

THE EDGE ASSOCIATION

Of Residents of Alderley Edge, Cheshire

Chairman

Martin Steiger,
Cornerfield,
Underwood Road
Alderley Edge,
SK9 7BR.
Tel. 583808

Honorary Treasurer

James S T Jennings,
Broomfield,
Macclesfield Road,
Alderley Edge
SK9 7BL.
Tel. 599781

Plans Secretary

Martin Sinker,
Heyes Cottage,
53, Heyes Lane,
Alderley Edge,
SK9 7LA.
Tel. 582253

Administration Secretary

Ian J Standen
Old Vine,
Macclesfield Road,
Alderley Edge,
SK9 7BW.
Tel. 585034

Minutes of the Thirty Seventh Annual General Meeting held on 29th November 2007 in The Council Chamber, Festival Hall, Alderley Edge

In the Chair: - Mr Martin Steiger

Apologies: - Ms J Brock, Mr R Jones, Mr & Mrs P Forshaw, Mr & Mrs J Waller, Dr and Mrs Theofilopoulos, Mr A Davies, Mr & Mrs R Estridge and Mr M Regan.

Present: - Mr I Daghish, Mrs C Copeland, Mr & Mrs I Standen, Mr A Pearson, Mr & Mrs S Lord, Ms M Lowe, Mr M Sinker, Mr J Jennings, Mrs S Shorland and Mr M Whittaker

Minutes of Previous A. G. M.: - The minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2006 were approved.

Chairman's Report: - In his first report to the AGM, the Chairman started by thanking the previous Chairman, Robin Estridge, for his leadership and for extending – where appropriate - the remit of the Association to the whole village. This was exemplified in the Village Forum, held in 2006. He then thanked the Committee (and especially the officers) for their support during the year. He particularly thanked Tom Marshall (the previous Plans Secretary), Janice Brock for organising a successful 'Autumn Leaves' Dinner and Martin Regan for producing the annual Newsletter, which was widely admired.

The Association has had discussions with Borough and Parish Councillors on topics including included the future of the Festival Hall, the 'temporary' car park in the public park and the by-pass. Other matters discussed included the specific planning applications as well as the planning application process, the Somerfield and Westbrook sites and the shortage of car parking spaces in the village.

Much of the effort on planning arose from objections to speculators who try to knock down good housing stock to replace it with enormous mansions with little or no garden followed up by misleading estate agent's literature. The Association held its annual meeting with MBC Planning Department on 19th October and we were encouraged by the responses of John Knight (the successor of Peter Yates). We detected considerable uncertainty arising from the incomplete plans for a new Unitary Authority.

Litter from building work is a major problem and he announced that there will be a 'Spring Clean' day on Saturday, 5th April 2008. Liz Standen pointed out that the Council is being paid to do this work and that there is always a small risk associated with picking up litter. In response, it was stated that we can obtain safely equipment from Diane Smith, the Town Manager at MBC and that the purpose of the exercise was to shame the Council into doing what they are demonstrably failing to do at present.

Finally, he pointed out that if we value local services, it is incumbent on us to support them with our custom

The Chairman then invited Ian Daghish to report on progress with the Parish Plan. A committee has been set up after the public meeting and a questionnaire had been formulated. With a response of over 700 replies from 3,500 distributed, the views expressed will be seen to be credible. The main issues identified have been

- (a) there are too many flats and quite enough housing in the village
- (b) excessive traffic and lack of parking will only be ameliorated by a by-pass and additional parking
- (c) we are a distinct community from Wilmslow but we need to retain our character, protect our local shops and our facilities such as the Festival Hall and the Cricket Club
- (d) in the short term, we need to tackle, with vigour, the derelict site in the centre of the village.

A Design Statement will also be prepared in advance of the next public meeting but Martin Sinker confirmed that work on this had not yet started.

