

Menston Community Association

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 8 January 2014

Present: [Committee] Steve Ellams (SE) – Chair, Alan Elsegood (ADE, Acting Sec'y), Peter Ward (PW), Quentin Mackenzie (QM), Lillas McCulloch (LM), Chris Hartley (CH).
Members of the public incl. Graham Booth, Sue Rix, David Rhodes, Philip Moore, Roger Livesey (Website), plus 6 other attenders.

Apologies: Glyn Martill (GM), David Manson (DM), Cllr. Dale Smith (DS), Cath Tully (CT), Cllr. J Whiteley.

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising

Published on both the 'official' and 'alternative' websites. Agreed as a true record. ADE offered to script the Minutes for tonight's meeting. SE proposed taking the Agenda items in a different order in view of recent developments (although recorded here in the sequence listed on the Agenda).

3. Correspondence

Item deferred.

4. Parish Council/Menston in Bloom Reports

There had been no recent Parish Council meeting on which to report.

Menston in Bloom was relatively inactive over the December/January period, particularly in light of the bad weather, but QM reported that 2 benches had recently been delivered and installed in Butterfield Park.

5. Forum meeting update

The next Forum would take place at Kirklands on Tuesday 4 February and would be exclusive to the Menston organisations (expected to be jointly chaired by MCA and the Parish Council). Issues which are expected to feature in the Agenda include:

- Threatened closure of the Children's Centre
- Plan for a Menston Car Show to take place on Monday 5 May
- Improved communication by the creation of new Notice Boards in the village
- Airport and aircraft noise/overflying
- Development proposals, flooding and drainage concerns

SE intended to invite our MP (Philip Davies) and members of the media to ensure adequate ventilation of the concerns of Menston residents against the background that Bradford Council was misinforming and mistreating Menston and ignoring planning regulations. It was noted that Philip Davies had asked for the opportunity to raise an Adjournment Debate in the House of Commons concerning the conduct of matters in Bradford Council.

6. Update on Newsletter ("Menston News")

The next issue is in preparation, and due for distribution appx. 20 January (2 weeks in advance of the Forum). Concern was expressed about the distribution process: some people not at home when the bulk bundles were available and some areas had not received deliveries last time. One suggestion was that the volunteer deliverers might collect their bundles from SmallPrint at times convenient to them. Might not suit everybody. We have enough deliverers, but getting the newsletters to them is still a problem.

7. Support for local businesses

Difficult climate for business, especially those in the village. Could the MCA (and Parish Council) do more to promote and support local businesses and help keep them viable? The 'alternative' website (www.menstonvillagewharfedale.com) was seen as one method of promoting them if businesses were willing to provide information. The "Menston News" was a source of advertising at relatively low cost. The idea of Notice Boards at 4 or 5 key locations around the village was another potential method of drawing attention to village businesses, although there would be a cost of providing them, which businesses might help defray by sponsorship. A Working Party was proposed to progress this idea.

8. Objections to proposed developments (incl. full development plan for Bingley Road)

Although the housing allocations for Wharfedale had been reduced by 50% (from 4,500 to 2,500) and Menston's from 900 to 400 new homes, there was a new Planning Application for 12 homes lower down Bingley Road, and a full Application had been submitted and approved for 134 homes on Bingley Road. Both these planned developments were on land subject to flooding and Bradford Council had ignored the fact it was unlawful to displace water flows onto adjacent land. Two complaints were running via the Local Govt. Ombudsman and formal complaints had also been submitted to Bradford's City Solicitor. There had been a protest at Bradford City Hall and petition to Bradford Council on 10 December, attended by numerous Menston residents. In addition, Natural England were corresponding with BMDC to ensure that proper account was taken of environmental and wildlife habitat factors.

Many residents had lodged objections on the Bradford Council website but more were needed via the link: (http://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/the_environment/planning_service/planning_applications/public_access_for_planning) as we had over 1,100 objections to the original Planning Applications for Derry Hill and Bingley Road.

We have to recognise that there are now FOUR planning/development proposals being advanced and favoured by Bradford Council, viz. Taylor Wimpey re. Bingley Road, Barratts re. Derry Hill, Chartford Homes re. Bingley Road (adjacent to Red House Gardens) and a new application re. Hargrave Crescent.

We have also seen the initial proposals relating to Section 278 (Highways) proposals for Menston, which include all sorts of humps, bumps, changes of road surface and parking restrictions. These are not yet out for public consultation but anyone who has concerns should make them known to any member of the Parish Council in advance of the meeting due to be held on Thursday 30 January at Kirklands.

9. Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsman had received two complaints (one from SE and another from ADE) and both were currently being referred to an investigator. Evidence had been submitted relating to Bradford Council's breaches of procedure, misleading statements and not supplying Councillors on the Planning Panel with the flooding and drainage evidence. There was nothing yet to report-back.

10. Car Show and Christmas Lights Appeal

The proposal to hold a Car/Vehicle Show (like the one held in Menston over the Jubilee weekend) was discussed, and the provisional date was seen as Monday 5 May (being the early May Bank Holiday). SE had held early discussions with The Menston Arms, The Fairfax Club, The Malt Shovel and Parmley Graham as four locations on which vehicles might be displayed. There was scope for such a show but potential problems if it was not restricted, as otherwise there could be siting problems. If vehicles were on display at Kirklands, for example, the event would straggle along the whole of Main Street.

The idea of collecting voluntary contributions (rather than an entrance fee) was discussed, with the proceeds going to a fund for bigger and better Christmas lights with facilities for permanent installations (perhaps similar to the methods used to good effect at Burley in Wharfedale). It would be expected that the Car Show would provide businesses in the village with opportunities, especially for the sale of food and refreshments. It was also suggested that Nigel Cawthorne be approached with the idea of running a repeat of the successful Village Walk event on the same occasion. A Working Party was proposed, the members to be confirmed outside the MCA meeting, and a feasibility study/financial plan produced.

11. Any other business

ADE had raised the issue of aircraft noise at the Airport Consultative Committee meeting held on 12 December, but Menston's concerns had either not been understood or had been trivialised by other members. Part of the problem was that, of the 20+ members of this Committee, only Burley in W/dale had a similar experience of overflying and resulting noise. ADE had pointed out that aircraft seemed to be flying closer to the southern boundary of the permitted Noise Preferential Routing and, if this became regular practice, it meant in effect re-drawing the NPR farther to the south and, consequently, closer to Menston than it already was. Unfortunately, the complaint did not receive support.

Plans are still progressing for a complete re-drawing of the NPR such that it would form a straighter line from the airport out towards Ilkley, with the turn (to the aircraft's intended route) not taking place until approximately 5 miles out (closer to Ben Rhydding).

12. Next meeting

Forum: Tuesday 4 February 2014, 7.30 – 9.30pm at Kirklands Community Centre

In the interest of openness, MCA meetings are open to all Menston residents.