

HCERA AGM 2023 Chairman's Report

I would like to review the past year.

THE HCERA AGM 2022

At least 39 residents attended the 2022 HCERA AGM, the Association's 32nd, at the Hardmoor Early Years Centre. Reports were prepared in advance and not read out during the meeting. This allowed more time for discussion.

CAROLS 2022

Carols on the Upper Green in Ethelburt Avenue on Thursday 22nd December, was as always a lovely community event. The rain held off and Ocean Brass played beautifully. Thanks to Lawrence, Louise and Peter for their contributions, and keeping us in check! Donations of £90 were collected for the St Albans food bank.

LITTER-PICKING

There was a litter-pick over the weekend 11-13 November. As usual, the equipment was borrowed from the Council and the bags of litter left in Field Close for collection. The Spring litter-pick was a disappointment. So few volunteered that we cancelled the delivery of the Council equipment. Using what litter-picking equipment we had, main areas were cleared of litter but the volunteers had to take the litter home and add it to their own refuse.

CORONATION GATHERINGS

The weather blessed the gatherings on the Sunday 7th May with sunshine. A strong turnout of residents from Leaside Way and Summerfield Gardens came together to celebrate the coronation of the king and queen with afternoon tea on the green in Leaside Way. It was lovely to see everyone chatting enthusiastically together! Sue Green and Peggy Gow provided a splendid spread for the green in Bassett Green Road.

Sadly, Monday 8th May was a washout and only a very few braved the weather on the Large Green in Ethelburt Avenue.

OPEN GARDENS

Fourteen gardens were opened on 4th June. We had an opportunity to see some hidden gems. A donation of £194 has been sent to Mayfield Nurseries.

SCARECROW COMPETITION

The first ever Scarecrow Festival organised by Malcolm Price got off to a fairly slow start, but gradually built up such that there were 15 exhibits on view. The overall theme of TV characters really caught on and there was a vast range of ingenuity and artistic talent.

The final winner was 86EA with their, "Minions", while "The Repair Shop" at 70BGR was a close second. Everyone had fun while contributing a little to the charity, Mayfield Nurseries.

THE SUMMER PARTY

The Yellow Weather Warning for high winds on the Saturday, put us in a quandary. With the BBQ meat due for delivery, a long postponement was not an option. A decision was therefore made to move to the following day, Sunday 16th July. The winds were still too high to have a bouncy castle. Our thanks go to Michelle and Ken Hickling and Mark for the BBQ and Verity Robson for organising the children's games. As usual, residents came with a good selection of salads and puddings.

STREET REPS

In March, Roger Goddard resigned as the street rep for Stoneham Lane. He said he not able to

commit fully to the role and consequently was not able to undertake the duties fully. Benjamin Davey, a street rep for Ethelburt Avenue resigned in May. The street rep plays a pivotal role in the functioning of the residents association, so please consider volunteering and making this contribution to the community.

WARD BOUNDARIES

As I said in my 2022 AGM Report, HCERA discovered that Southampton City Council had submitted a proposal for boundary changes that would see the Estate carved in two between Swaythling and Bassett across Bassett Green Road. HCERA submitted responses of our own indicating that putting a boundary in the middle of a conservation area and residents association is inappropriate. This was successful.

The new ward boundaries became law on 23 February 2023 and sees the area covered by HCERA, undivided in Swaythling Ward.

MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES

The Association is a member of the City of Southampton Society, North Southampton Community Forum and Southampton Voluntary Services. The City of Southampton Society takes a keen interest in planning applications and frequently makes comments on planning applications in this conservation area. A notable intervention this year, was to oppose replacement of steel sash windows in a property at the top end of Ethelburt Avenue for which planning permission was refused. Since the start of Covid, Southampton Voluntary Services has had their monthly Friday Forum on Zoom. I quite often “go to” these. I suspect that the North Southampton Community Forum is gradually fading away. There seems to have been little activity in 2023.

THANKS

I would like to thank all those who make HCERA possible. Thank you to all the people who give up their time to attend committee meetings, to the secretary and treasurer, to those who moderate the Facebook Group, to Dan Hopgood who convenes the Road Improvement Group, and to our webmaster Nic Monks. I also thank St George Catholic College for hosting this meeting.

Ray George, HCERA Chairman.