



TDRA 31st AGM MINUTES

On 10th May 2017, 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 M. Winniberg.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the 30th AGM were presented and approved. Proposed by R. Isworth, seconded by J. Nelson, and passed unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

B. Fagg asked what was happening about a Neighbourhood Plan. J. Nelson replied that there would not be one, largely because it was uncertain what area it would cover. Also because there would be a Referendum which would be opposed and instead they were proposing an Action Plan which would get around these problems, and would act as a guide that the Borough Council would refer to on Planning Decisions, particularly regarding open spaces.

5. Chairman's Report

Most years the Chairman of TDRA starts by saying it has been a busy year! But has this really been the case in 2016/17? Now, coming on for 7 years after the Tent1 site was adopted for expansion of Tenterden, we have yet to see a single dwelling completed. Overlooking the Tent1 site, as I do from my kitchen window, has some advantages – together with TDRA member Tony Russell who also overlooks the site, we have been able to ensure that a tree subject to a preservation order was not damaged, and the pond protected. I can confirm that many hundreds of tonnes of earth have been moved, and moved, and moved yet again. Many pipes have been delivered and disappeared below ground. Yet still not one dwelling completed. I see no walls arising! The time it takes to deliver houses from conception to completion creates problems for our planning system and probably is part of the cause of the high house prices that we enjoy/or suffer from (depending on your age). The work is now well under way, with walls going up and houses due to appear soon. The first should be ready in November.

A recent dictate from central government means that Ashford Borough Council (ABC) must now deliver an extra 1200 houses in the next 5 years – on top of the thousands already in the planning pipeline for Ashford Borough. That is 1200 extra completed houses in 5 years – not just planned. How many of these are likely to be in Tenterden is not yet known. No sites have been selected to date. Under these circumstances there is a high risk of unplanned, and often unwanted, housing development being proposed and being granted planning permission on appeal. Will it be a case of the fastest winning at whatever cost to the Town and the environment? TDRA will do its best to influence the choice of sites as it has done in the past.

We have already seen one example of unplanned development being approved in Tenterden during 2016. The Tilden Gill site for up to 100 houses was objected to by TDRA, and initially turned down by ABC, but was granted outline planning permission on appeal. Now other sites are likely to appear. The draft Local Plan is being re-drafted, but will it really be useful in controlling

development so that the Town grows at a reasonable pace and we all continue to enjoy the best of Tenterden?

But development is not all negative! The £3.5 million that the Town Council received from sale of land previously designated as the wildflower meadow of Tent1, together with 'Section 106' funds, are destined for regeneration of the Town. Detailed consultations have been carried out by Lipton Group on behalf of the Town Council, in which many of you will have participated, as did TDRA committee members. The outcome should see improvement of sports facilities, the Town Hall and possibly a cinema as discussed in the latest copy of The Resident. TDRA committee members have volunteered to participate in the Focus Groups leading the regeneration implementation.

The Town is changing – much shopping is now done online and delivered in white vans. Our independent High Street shops are under threat of disappearing. We have seen this most recently with the loss of Swaines Outfitters after several generations – no buyers could be found to continue the business. Others have gone earlier – Franklins Electrical and Mr. Anstey's Linen House amongst others. We now have a proliferation of coffee shops and restaurants as well as charity shops and empty shops. None of this is helped by the irrational Business Rates system, taxing property value rather than profits.

More families moving to Tenterden into the new housing may help to saver the independent shops in the High Street. But I suspect that more is needed – a major change to reduce Business Rates for High Street shops is also needed to provide a level playing field with online shopping. Tenterden must be more than a pretty High Street with attractive old buildings, but also a vibrant community for residents and visitors of all ages.

As we move forward in this digital age TDRA is seeking to improve communication with members by improvements to the TDRA website, www.tdra.org.uk. I encourage members to visit the site regularly and please do let us have your email addresses so that we can send out information to you all – and hopefully receive your views in response. With your help TDRA will continue to lobby for the best outcomes for Tenterden.

It is noted that the Town Council are actively engaged in a project to make Tenterden a tourist destination.

The Chairman then asked for feedback as to whether members still wanted to have paper Newsletters rather than email.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported donations for the 2016/2017 year of approximately £2,600, which, together with reclaimed tax, gave us total income for the year of around £3,000.