Treasurer's Report: James Jennings presented his report for the 12 months ending 30 September 2007. The financial position was set out in the Receipt and Payment Account, which summarised the receipts and payments over the period and the assets and liabilities as at 30 September 2007.

There was a surplus this year of £513 (£50 higher than last year). Subscription income remained virtually unchanged at £1,197 but costs were £434 lower than last year. During the year, we repaid the loan of £750, which arose in the previous year in order to avoid an overdraft position at the Bank. Philip Forshaw who was eventually successful in getting four new signatories added to the mandate with the Britannia Building Society, thereby making the account operational was thanked for his efforts. The account has been moved to one with a new higher interest rate of 3.85% (comparable to rates on Club Accounts elsewhere).

During the year, a sub-committee completed its work on updating the membership database, revealing that 51 members were paying a subscription rate below the current annual rate of £10. We will shortly issue letters to these members, inviting them to increase their subscription rate to £10. If all these members increase their subscription to £10, total subscriptions would increase by £250 per annum. At the end of September 2007, there were 142 members, a decrease of seven from last year.

Liz Standen queried whether the Association should carry Public Liability insurance. It was agreed that it would depend on the type of event being organised. Some events such as the Annual Dinner and the AGM do not expose the Association to risk but something like the Litter Pick would warrant further evaluation.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for producing the accounts and they were accepted by the meeting.

Planning Matters: - Martin Sinker tabled a list of all recent planning applications. He has reviewed 48 Planning Applications during the year (30 is typical for recent years). Almost all were in the Conservation Area, some relatively trivial but others for major “demolish and rebuild” projects. We have had some success, in encouraging the refusal, withdrawal or reduction in scale of some of the more unacceptable schemes.

The system of Area Representatives has been a huge help in sounding out and mobilising local opinion. For example, some 50 letters of objection were sent to the Planners about Witches Gate, so thanks to all concerned. Frustrations continue with Springfield Lodge, where Philip Forshaw has been fighting a determined battle.

There is current concern about developers buying-up a number of adjoining properties, planning wholesale demolition and redevelopment. We are making efforts to liaise with the developers, and in principle to resist new gated communities. It will be interesting to see whether worries about property values have any effect on the rate or types of development in Alderley Edge.

MBC are updating Planning documentation and Criteria, with some public consultation. We are contributing suggestions for their list of Locally Important Buildings. These do not enjoy the same status as statutorily Listed Buildings, but do have some protection against demolition. We are proposing the Festival Hall and the Sorting Office for the list, as well as a large number of properties within the Conservation Area.

Nationally it sounds as though planning restrictions will be relaxed still further, giving us a more difficult task ahead. Alan Pearson said that the Wilmslow Trust wants to see the character of Alderley Edge retained and it was working through our Plans Secretary to this effect.

Election of New General Committee: The current members of the old General Committee were elected en bloc, having been proposed by Bernice Lord and seconded by Liz Standen.

Any Other Business: The following matters were raised: -

- The 2008 Dinner will be held at St Mary’s Hall on 10th October with a format similar to a Harvest Supper.
- Liz Standen was concerned with pedestrian access along Macclesfield Road. Problems include speeding traffic, contractor’s vehicles blocking the pavement and inadequate street lighting. Ann Usher of Trafford Road is reported to have access to expertise. It was agreed that the Association would discuss the matter with some urgency and make representations to the appropriate authorities.
- The Chairman thanked Ian Daghish for arranging and conducting the wine tasting

There then followed a brief meeting of the General Committee. The result of the election is shown below. A schedule of dates for the meetings in 2008 is in the Minutes of the General Committee for 29th October 2007.

General Committee Members for 2008: -

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Mr M Steiger Chairman | Mr I J Standen Admin Secretary | Mrs S Shorland | Mr J Waller |
| Dr P Forshaw Vice Chairman | Mr J Jennings Treasurer | Mr S Lord | Mr M J Whittaker |
| Mr M Sinker Plans Secretary | Miss J Brock | Mr I J Daghish | |