

The QEP Chronicle No 4

'The Summer so far'

Now that England's Football Team is out of the World Cup, and its Cricket Team has had variable luck, doubtless your thoughts are turning to holidays and making the most of the summer weather. It has been some time since we last issued an edition of the Chronicle and there has been progress on some of the issues, while others remain much as they were in the last newsletter.

There are 6 'Hot Topics' that are currently keeping the Residents' Association occupied:

- Trinity Estates
- The Community Centre
- The 'all-weather' pitch
- Crime and Traffic
- The Summer Fayre
- Complaints to the Ombudsman

Summer Fayre – 2 September 2006

Details of the Summer Fayre 2006, to be held on The Green have now been delivered to every house. Last year's event fantastic and we hope it will become an annual event

It will only be a success if people help; setting up, taking down and on the day itself. QEP needs YOU, so get in touch with;

Richard Moody
Knoll House
15 Forster Road
rjmoody@virgin.net

And there has also been some success and progress in several areas that may have passed you by; but first a point of clarification that many of you have asked about!

QEP Residents' Association (QEPR)

QEPR was formed in December 2004 at a public meeting. It resulted from the discovery, by the residents here already, of several very serious matters which had not been revealed to purchasers by either the Council or the Developers. The most serious were

1. Diverting both the Arriva bus routes from Grange Road, along Henderson and Railton Roads and back out.

2. A Community Centre was to be built on The Green, and all residents were expected to contribute towards its upkeep, although it would be a commercial business.

3. An 'all-weather' sports pitch was to be put on the only flat part of The Green.

4. The local searches were missing the information which would have revealed this information and the developers had not provided it either.

5. Opening an access point in Goddard Close. This will not now happen thanks to QEPR.

In addition it had become clear that Trinity Estates were not doing a good job and that the general condition of the public areas was declining.

We generally meet once per month and try to conduct most business by phone and email. We produce a periodic newsletter and have update meetings when necessary.

Those who have registered their email address with us will receive information on important issues by email.

Queen Elizabeth Park Residents' Management Company Limited

This is the company formed by the developers that will ultimately be responsible for the management of the Park. All households own 1 share in this company. At the moment control of the company - in the form of 2 directors - is in the hands of the developers, Laing and Linden, and residents have no voting or other rights. This situation will continue until the developers decide to hand over the company to the residents. At which point, if there are no volunteers, the developers can nominate a number of householders to be the new directors.

This is the company that appointed Trinity Estates to manage the park and is their employer.

Trinity Estates

QEPR has had concerns, from its inception, regarding Trinity Estates and the Management of the Estate. Maintenance has not been carried out to an acceptable level and the overall management and budget have caused deep concern. Residents

should all have received the draft accounts for the FY 04/05 which showed that Trinity had overspent by more than £30,000. They issued a supplementary bill to recover these costs.

Last summer, when they sent out their budget forecast it included only a 4% increase on the previous year, which QEPRAs believe will lead to a further overspend in FY 05/06. Assuming that the costs are similar - which they are - be prepared for another supplementary bill.

The latest Trinity letter, dated 21st June 2006, includes not only the latest service charge bills, but also the budget for FY06 which has increased significantly.

It also states that QEPRAs were consulted about this. A number of residents have also been told by Trinity that 'QEPRAs asked for the increase'. More accurately, and despite many obstacles put in their way, QEPRAs have been trying to get Trinity to tackle their lack of a realistic business plan and their failure to maintain the park as we would all wish. As power lies still with the 2 appointed directors it is simply not true that QEPRAs have been able to direct Trinity to do anything!

We have been trying for over 18 months to encourage Trinity to improve their service and have held a number of meetings with various members of their management team. We have pointed out to them that continuous overspends, followed by a large additional bill, are not fair to those on a budget, and that if the actual costs are known to be higher then this should be reflected in any new budget that they produce.

QEPRAs committee members are residents just like everyone else, and we want to see that our money is spent in an economical and effective way.

Redfields. This is the new gardening company employed by Trinity to replace Hilliers. They have been on site for a month and we intend to look at the estate in detail next week to see if they have made a difference yet.

Problems. We try to keep a master list of the problems around QEP. It would be helpful if, when you report something to Trinity, you could also send a copy to

Elizabet@qep.ra.wanadoo.co.uk.

If you would like to help keep your service charge down, and have a few hours a month to spare to get involved in this, please contact us.

Stoughton Community Association (including the Community Centre Project)

This began life as the Stoughton Action Group, originally opposed to the development at QEP. They now wish to operate the proposed Community Centre and are responsible for the increase in size from 150m² to 390m².

