



TDRA 30th AGM MINUTES

On 13th May 2016, 7.30pm at St. Mildred's Hall, Tenterden

1. Present

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from B and H Martin, and I Marsden.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the 29th AGM were presented and approved. Proposed by Mr. A. Topley, seconded by Mr. T. Russell, and passed unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

No matters arising were brought before the meeting.

5. Chairman's Report

This has been another industrious year for the TDRA with some major goals achieved. The new website was launched in September 2015, after many weeks of intensive work to ensure that the result was a positive and a useful medium to enable the Association to communicate effectively with its members and the local residents. Our aim is to gradually over time, communicate more using the internet as a more efficient and flexible way of reaching out to our members. We do however intend to retain the annual paper edition of *The Resident*, which will be distributed as usual by our dedicated volunteers. We have had a number of new members join us using the website, which is very pleasing and encourage all those who have not yet registered their email addresses to please do so via our website.

We welcomed a new Committee member, Carol Parkin, who has taken an active role on the public relations side, promoting the Association's aims and achievements within the local community. She has also been pursuing the Tenterden Cinema Initiative, which has strong support from local residents as illustrated in the Tenterden Council's Residents Questionnaire. She will be uploading updates on her progress to the website and has written a piece covering this in an edition of *The Resident*.

Our 'tree man', Bill Chantler, has had a successful year, managing to coordinate between Ashford Borough Council (ABC), The Highways and Tenterden Town Council, to realise 4 new tree plantings along Appledore Road. The trees replaced damaged or dead trees to retain the much appreciated tree-lined routes into Tenterden, adding to the quality of the town's appearance. Bill has written an article for *The Resident* with more details on this and the 'Tree Planting Ceremony' that took place.

We continued our planning role throughout the year on numerous applications affecting the community – our aim to keep Tenterden the beautiful, high quality town that it continues to be. Roy Isworth, Ken Grant and myself attended the public enquiry for the Tilden Gill application. Roy made a verbal representation, upholding our prior written objections to the application. You can view our submitted objections online at the ABC planning applications website, or in The Resident. We have also been monitoring the progress of the TENT 1A residential development for 248 units, approved by Ashford Borough Council (ABC) over a year ago, as much has been happening behind the scenes. We now understand that TTC land (wild flower meadow) has been sold, together with a part not required by Taylor Wimpey. Work has just begun on the Taylor Wimpey site. We continue to support Roy in his aims to assist Ivy Court Surgery to be able to expand to cope with the additional population from the TENT 1A development. As well as continuing to press for adequate infrastructure provision to cope with the additional residential units. We will endeavour to keep members updated on the TENT 1A development as much as possible over the coming months.

We continued the success of our coffee morning the previous year with another held at the White Lion Hotel in October. Digital presentations and advice on how to use our website were run by Mike Winiberg our IT expert. The coffee mornings offer a great opportunity for the Committee Members to engage directly with our members, and for new residents to learn more about who we are and what we do.

I would like to thank all my fellow Committee Members for everything they have done for the local community, and for the support of the Association's members. The TDRA participates at various consultations and events throughout the year on your behalf – the more members and support we have, the greater our voice. Minutes of our meetings can be viewed online on our website.

6. Treasurer's Report

Members will recall from the prior year's AGM that we had proposed that some of the £750 of that year's surplus be allocated to a Community Award for school children in the town. Regrettably, despite promotion through the schools and advertising, there were no entries and therefore the monies are carried forward for future allocation to suitable causes in the town.

In the current year, we have recorded a surplus of some £340 due to income remaining broadly even, and key expenses of (i) £1,100 to improve the website, (ii) £200 to top up the Tree Fund, and (iii) £1,900 which covers communication to members and the necessary administration costs.

We are pleased to report that the Tree Fund has been increased by £400 overall - £200 from TDRA and a donation of £200 from Ashford Borough Council initiated by one of our local councillors.

Members had no queries on the accounts.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by T. Pearlman, seconded by T. Russell and approved unanimously.

7. Planning

We have had another busy year monitoring and commenting on key planning applications on your behalf. Our aim is to voice concerns or positive comments on planning applications, either in writing or by attending Committee Meetings on behalf of Tenterden's residents. The key cases are outlined below:

Tent 1A

Following approval of the TENT 1A application by Ashford Borough Council (ABC) just under a year ago, much has been happening behind the scenes. All relevant parties (Local Authority, landowners and banks) approved the Section 106 Agreement last summer. This is a legal agreement which details the steps necessary to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, and is drafted when it is considered that a development will have a significant impact on the local area which can be modified by means of 'developer's contributions' towards highway and community infrastructure investment.

