



## **CHAIR'S REPORT FOR January 2011**

Happy New Year to you all ! I have a feeling that 2011 will be a great year for us – it has certainly started well:-

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

**Cambridge Road Estates Play Scheme ( CREPS)** You may recall that back in August we discussed the fact that, following the fact that we had lost the original 'Playbuilder' funding after it was 'un-ring-fenced' ( is that a word?) the Sub Committee charged with implementing the Playbuilder Project applied for funds from various sources – one of which was thanks to Simon at Quadrant who applied to the Marathon Trust. for the £110,000 – slightly more than the original amount allocated to the scheme. This was submitted under Des Gordon's name as RBK Resident Participation Officer As you may already have heard, we received notification via Des on Tuesday that this bid was successful! This is obviously great news but heralds a lot of hard work fairly quickly. There is a meeting of the sub committee scheduled for Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> January where a great deal of decisions need to be made. I guess that we are lucky that plans for the scheme were well under way before the funding was pulled so we have a solid basis with which to start ( including the responses from residents to the Playbuilder questionnaires).

Previous experiences tell me that we need to resume this project with a very clear idea of what is expected from whom and a clear plan for the future. This is on the agenda for Monday's meeting and needs careful consideration.

**CRE Gardening Group** As agreed at our last meeting, Mary and I visited the Kingston Environmental Centre a few weeks before Christmas. We met with Marilyn and agreed a way forward for this project. As a start we have invited Hilary from Transition Town Kingston ( TTK) to attend our meeting on Monday so give us the latest updates. In addition we have planned to hold an initial meeting for the 'CRE Diggers' on 20<sup>th</sup> January in Piper Hall ( posters have been circulated). We aim to notify residents via posters and through both our website and local press - in addition to an article written by Mary for the forthcoming Newsletter.

Unfortunately the funding bid to Capital Growth was rejected but I feel sure that when this is discussed on Monday we can find some way of finding the basic funds required to start this project which has been so long in the planning.

**AFC Wimbledon training and match sessions** This scheme started last Saturday following our best efforts to promote it – this included a leaflet delivered to each household, posters and leaflets handed out during both the Gala and Mince Pie Munch, website details and press notification reminders. I also corresponded with Paul last week who has arranged to pay us a visit very soon to discuss progress. I believe that this is a great opportunity for local youngsters and that we should do whatever is needed to ensure that local youngsters are made aware of the project.

**Fit as a Fiddle** This is another joint project due to start on Tuesday in Piper Hall. Doreen has been in regular communication with Grace Shorthouse from Age UK ( who seems quite impressed with our set-up!) At last count there were 9/10 residents booked to join the course – a great start! I am sure Dor will be able to update further on Monday.

**Royal Wedding Street Party** You may recall that Alan Griffiths, ( Vice Chair of CRERA) attended our last meeting to discuss the possibility of this project being jointly run. This was agreed so long as both the funding and the workload was split 50:50.

John, Doreen and I ( the 3 Crest appointed delegates duly showed up at the Fed's Tadlow Office to find 5 CRERA delegates plus Saddiq working in the back ground. At our request, Des kindly agreed to act as an independent Chair. Things did not get off to a great start when Alan introduced us as 'the enemy'. He was also clearly irate that we failed to accept the premise that CREst should pay for the lions share of the event, provide the expertise and experience ( including insurance cover and Health and Safety certification) but then allow CRERA to be recognised as 'Project Lead'. Fortunately, the other delegates seemed to understand the need for fairness and equality and by majority vote it was agreed that this be a 50/50 project. A date was agreed for a follow up meeting ( 24<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm) but... who knows? The notes from this meeting have been circulated by Des.

**Fun Day** As part of the Monday meeting we must agree a date for the Fun Day committee to meet and begin planning for this year's event. If any of you would like to be included in any aspect of the planning please let me know.

## **ESTATE MATTERS**

**Madingley Fire update** - There was disappointment for Madingley residents living on floors 1 – 10. At a meeting in November they had been led to believe that there was a good chance that they could be home by late November/early December. However, a delay with delivery of the fire doors meant that this was not possible. However, the Madingley Fire Fund trustees had already made plans to distribute ASDA vouchers for £111 to each household. Plans were rapidly made to issue these vouchers at the Mince Pie Munch/Tree lighting on 16<sup>th</sup> December ( which all Madingley residents had already been invited to). A letter confirming these plans and offering an alternative collection was sent to Madingley residents. This proved to be highly effective as it gave the residents involved the opportunity to meet up with old friends and catch up. A large percentage of the vouchers were handed out with the rest almost all hand delivered. Despite torrential rain/snow, Mayor Chrissie Hitchcock gamely stood outside with me to switch on the tree lights. As a bonus, a raffle held to raise Fun Day funds raised some £30.