Community Centre

This finally came before the planning committee in April, and, despite a magnificent show of support by residents with almost 150 letters of objection and more than 60 people attending the meeting, the application was approved.

Notwithstanding the lack of support and the overwhelming objections it was clear that the planning committee was determined to ignore its' own policies and guidelines and approve this ugly building, now shoehorned in next to Budgens.

It appears that the developers intend to sell on the site for someone else to develop but we have no more information at present.

SCA have a questionnaire on their website at; <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/stoughtonca/SCCP/> You may wish to complete it and give your views on the subject, as you will be paying for the external maintenance of the centre if it is built. It does give you the chance to express your views to SCA.

A number of residents stood for election to the SCA committee in March and were successful so we have representation at last in the local group responsible for the Community Centre saga.

Complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman

QEPRAs began two complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman at the end of 2005. This is not a quick process and has now reached the point where The Ombudsman has asked the council for their comments and we have just sent our response back. It is so complicated that we could use up the whole newsletter on this issue alone. We will try and put a summary on the website.

John Hamilton-Williams has done a great job on behalf of all of us with this very complex matter.

Community Centre maintenance charge

Residents will be aware that when they purchased their properties they signed a covenant to maintain the building. The type, ownership and size of the

building has changed completely as a result of the planning application, granted in on 4th April 2006. There have been attempts to transfer the benefit of the original covenants to maintain from the original building to that now proposed. This forms part of the dispute between QEPRAs and the Council.

You may receive a request to sign a new document relating to the contribution for maintenance. **You are strongly advised not to sign any such document and to refer the matter to the committee.**

The outcome of this depends on a number of things and we do not know when it will be resolved.

The 'all-weather' pitch

This remains a contentious issue; all the ward councillors and almost everyone else that QEPRAs has consulted are against there being one on The Green. The proposal, to tarmac over a large part of The Green, seems utterly ridiculous. QEPRAs is continuing to hold talks with the relevant parties to try to change the current intentions. This topic is being pushed solely by the Council Planning Officers against strong local opposition.

Producing and delivering the newsletter requires a huge effort, which is why it is not produced as often as we would wish

At present we only have email addresses for about half the households. If you want to receive more regular information by email then please send an email to;

iliveatqep@btinternet.com

giving your name, street/flat name and number and a phone number. We will only use this information for QEPRAs matters and will not pass it on to external agencies.

Bus Route

Eventually Surrey County Council decided that the buses would remain on Grange Road. This was partly due to overwhelming public objection, but mainly because the integral traffic calming on the roads, especially Henderson Avenue, meant that the buses would not fit round the bends!

Two new bus stops were then installed, by SCC, on Grange Road, close to Hopkin Close, without any local consultation.

Speed Limit

Please remember the speed limit in QEP is 20mph.

Parking

Parking continues to be a problem in some areas. Thanks to Government Policy there are not enough parking spaces, so everyone needs to park considerably, especially on the access roads and on bends and junctions.

Please also remember to leave enough space on pavements for people with pushchairs and in wheelchairs to pass.

Covenants

There are several restrictive covenants controlling what can be done to the homes in the Park. The exact reference differs depending on the builder and when you bought, but we believe they all can be found in section 5 of the transfer documents.

Sales boards – not allowed at all.

Satellite dishes – must be installed in accordance with the guidance given on the website at;

www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/ant/antenna_guide.html

Some owners need the permission of the Management Company whereas others have a restriction forbidding their placement on the front of any home in QEP. If in doubt you should check your documents or contact Trinity.

Refuse

This must only be put at the front on the day of collection.

Extra recycling boxes and recycling box lids can be purchased from the Recycling & Cleansing Depot on Woking Road.

More information can be found in the Environment section of the Borough Council Website.

Dog Bins

Trinity have managed to send one of their usual unhelpful letters on this subject. It would appear that the problem was caused because Trinity had failed to ensure that the dog bins were emptied regularly. Once the bins were full people tried to be responsible and place their 'items' in the regular rubbish bins. We are told that this matter is now resolved – only time will tell.

Re-mortgaging/Selling

All homes have a covenant to the QE Park Residents' Management Co Ltd in respect of the service charge.

A number of people have had difficulty knowing who to contact about this when re-mortgaging or selling. Your solicitor should contact;

Pitmans
47 Castle Street,
Reading
Berkshire, RG1 7SR
T: +44 (0) 118 958 0224 F: +44 (0) 118 958 5097
DX 146420 Reading 21

We believe they currently charge £58.75 for this service and you should mark any correspondence for the attention of Andrea Bojie.