Expenses are broadly6 divided into £800 for The Resident Magazine, and £1,600 administration expenses (including £600 to maintain and update the website).

Given the potential surplus, the Committee allocated £700 to the Tree Fund to replace the monies expended during the year, which left a small surplus of £211 after all expenses.

The Association retains a healthy balance of £5,200 in overall cash resources, which is available to cover such good causes in the town which may arise.

There being no questions from the members, adoption of the accounts was proposed by S. Ferguson and seconded by R. Isworth and approved unanimously.

7. Planning

We have been actively monitoring planning applications over this period, and have formally issued our comments to Ashford Borough Council for a number of key applications including the following:

17/00103/AS – Tesco Stores Ltd., Smallhythe Road, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7LN Installation of dry cleaning, key cutting, shoe and watch repairs pod to Tesco premises

‘... I am writing on behalf of the Tenterden and District Residents’ Association (TDRA) to object to the proposed design of the ‘Timpson Pod’. The form, signage and materials are not sympathetic to the local architectural vernacular of Tenterden and would harm the historical setting of the town. In addition we are concerned about the potential harm this business will do to pre-existing independent businesses in the High Street that already offer this type of service.’

This application has been permitted.

16/01529/AS – Land to the Rear of 3-7 High Street, Tenterden Erection of Covered Market Stalls over Existing Open Paved Area

‘... I am writing on behalf of the Tenterden and District Residents’ Association (TDRA) regarding the above planning application to voice our concern over some of the proposed materials for the market stalls. We do not think the galvanised steel finish to the structure is an appropriate finish in this sensitive location. The finish should reflect more typical materials used in the surrounding context, such as the town’s black painted decorative railings and sign posts in the High Street. We believe a higher quality and more sensitive palette of materials would enhance this important area more successfully.’

This application has been received but currently not yet validated.

16/01090/AS – Land West of Shrubcote and Southwest of Appledore Road Erection of four detached dwellings, with associated landscaping, provision of new accesses onto Shrubcote Road and Appledore Road with private parking, and provision of a sustainable drainage system, and other ancillary works.

‘... I am writing as planning Secretary on behalf of the Tenterden and District Residents’ Association (TDRA) to object to the amended proposal for the erection of four detached dwellings and landscaping located at land west of Shrubcote and south west of Appledore Road, Tenterden, Kent. The amended proposal does not change our previous concerns as follows:

- ≡ This development will have an adverse impact on the setting of Hales Place, the grounds of which form an important ‘green lung’ within the town and its conservation area.
- ≡ This development would still have a significant detrimental impact on the woodland which has been developed over recent years within the grounds of Hales Place which is an attractive feature and wildlife habitat.
- ≡ This site was rejected in the Tenterden and Rural Sites Development Plan Document. In our opinion it does not meet the criteria for an ‘infill site’.
- ≡ Approval of development of this site would potentially open the way for further development of the fields to the south which abut the Tilden Gill site (recently granted outline planning permission on appeal) which would urbanise the entire area around Hales Place.

This application is pending decision.

16/00751/AS – Breton Court, Grange Road, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6EE

Demolition of the west wing involving the loss of 3 bedrooms and the erection of a detached building and association works to accommodate 24 bedrooms for use in conjunction with the existing care home. **Reconsultation following receipt of new site plan showing an amended red line boundary and completed Certificate B confirming the serving of notice**

‘... TDRA object to this application for a number of reasons:

1. The development is an over-intensive development of the site to the detriment of neighbouring properties which include listed buildings.
2. The provision of parking is inadequate for the proposed future size of the development when the needs of staff, visitors, service vehicles and emergency parking are taken into account. This will result in additional parking in Grange Road leading to frequent obstruction of this relatively narrow road.
3. The proposed surface water drainage for the development appears to be inadequate and to be reliant on non-existing land drains. It appears likely to cause flooding to adjacent properties.
4. The building works as proposed will have a serious detrimental impact on tree T7 which is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.
5. There is no established need for this additional capacity for care following developments of care homes at High Halden and Woodchurch.’

This application is pending decision.