For those who wish to apply for money from the Community Infrastructure Levy, it will be required that a proper business case is submitted in support of the claim. Tenterden Town Council (TTC) should be contacted for further advice on this.

Amendments to the Tenterden Leisure Centre lease permitting access to the TENT 1A site via Recreation Ground Road were also agreed by all parties last autumn.

The part of the site not owned by Taylor Wimpey was marketed to potential developers by Batcheller Monkhouse and will have space for 138 residential units. The money from the sale of the 'wild flower meadow' which forms part of this site, will go to TTC when completed. Taylor Wimpey will develop the remaining area of land and are expected to build 112 residential units. The building programme is not known yet, and we are still awaiting final confirmation of the agreed purchaser for the remaining land.

We will endeavour to keep members updated on the TENT 1A development as much as possible over the coming months.

Tilden Gill – 15/00930/AS

We submitted our objections in November 2014.

This would be a complete disregard of previous agreements with the Council for the town's Core Strategy, limiting growth within Tenterden to the circa 450 dwellings to be located on the TENT 1A and B sites abutting Smallhythe Road until at least 2030. There are no effective proposals to upgrade and the local infrastructure, mitigate the probable impact of the additional cars on the local traffic and parking and expansion to community services. This is not what a majority of local residents want.

We attended the Public Enquiry, held over four days (an additional day was assigned) in February. Roy Isworth gave a verbal representation upholding our objections.

Breton Court – 15/00930/AS

We submitted our objections in July 2015 on the following grounds:

1. *The proposal is not sympathetic to the adjacent listed building. The scale of the proposed building will adversely impact the historical setting of the listed building.*

Insufficient detail and description of proposed quality of materials to ensure the highest quality construction and design in such a sensitive location.

2. *There will be significant impact on traffic levels on an already congested road.*
3. *There is insufficient parking provision as a whole, with a consequence of more congestion on surrounding roads by overflow parking in these areas.*
4. *The proposed entrance does not meet Highways requirements for adequate visibility.*
5. *Likely over intensification of limited access points to the site by staff, visitors, residents and service vehicles.*

The application was withdrawn by the applicant.

Danemore – 15/01160/AS

We submitted our objections in October 2015.

We are concerned about the lack of parking provisions for the site and the impact this will have on an already congested area. We suggest that all parking is provided by means of a below ground parking facility. This would avoid further reduction in soft landscaping on the site and too many unsightly vehicles. We do not feel that the road access to the site will be adequate to accommodate the additional vehicular traffic (including delivery trucks), this is already a high density area. We feel that the proposed density of this site will have a negative impact on adjoining neighbours as well as the inevitable impact on traffic, fewer units would help alleviate this. We believe that a more far reaching road strategy would need to be considered for routes into town, with the resulting additional cars from this proposal – for example a one way designation to Oaks Lane.

This application is still undecided, and is expected to go to a Planning Committee.

Clower Bank

This application is awaiting a decision.

These are just a few of the key planning applications we have been acting on and by no means an exhaustive list, you can see more information on our website under 'Planning.

Ashford Borough Council appear to be overloaded with producing the Local Plan and had to use outdated figures from the previous plan. We submitted our objections but the developers had a strong team, and that coupled with Government guide lines and a push for more housing made it difficult to resist the Inspector's decision to allow the development.

8. Membership Report

M. Lyons reported that it was difficult to know exactly how many members we had as the membership is per household. We have 725 households, which probably equates to between 1500 and 1600 members. He stressed the preference for having Standing Orders, and email addresses for the Newsletter, and the need for more Distributors. He then thanked the Distributors for their hard work in what is sometimes a difficult job finding people in.

9. Election of Committee and Officers

The Chairman stood down while the Secretary took the Chair. The Committee resigned en bloc in accordance with the rules and then offered themselves for re-election as follows:

Mr. I. Marsden
Mr. N. Webb
Mr. A. Bates
Mr. W. Chantler
Mr. M. Lyons
Mr. K. Grant
Mrs. S. Nepp
Mr. H. Burnside
Mr. M. Winiberg
Mrs. C. Parkin

Mrs. A. Bates proposed that they should be re-elected, seconded by M. Peacock and passed unanimously.

Chairman	Mr. A. Bates
Vice Chairman	
Secretary	Mr. N. Webb
Membership Secretary	Mr. M. Lyons
Treasurer	Mr. H. Burnside
Planning Committee Secretary	Mrs S. Nepp

Proposed by Mr. D. Edison and seconded by Mr. T. Russell, and passed unanimously. Mr. A. Topley then proposed that Mr. David Walsh be appointed Independent Examiner for the Accounts for next year. Seconded by B. Halstead and passed unanimously.

