**CLEAVER SQUARE, CLEAVER STREET AND BOWDEN STREET RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

**AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

**Minutes of the virtual Annual General Meeting held via Zoom at 7pm**

**on 11 November 2020**

**1. Introduction and apologies for absence**

There were 17 residents present online. Apologies for absence were received from: Mark Wallace, Patrick Tatham, James Taylor, and Councillors Jo Simpson, David Amos and Jon Davies.

The Chair, Penny Ritchie Calder, welcomed those present.

**2. Minutes and matters arising from the AGM on 20 November 2019**

The minutes of the last AGM were approved. Matters arising would be dealt with under relevant agenda.

**3. Neighbourhood Watch report**

PC Callum Jones from the Princes Ward Safer Neighbourhood Team was unable to attend and sent his apologies. PRC summarized issues, including drug dealing witnessed in the square/Cleaver Street/Bowden Street, thefts of cycles and thefts from houses undergoing renovation. Action was still awaited from TfL on the installation of signage to stop motorcycles and scooters by-passing the no entry gate by the Art School.

There had been problems with crowds in the square through the summer following the loosening of lockdown rules, with a huge increase in litter and urination in gardens and alleyways. This had required liaison with Lambeth Parks department, which experienced similar problems in parks throughout the borough.

**4. Message from local councillors**

Our local councillors were unable to attend but sent the following message: *“The pandemic seems to have brought communities closer together in Lambeth, one of the few positive outcomes, and Cleaver Square is no exception. Of course you were already well organized and tight knit but I know from personal experience local residents have reached out to the wider community as volunteers for those self-isolating or in need. Thank you. The same old annual routines have had to be adjusted but leaves are still being swept up, Charlie’s Patch tended and odd socially distanced social event has emerged to raise the spirits. From the Town Hall’s perspective we have tried to take on the challenge of the pandemic in a calm and practical way but make no mistake the issues are building up behind the scenes with increased unemployment and the poverty that will create. Thank you for all you do and contribute and we are here to support you*.” Residents thanked the councillors for their continued hard work over a difficult year.

**4. Chairman’s report and Association finances**

The committee had met only once (24.2.2020) because of Covid but had kept in touch via email.

1. **Report on street cleaning**: Problems still remained with litter and dumping resulting from reduced street cleaning Thanks were due to Elizabeth Filkin for continuing to liaise with Lambeth Streetcare to get standards of cleaning improved and to deal with local businesses dumping refuse in the street.
2. **Parks department**: Liaison continued, particularly in relation to maintenance and leaf sweeping. A request had also recently been made for a check of all trees in the square. The wish list given to the department, including replacement of gravel, replacement of cherry tree, and repairs to railings, had not yet been actioned.
3. **Kennington Cross road safety:** Committee members and local councillors had continued to liaise with TfL about improvements to safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists
4. **Building work:** Problems with noisy building work continued. Residents would be reminded of the Considerate Builder guidelines available on the website. One resident suggested that anyone undertaking noisy work should put a tab at the pub for neighbours.
5. **Report on events**: the Covid-19 lockdown had an impact on all events from March 2020 onwards, but various activities were still possible:

* Carols in the Square in December 2019 was very well attended and raised just under £1,000, shared between the Kennington Association’s Secret Santa and Vauxhall Foodbank.
* The annual spring rake up was cancelled, but two plant swaps were held on 25 April and 23 May along with sunflower planting (2 May).
* The 75th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May was marked by socially distanced drinks.
* A book swap was held on 9 May.
* An impromptu distanced summer party was held on 2 July.
* A distanced autumn rakeup/clean up took place on 10 October. Over 200 bulbs were planted on Charlie’s Patch and in other beds.
* The Supper Club had been unable to meet because of Covid restrictions but it was hoped it could resume in 2021. Renewed thanks were due to Polly Hutchinson for coordinating the meetings.

1. **Finances**: The Chair reported that full accounts were available for inspection, and that the current balance stood at £1073. Expenses included a D-lock for the art school gate, website hosting and domain name renewal, and bulbs and plants for the autumn rake up.

**5. Forthcoming events and proposed dates for 2020/21**

It was unlikely that the annual Carols in the Square event could be held in its usual form. Options were being explored so that the usual charities (the Kennington Association’s Secret Santa appeal and the Vauxhall Foodbank) would not be let down. PRC suggested a crowdfunding scheme. She also recommended that residents should be encouraged to put up outdoor Christmas lights to cheer up the square.

Depending on the pandemic, it was hoped events for 2021 would include:

* Spring clean/Community Freshview: April date t.b.c.
* Summer Party: date in June/July t.b.c.
* Carols in the Square: date in December t.b.c.

As the lockdown plant swaps and book swaps had proved popular, these could be repeated in 2021. Edward Hutchison suggested that the square should host a lunch party to thank those who had worked so tirelessly in the NHS during the pandemic.

**6. Membership of the Committee**

PRC thanked members for their work over the last year. Ursula Ovenden was unanimously voted on to the committee. The committee therefore comprised: Mark Wallace, Edward Hutchison, Michael Honey, Hilary Gal, Carola Breuning, Emma Moody, Mike Tyler, Simona Springer, Rod Spence, James Taylor, K Newman, Ursula Ovenden, Penny Ritchie Calder (chair).

PRC said that if anyone would like to take over a Chair, she would be happy to discuss what was involved

**7. Any Other Business**

* Ursula Ovenden suggested that a boules club could be formed to meet weekly in the square. This was enthusiastically agreed.

**8. Date of next AGM –** November 2021: date to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.