Increasing East Cross Surgery Services

As reported in the Kentish Express, Tenterden edition, 23 February 2017, Ivy Court Surgery is to expand following a long battle with NHS England, including significant representation by Roy Isworth, former chairman of TDRA, who actively attended many meetings with the relevant bodies to support the surgery’s case for expansion. The project appears to be focussed on adding an extra floor, although the design has not yet been fully finalised. It is intended that the surgery will remain fully open during the works, with construction expected to take up to two years. TDRA will be observing the progress and will continue to update members via the web-site and in forthcoming newsletters.

Westwell Court

We have been monitoring the pre-application for a nursing home at Westwell Court, and are particularly concerned about access. There is not a need for an environmental impact assessment, but we will monitor the application which we believe has been recently submitted.

R. Lusty then thanked the Association on behalf of the Westwell Court residents for our support.

8. Membership Report

M. Lyons then asked that members keep an eye on changes of ownership in their neighbourhoods as it is difficult to keep tabs on members who move. He then thanked the distributors for their help over the year and asked if anyone would be prepared to take on the Ingleden Park Road/Swain Road area.

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

R. Isworth proposed that they should be re-elected, seconded by J. Fagg 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 B. Fagg and seconded by R. Lusty, and passed unanimously. S. Ferguson then proposed that Mr. David Walsh be appointed Independent Examiner for the Accounts for next year. Seconded by R. Isworth and passed unanimously.

10. Any Other Business

J. Nelson reported on the Tenterden Regeneration Project and invited members' views on the Lipton Report. He stressed that the report is only the start and that input is needed. He stressed that the only thing the Town Council has agreed is that the report should be published, which in itself is a distillation of public comments so far. However there are errors, (e.g. that the Town Hall is hardly used), but whatever is proposed has to be legal, plausible and enduring for the longest time. There is no timetable for a decision as the £3.5 million is from the sale of Council land. Neither does it have to be spent all at once. It is separate from the Section 106 monies on which there is a 5 or 10 year time limit and restrictions.

J. Mills commented that she had attended the consultation and felt that the input would be generationally unbalanced as there was very little involvement from the young. She also noted that parking had been raised but it is not mentioned in the report. The Chairman responded that there were 25 new parking spaces at the Leisure Centre, with 17 more to follow, and an extra 50 around Tent1. He also mentioned that we had attended the Parking Forum which had led to the changes in Sunday parking at Bridewell Lane.

G. Edison asked if there could be a minibus provided to circulate the 250 houses abutting the Smallhythe Road during peak shopping hours, or failing that have a Park and Ride scheme. This could also be used to provide parking for workers commuting into the Town. A. Bates replied that he would raise this at the next Parking Forum meeting.

T. Jinks said that parking in and around Turners Avenue was particularly bad to the extent that mobility scooters are sometimes blocked on the pavement by their parking. The Chairman replied that in 2007 a plan had been suggested to put double yellow lines on most roads, but this had been rejected because it would have inconvenienced visitors to the Town. Therefore they had only been placed where there was a safety issue. If there were more double yellow lines this would only serve to move the parking problem further afield. It was also noted that a discounted season ticket scheme had been suggested, but it was difficult to get approval from Ashford Borough Council because of the loss of revenue and difficulty of administration.

B. Fagg noted that the surgery carpark has reduced spaces because of the yellow hatched areas for no parking. S. Ferguson replied that this had been deliberate to allow parents to pick up children from the school with a blind eye being taken on the short term parking that it involved. The Chairman also noted that employees at the Leisure Centre

have discounted parking permits and acknowledged that Council workers were treated differently from the rest of the public.

R. Isworth updated the meeting on health provision and the impact of new developments on the town. He said he had had no success so far on the opening up of the East Cross Clinic although he has tried very hard. It is only used for two Chiropody Clinics, and even has a receptionist for three consulting rooms which are never used. The sustainability plan requires that resources like this are used but he can never have a proper debate about this because of the constantly changing personnel responsible, and now has been told that there can be no further discussion until after the election. He also said that there was room on the lower ground floor of West View, which could easily be converted. He also pointed out that Damion Green had successfully got funding for the development of an upper floor in the Ivy Court Surgery.

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 Ciaran Downey who stood in for Paul Hatfield on behalf of Dandara, joint developers of the Tent1 Project.

18th May, 2017