Do not pay Trinity Estates to do this as they have told some residents that they will charge £148 and it is not clear that they are authorised to do so.

Crime

The Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) signs are now up and the whole park has now been organised into areas. If you do not know which area you are in, please contact us and we will try and put you in touch with your co-ordinator

Andy Coumbe, the Community Safety Warden, produces a regular newsletter which we know some people receive either directly or via their NHW co-ordinator. If you want to be added to Andy's distribution list please contact him on;

coumbea@guildford.gov.uk

Trinity – fault reporting

Paul Godbold was the Property Manager but he has been promoted and replaced (temporarily!) by Craig Stevens. All faults should be now be reported to him.

Tel: 0845 345 1584 Fax: 0845 345 1586
craig.stevens@Trinityestates.com

plus a copy to Elizabet@qepira.wanadoo.co.uk.

Police – crime reporting

With the pressures on the Surrey Police budget it is essential that all crimes and any vandalism or nuisance are reported to the Police.

The more reports received, the more resources will be made available. It is also important to quote the crime numbers given below when you contact them either by phone or email.

If the incident is on The Green/Railton Road then you should quote Crime Number C/05/22124.

If it is in the Cardwells Keep/Little Street area you should quote Crime Number 05/17016.

Tell the Police if you are worried about retaliation – they will not come to your house but will deal with you by phone.

Police Contacts

Surrey Police (non- emergency) 0845 125 2222

Police officer (Steve Cake) 0845 1252222 ext 3390
or steve.cake@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Community Safety Warden (Andy Coumbe)

07876 578431 or coumbea@guildford.gov.uk

PCSO (Sheila Willis) 07967 986569 or
Willis10641@Surrey.pnn.Police.uk

In this hot weather, don't forget to lock all downstairs doors and windows before you go to bed. There has already been one incident where the thieves gained access through unlocked patio doors.

QEPRA Website

www.queenelizabethpark.co.uk.

QEPRA Committee

All the committee members are happy to talk with other residents on any subject concerning QEP, so please do not hesitate to ask questions – or better still you can offer to help!!

Since the last newsletter Dinah Bisdée has resigned due to pressure of work. Both Rick Kelsey and Glen Herbert will be standing down at the AGM and although we have a volunteer to replace Glen as Treasurer we need a new person to co-ordinate Neighbourhood Watch and liaise with the local police. All three are thanked for their hard work on our behalf over the last 18 months.

The current committee is as follows;

Grace Blake	Chairman	grace_blake@btinternet.com
Bill Perkins	Secretary	qep.residents.sec@ntlworld.com
Liz Skojda	Defects	Elizabet@qep.wanadoo.co.uk
Glen Herbert	Treasurer	glen.herbert@ntlworld.com
Rick Kelsey	Neighbourhood Watch	rick.kelsey@btopenworld.com
John Hamilton-Williams	Legal	hamwil@btinternet.com
Gavin Critchley	Social	critchley1968@yahoo.co.uk
Adam Moreve		adam@lepapillon.uk.com
Michael Hanson		hansonmd@hotmail.com
Michael Andrews	Trinity	mda.home@googlemail.com
Matt Jones	Trinity - financial/SLA	Matt.Jones@haden-bml.co.uk
Emma Cappello	Trinity - trees	gianluca.cappello@ntlworld.com
Written correspondence can be delivered to: 20 An Gorlan, 20 Railton Road, GU2 9LX		

QEPRAGM

We will be holding the AGM in the first two weeks of September, date, time and location to be confirmed. A copy of the current rules of the Association is included in this newsletter. Any points for inclusion in the agenda should be sent to The Secretary by no later than Friday 18th August 2006.

Even if you are unsure about standing for the committee, there are lots of things you can do to help;

- Be a road representative for your road
- Deliver newsletters
- Keep the membership list
- Manage the mailing lists
- Maintain the website
- Help at the Summer Fayre

Write the newsletter

Join the gardening committee

Join the committee dealing with Trinity

Represent your block of flats

Help with Neighbourhood watch

The more people there are involved in the day to day things going on, the better chance we have, as a community, of getting value for money and living in a beautiful place.

Don't just sign a cheque and grumble about the Service Charge increase – join in!

There will be a cake stall at the Fayre – so get baking!

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QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

RULES

These rules are for the purpose of setting up the Residents' Association and establishing some principles. Work is needed to refine them and that cannot be done until the Association is established

1. **NAME** The name of the Association shall be Queen Elizabeth Park Residents' Association.