The Secretary then passed the Chair to Mr. A. Bates the new Chairman.

10. Any Other Business

A Cinema in Tenterden

A Town Council questionnaire issued in September 2015 asked local residents to give their opinions about having a cinema in Tenterden. Apparently, this proposal was overwhelmingly supported. Precise results have actually been published today.

A cinema would appeal to all ages of resident and would also have a beneficial knock on effect for our local shops and businesses.

As the Town Hall is in need of refurbishment and to be made more fit for purpose, it was proposed that a cinema could be part of the redesign of the building. This idea was rapidly dismissed by TTC, stating that Ashford Borough Council have informally suggested that they would not get planning permission for a cinema at the Town Hall.

TDRA committee felt that there needed to be a professional and full feasibility study carried out before such decisions could be reached and that due diligence had not been carried out regarding this proposal. A feasibility study would also determine the viability of other possible sites, as well as the possibility of external grants, sources of funding and commercially viable methods of management.

The advantage of extending the Town Hall to incorporate a cinema, apart from its central location, is that it would be possible that Heritage Lottery funding would be available, given the status of the Town Hall and also that, because of the nature of the building, work would have to be carried out to a very high standard. A study would also indicate the best 'value for money' option.

There are many precedents for the Town Hall proposal, including the venue operated by Silverscreen in Folkstone, which is largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. We understand that this organisation is, amongst others, still interested in Tenterden as a prospective project.

Significant funds will be realised from TENT1 in July, but we feel that the funding of a cinema should only partly come from this source. Other sources could be the Heritage Lottery Fund, Government match funding and possibly even funding from Ashford Borough Council.

The operator of the venue would front the equipment cost and the operation should be viewed as a profit making enterprise, especially as the building would be leased by TTC to the operator. This is all possible, but needs a feasibility study to properly assess the business plan.

An alternative to the Town Hall site would be to find another suitable building in Tenterden. Our concern here is for the quality of the venue and its location, which should be as central as possible.

TTC have said that consultants are to be employed to assess public opinion regarding the level of support for a cinema and also other projects. These people would also be in charge of approaching and liaising with possible funding bodies, such as the lottery.

There is, however, a danger in all of this that the precious funds will be eaten up by the consultants costs, plus the potential bottomless pit that is the repair and refurbishment of the Town Hall. TTC have not published any costings for the employment of these consultants, nor for the repair and refurbishment of the building. We feel it is vital for the town that TTC are completely open about all these costs and that wise decisions are made.

Tenterden and district deserves high quality, central venue, which is aesthetically pleasing and in keeping with the style of the town. If local residents are to be consulted again, I hope you will make your views known.

Councillor Justin Nelson explained that the Conservation Officer had warned that the Assembly Room could not be used because of its heritage status, and accepted the fact that there needed to be consultation on the matter. Councillor R. Lusty noted that the TTC survey had little support although it was acknowledged that those who had responded had done so positively.

East Cross Clinic

Councillor R. Isworth explained that the clinic was owned by NHS England, who will not sell it despite the fact that it is very underused. There was hope however that this might change as outreach clinics are becoming necessary. He hoped to start his own Urology Surgery there later in the year.

Surgery Car Park

T. Russell complained that there was a lot of wasted space now. A. Bates acknowledged this and said that he would raise it at the next Parking Forum Meeting to be held on the 1st June, 2016.

Trees

T. Russell asked if the Committee was aware of the number of trees to be felled as part of the TENT 1 project. This involved 14 to make way for access, and another 8 for a woodland path. He felt that the wood did not need a path. A. Bates responded that there should be a management plan for the woodland, and that that would be the time to raise this issue.

Neighbourhood Plan

S. Nepp stressed the need for a neighbourhood plan in light of the Tilden Gill decision. Ashford Borough Council have yet to publish their Local Plan, taking strategy up to the year 2030. A neighbourhood plan would however be quicker and cheaper, as well as being a statutory document. Local villages have already completed theirs. The cost is comparatively small, with grants available. They take on average two years to complete, and the local authority is then obliged to support the parishes wanting one.

On conclusion of the formal meeting the Chairman then thanked all those who attended and encouraged members to contact the Committee with their views and concerns.

He then introduced the guest speaker Councillor Justin Nelson who gave a short talk on his personal experiences of volunteering.

27th May, 2016