**Report on Fire in Kingston Newsletter** – You may recall that back in the first week of September, I was asked at short notice to help out RBK by providing a story at very short notice for their house paper. It was just a few days before the Fun Day with a tight deadline but I did the best I could, given that the RA had 'refused to co-operate'. Imagine, then how I felt when by pure chance I read in the RPRG ( Resident Participation Review Group) minutes that Ray Austin, Tim Bell and others had recorded their displeasure that I had written the article. Even worse, at least 3 people present at the meeting were fully aware of the truth but chose not to set the record straight. Des has promised to sort this out but over a month has passed and, yet again, I am waiting for an apology. This is not a trend that I will allow to continue.

**Gas supplies to surrounding blocks** – I should say straight away that I have been one of the residents who has been left without heating or gas cooking facilities since the fire. I had originally planned to highlight the hardships that we have faced. However, I am cursed with a sense of fair-play which prevents me from using this report as a platform for personal grievances . Suffice to say that things have been very hard – cold, expensive and no sign of improvement.

## **HOUSEKEEPING**

**Newsletter** - I am delighted to report that Jenny has sent me through a draft copy of the Jan 11 Newsletter – and I think that it is wonderful. To me it explodes with things to do, information and

health advice. Maria kindly forwarded details of a current funding stream from NH Services. My 'day job' meant I had reason to read more about the scheme. Having done so, I truly think that we stand some chance of a successful application – especially if the latest Newsletter is used as a demonstration of what we do. I am hoping to complete a rough draft for your thoughts on Monday

Further details of the fund are at

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_123020](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_123020).

**Training etc** – As was agreed at the last meeting, I have been in touch with Sanja at KVA and made plans for us to meet with her to plan a way forward regarding registering as a Charity. This will require changes to our aims and Constitution and also alterations to our accounting systems. We are half there following an accounts one-to-one/two with KVA which will give us a more easily administered accounting system.

**Letter to Keith Broxup** - Well, it has taken 3 reminders from me but we did actually receive a response from Keith Broxup last Wednesday. This was delivered via the post so I shall bring copies with me on Monday. The contents of the letter have a link with the Playbuilder funding so I would suggest that we discuss this as a whole item – although that will be for you to decide.

**Meeting with Gary Walsh (ECET/appendix 1 follow-up)** A delegation of Crest residents met with Gary – newly appointed Head of ECET and others. This was the long awaited chat regarding the false accusations levelled to both me as an individual and CREst as a group. Gary has agreed to attend our meeting and apologise for the accusations that were falsely levelled at us.

However, it seemed obvious to me that Gary was struggling to get ahead of the workload left to him, so I figured that, given our hopes to forge a more positive bond with Gary and his Team, it would be sensible to set up this joint meeting for February. This will provide ample notice to those others who were involved and allow them to be sure they are free for the meeting. I suspect that CREst, as a group need to take some time to settle ourselves now that we know the truth. I can see little point in us venting our anger on people who played no part in what was obviously a plot to discredit us.

However, I would very much like to thank each and every one of you for your support. Never once during this whole sorry saga have I ever doubted your support. Ironically, all this situation has done is to strengthen the groups mutual loyalty.

**CRERA/CREst joint protocol** This is a matter that has been hovering on the edge of both groups for some time. Two years' ago we did sign a version of this protocol when Michael Mangan was Chair.

This item has now surfaced once again under a slightly different guise. We need to make the time on Monday to discuss this at length. Do we need such an agreement? What evidence do we have that CRERA would have any inclination to comply with this new document? They have shown us little evidence in the past that they mean to 'play by the rules' I think that we need to seek assurance that this could happen before we move any further forwards.

**New CREst representatives.** I am pleased to announce that Alma White from Cambridge Gardens has agreed to receive CREst Chair's Reports and Management Committee minutes to keep herself up to date on our activities. She is keen to act as a liaison between CREst and Camb Gdns residents.

**Norbiton Community Consultation** Jenny and I attended the inaugural meeting of this group – headed by Neville Rainford. RBK are anxious to establish exactly what key services Norbiton residents would like favoured in the future planning consultations. I have promised to speak with you all to try and ensure that as many residents from as many walks of life are asked for their opinion. All Norbiton Cllrs attended and I am sure that Penny will be happy to update us on future plans.