2. **OBJECTS** The objects of the Association, which shall be non-party and non-sectarian, shall be:

- a. To prepare for the transfer of the Management Company from the developers.
- b. To promote and serve the interests of members in local affairs.
- c. To distribute pertinent information to the members.
- d. To promote social activities among members.

3. **MEMBERSHIP** Membership is open to all residents of Queen Elizabeth Park. In the event of an issue requiring a vote, each household will be entitled to one vote. *(Note: Because of the ownership structure of QEP it may be necessary to have more than one category of members once residents take over the Management Company. This requires further clarification).*

4. **OFFICERS** The Officers of the Association shall be: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Information Manager, Legal Advisor and Social Secretary, all of whom shall be elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting. They shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting when they shall retire, but shall be eligible for re-election.

5. **MANAGEMENT** The management of the Association shall be vested in a General Committee consisting of the Officers, as stated in Rule 4, three Ordinary Members and Area Representatives. The number of Area Representatives shall be decided by the General Committee to ensure adequate representation. Both Ordinary Members and Area representatives shall be elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting. They shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, when they shall retire but shall be eligible for re-election.

a. **Frequency** The General Committee shall meet at least eight times each year and the quorum shall consist of six members. The General Committee shall have power to co-opt members to serve on the Committee or act as Area Representatives in the event of vacancies arising and may if necessary co-opt additional non-voting members. All committee members shall have one vote except in the case of a tie where the Chairman may cast a deciding vote.

b. **Notice** Seven days' notice of a Committee meeting shall be given except in cases of emergency. The duties of the General Committee shall be generally to transact the business of the Association and to deal with any matter not provided for in these rules. The General Committee shall at no time take any action that may be contrary to the rules, until the members at a General Meeting have approved such action.

6. **MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION** The minimum Annual Subscription shall be as determined at the Annual General Meeting, and shall be payable on the first of the month following the Annual General Meeting. All members shall be furnished with a copy of the rules on payment of the first subscription.

All Members of the General Committee shall be

authorised to collect subscriptions, and they must give a written receipt on the form approved by the General Committee or arrange for a similar receipt to be given.

7. **GENERAL MEETINGS** The Annual General Meeting shall be held in May *(Note: The actual timing for 2005 is to be decided by the initial General Committee)* each year when a report and audited Accounts made up to the previous 31st March shall be submitted. *(Note: This may change to coincide with the Management Company)*

a. **Notice** Fourteen days notice of the meeting shall, together with copies of the Agenda and audited Accounts, be given to all members.

b. **Resolutions** Notice of all resolutions to be moved must be given in writing and signed by the proposer(s), to the Secretary at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting for publication in the notice of the meeting. Amendments to resolutions can be given in writing prior to the meeting or can be proposed at the Annual General Meeting. Proof of Membership of the Association may be required of those attending the Annual General Meeting who wish to vote.

9. **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING** Special General Meetings may be summoned on the written requisition of at least 25 members, or at the discretion of the General Committee; such written requisition to be signed by all members concerned and sent to the Secretary, together with particulars of the business to be discussed, The Special General Meeting shall be convened by the Secretary within 21 days of the receipt of the requisition. The General Committee shall have power to include any other business it deems to be necessary on the agenda for any Special General Meeting, and all items on the agenda shall be stated in the notice convening the meeting.

10. **SUB-COMMITTEES** The General Committee may appoint sub-committees that shall include at least two members of the General Committee. All sub-committees shall furnish a report at the regular meetings of the General Committee and shall not commit the Association financially without the approval of the General Committee. All financial transactions of sub-committees shall form part of the general transactions of the Association. The Chairman, Secretary Treasurer and Legal Advisor shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees.

11. **EXPULSION OF MEMBERS** The Association shall have power to expel, at a Special General Meeting held for that purpose, any member who in the opinion of the majority of the meeting, has acted in a manner contrary to the interests of the Association.

12. **ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO RULES** Additions or amendment to rules may be made only at the Annual General Meeting and must be supported by not less than 75 per cent of the members present and voting (See Rule 7).

13. **WINDING-UP** In the event of the Association deciding by a majority vote of its members to cease functioning, a Special General Meeting shall held, a final statement of audited accounts presented and any balance of funds distributed as decided by the votes of the members present.

Drought

Don't forget that you are responsible for watering you own front garden, even if Trinity are supposed to maintain it. Don't let your plants die.