has developed two proposals, one focusing on developing a one way traffic system and the other favouring a two way system. Residents have been given the opportunity to respond to these proposals either on line or by post. At present the on line consultation shows that the one way proposal appears to have the most support. The JRA remains neutral in view of the polarity of opinions and will accept the results of the consultation.

### **Comments**

It was noted that it was possible for residents to opt for neither of the proposals but this was not clear and could have had an impact on how residents responded. It was suggested that the JRA could ask to see the results of the paper consultation.

### **DIY Streets (TW)**

There is a plan to close Brentwood Avenue immediately south of Forsyth Rd and some of the pavements around West Jesmond School would be widened. To facilitate cycling to school there is a separate proposal from Jesmond Safe Cycling to suspend the parking on the west side of Tankerville Terrace and to put in place a double cycle lane which runs down to Burdon Terrace for a trial period of 6 weeks. The proposal is supported by all three schools and the JRA.

### **Planning (Nils Clemmetsen)**

The association continues to focus on restricting the number of family homes being converted into HMOs and will register objections where a change of use or increase in size is proposed. The most significant applications have been:

### **Barnardos Offices at Orchard House**

The proposal to demolish the existing offices and replace this with a development of family homes was rejected on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013 but this decision was overturned on appeal.

### **La Sagesse**

Marketing is planned for around the turn of the year. Builder stated that they intend to build exactly to the plans that received planning approval.

### **Newcastle High School for Girls-Senior School Development**

This application has not yet been submitted/validated by the local planning authority. Plans are to demolish the existing two storey Church High Junior School and replace it with a three storey building.

### **Former Fleming Nuffield Unit Burdon Terrace**

Erection of a four storey care home and a single storey 80 place day nursery with associated car parking and landscaping following the demolition of 3 unlisted buildings.

JRA intends to object to this development mainly on the grounds of increased traffic. Comments from residents need to be received by 17<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Library (Sarah Breakey)**

Jesmond Library continues to be successful and will be holding its first Annual Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October. An outline of the Library's activities and finances will be outlined, alongside music and refreshments. A full update of the library and its events is available in The Blurb which is due to be circulated to all residents.

### **Website/Communications**

Ian Nelson is responsible for the maintenance of the association's Facebook page and website. Ron Armstrong is responsible for link mail and the e-bulletin. The chair thanked both Ian and Ron for their continued hard work in this area.

## **9. Committee Retirals/ nominations**

The chair thanked all our present committee members who are standing for re-election. Penny Shefton who is not seeking to be re-elected was thanked for her contribution to the JRA as she will now be returning to Poland. Crispin Welby has been nominated as a new committee member and was accepted by those present.

The Chair also thanked Katie McLeod and Bernie Winter who left the committee during the year, for their good service.

## **10. Matters of Concern Raised by Residents**

- Bell's Yard is in need of updating
- Jesmond Dene upkeep is lacking and it is looking neglected
- Problem of bins being searched for personal information

#### **11. Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service.**

On behalf of Alison Paton, Martin Gollan outlined the role of the CVS community worker in South Jesmond. The Good Neighbour Project is coming to an end in October but there has been a Newcastle Fund bid and it is **hopeful** that a community officer can be appointed if the bid is successful. It would be good to see Alison apply for the post as her work in the community has been greatly appreciated.

#### **12. Cutting the Cake for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

In celebration of 50 Years of JRA the birthday cake was cut. Jean Baty announced her retirement as the JRA President. She thanked the present Committee for their good work and wished continued success over the next 50 years.

#### **Next Meeting**

**September 8th 2015 at the Cricket Club.**