

Minutes of VICTORIA ROAD GROUP MEETING

Monday 9th January 2012, 8pm at Jonathan and Sally's (59)

Attendance: Mary Lewis (Chair), Jonathan and Sally Bromley, Carol, Bill Dutton, Mick O'Connor, Betty Marshall, Anna Buchanan (Treasurer), Gordon Buchanan, Paul Lewis, Jelly Williams.

Jonathan took the minutes.

1 Apologies

Received from Sam, Ali, Nick, Sue, John, Manda, Mireille, Philippa and Diana.

2 Minutes of last meeting, and matters arising

Minutes were approved.

Matters arising:

- Anna pointed out that the sum of £23 received was in fact a tax rebate. The actual sum was larger. Needs correction in the minutes.

action: Mary

- Photographic competition: 16 entries were received, 6 were shortlisted and displayed at the Christmas party. The winner was Da Cornock-Taylor, the runner-up Jonathan Bromley. Those photos are already on the blog. Thanks are due to Elman Poole for setting up and generously funding this event. Sally asked whether it brought in any people who don't normally participate in VRG activity. Mary reported that all six shortlisted were VRG "regulars", but the others aren't known at this time. There was a suggestion that we could exploit the results by using the images on merchandise such as tea towels or calendars. Prize money is available for a second run of the contest.

3 Newsletter

Chair suggested that one issue should be circulated as a matter of urgency, even though Sam and Manda's plans for a revamp of the newsletter are not yet complete. In the medium term we hope to make it more arresting and informative, with VRG contact information appearing in every issue. More immediately there is a need to publicise the Seven Roads Jubilee event and VRG Quaffers' Quiz. A very simple flyer should go out ASAP.

Several members indicated that there is already a good level of information about VRG activities. Perhaps a year's calendar of anticipated events, with approximate dates, might be useful? There was some discussion of possible formats.

Jonathan will prepare a simple newsletter, for immediate circulation, by 15th Jan.

action: Jonathan

The relationship between the newsletter and the existing Welcome Pack was briefly discussed. It was felt that the Welcome Pack is genuinely useful.

This topic will be reviewed at a future meeting. Paul will prepare a mockup example for discussion. Sally to investigate colour print costs.

action: Paul, Sally

4 Recent and upcoming events

The Christmas party took place at no.56 with about 40 participants including a few new faces. Thanks were expressed to Ali and Sam for hosting, and to Nick for preparing fine mulled wine.

Mick and Sally reported on progress towards the wine tasting challenge evening ("Quaffers' Quiz"). Helpers will be needed before and during the event. We need to inform Juliet Field (church hall bookings secretary) of our requirements for tables and chairs in the upper hall. Mike and Mireille have helped extensively with planning and are familiar with the organization of such events. Carol (and Alan *in absentio*) offered to run the drinks bar (donations). Mary and Paul can help at the event but not beforehand. There was a problem with cleaning of the upstairs hall when we last used it; we need to check with the hall whether they have yet provided a suitable large sweeping brush. Hall cost will be about £80. Total budget for the evening about £240, with the intention that it should roughly break even. The organising team will seek feedback on what people liked and disliked about the event. Sally and Mick briefly outlined the evening's format.

action: organising team, helpers

OxClean is March 3rd-4th this year. Mary has registered us, but there has been no response from the Council yet. We will tackle the same area as last year (around the Marston flyover on the A40). Highlight this event in the Newsletter.

5 Seven Roads Jubilee event

A team is working on a party on 26th May – avoiding the Bank Holiday week and being sensitive to those who might object to royalist celebrations. A format similar to the millennium party, but on a smaller scale, is planned. It will probably run from noon to midnight, with closure of King's Cross Road from Victoria to Portland. Mary and Sally are Victoria Road's representatives on the team and will keep VRG informed. VRG has pledged to contribute £100, and a total of £280 has already been given or promised; the organisers expect to go ahead once £1000 has been raised. It was suggested that a contributions box could be available on Green Balloon Day.

5.1 Provisional dates for 2012

The following dates were agreed:

Sat 4 Feb	Quaffers' Quiz
Sat 28 Apr	Green Balloon Day (Carol kindly offered the use of her driveway for coffee)
Sat 26 May	Seven Roads Jubilee party
Sun 1 July	VRG Garden Party (venue to be arranged)
Sat 17 Nov	Media Madness
Sun 9 Dec	Christmas party

6 Communications received

- Information had been received from the City recycling team about the Refashion event (see below)
- The parents of Catriona (VR resident who died unexpectedly) send us £20 each year as a contribution to Christmas celebrations. Nick has already thanked them.
- Mary had received a response from Jean Fooks (councillor) regarding concerns about the forthcoming Sainsbury's supermarket in Suffolk House and our regret at the loss of local retailers. It was disappointing; the building does not require permission for change of use, so the council are unable to intervene. The site is owned by a London Property Company; apparently there is now no retail property at all in Summertown that belongs to the council. This issue had also been aired at the North Area Forum in December 2011.
- Paul had received a response from Nicola Blackwood MP regarding support for a Post Office in Summertown (perhaps in the Library). The response was long and thorough, but noted that current improvement plans for Summertown Library are on a small scale. There are vague longer term plans for more extensive changes to include a Post Office.

7 Recycling

The battery recycling bin is now outside No.46. Thanks were expressed to Mary and Paul for hosting this useful facility.

Carol (Recycling Champion) has been in touch with the City Council's recycling team, two new employees who seem very energetic and have organised the Refashion event.

8 AOB

- Gordon noted that he has used the Post Office's online postage prepayment service, and it could be useful to other residents.
- Carol is considering holding a yard sale, and asked if VRG might wish to get involved with more vendors participating. Some concern was expressed that this is not something that should be directly promoted or sponsored by VRG, but of course there were no objections to the idea of an individual sale and it was suggested that it might be even more successful if several residents were to hold such events on the same day.
- Gravel from some driveways, particularly on the sloped north side of the road, tends to spill on to the footpath making walking difficult for all but the most agile. Could residents perhaps be reminded of their civic responsibility to keep the footpath passable? The meeting's opinion was that it could perhaps be mentioned in the newsletter in a general way, but it would be inappropriate for VRG to approach individual householders.
- Bill noted that the Animal Sanctuary in Stadhampton always needs old towels, sheets, rags and newspapers for animal bedding. He could accept contributions at No.55.
- Anna asked whether last year's successful skip hire could be repeated. There was general agreement, with a suggestion that anyone putting more than a trivial

quantity into the skip be asked to contribute £10 to the cost. Suggested date 7th July. Various people offered to have the skip on their driveway but it was felt that Sam and Ali's at no.56 would be best, if available.

9 Thanks to hosts

Sally and Jonathan were thanked for their hospitality.

10 Date of Next meeting

8.00pm, Wednesday 14th March 2012 at No.102A (Mick and Philippa).