Craven Vale Community Association

Notes of Annual General Meeting

June 11th 2014, 7.00pm at The Vale Community Centre, Hadlow Close

Present: Residents: Grant Scott (Chairman), Shirley Blount, Alan Cooke, Bill Duff, Betty Field, Christine Harrop, Lindy Holloway, Dean Kelly, Lauren Kelly, Clive Taplin, Geoff Wilcock, Nick Wood; Others: Cllr Gill Mitchell, Cllr Warren Morgan, Sharon Terry (Resident Neighbourhood Officer), Nick Aldwinckle (Neighbourhood Officer), Amy Allison (Trust for Developing Communities), PCSO Carol Manton; Guest: Dr Hilary Orange, University College London.

1.   **Welcome and Apologies**. Following a buffet from 6:30 pm onwards, Grant opened the meeting at 7:05 pm. Apologies were received from Rosemary Johnson.

2.   **Presentation on the Archaeological Studies of Whitehawk Camp**. Dr Hilary Orange, of University College London, described the current studies being undertaken at Brighton's Neolithic camp by UCL, Brighton and Hove Museums, the City's Park Ranger service (led by Paul Gorringe) and Brighton Archaeological Society, and funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The camp is one of Britain's earliest monuments, and is a causewayed camp with some four or five rings of low embankments and ditches, split by causeways for ease of access. It is currently believed to have been a regional meeting-place rather than a fortified camp or a religious centre, but more excavations may help to determine its purpose.

The site has been extensively damaged in the past 100 years, and part of the work will be to remove all later dumps of metal and rubble. During August teams will clear the rubble and excavate identified areas of interest on the outer rings of the camp. Other teams will work over the coming year at the Museum and clean, photograph and catalogue both this year's discoveries and the 4,000 objects uncovered in the last digs, in the 1920s and 1930s. A community festival is planned on the site for August 23rd.

Over 100 local people were already signed up and residents were invited to join them and join in whatever activities interested them most. The Association agreed that it and the Friends of Craven Wood would like to be involved with the event on August 23rd. The Friends could consider an escorted tour of their area, showing the ecological improvements being made.

3.   **Minutes**. The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of July 10th 2013 were circulated and were agreed to be a true record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

4.   **Chairman's Report**. Grant reported on the year, and gave thanks to members of the committee who had achieved so much over the past year, plus the sustained efforts of Amy and Claire from TDC, those from the Housing Office, and our Councillors and PCSOs.

The highlight of the year was probably the final completion of the kitchen project which had been dogged by many delays. Even now, small improvements remained to be made but there was nothing to stop the kitchen being used for local events and for providing youngsters and others with cookery classes. In addition, we have re-organised the cupboard space in the Community Centre, and added an extra cupboard in the toilet for the cleaners. We have also invested in a wifi-enabled computer for general use.

Two new activities have been well-supported – a monthly meeting for residents of 50-plus, with a variety of activities to go with coffee and cake; and a food bank on Friday lunchtimes, replacing the one which had operated for some time at the Haven, although it was being closed temporarily during June while the Association undertook the necessary paperwork to take over responsibility from Queens Park CA.

We held successful Halloween and Christmas celebrations, although the Festival and Fun Dog Show planned for June 7th was cancelled due to a 'dire' weather forecast – this will now be held on August 16th.

Planting work continued on the Estate with 100 new saplings and some 3,000 wild flower plugs, while a new set of steps was built to improve access from Tilgate Close to Craven Wood.

Meetings (which combine Community Association, Tenants Association and Local Action Team activities) continue to be well-attended although there is always room for further active committee members.

5. **Treasurer's Report.** Alan circulated the audited accounts. Separate accounts are held for the Community Association and the Vale Community Centre. At the end of March 2014 the CVCA account held some £1,607 of which £24 was available for day-to-day activities, and the remainder reserved for specific projects, notably grants made for youth projects, the dance project and local health initiatives – a further payment of £1,370 was due to be received from the Peoples Health Trust to meet the costs of the kitchen project already met. The Vale CC account held £2,407, with an outstanding credit of £1,050 due during the coming year. The meeting unanimously adopted the accounts as audited by the Resource Centre.

6. **Election of Committee**. Sharon thanked the committee for all their hard work over the past year and then asked for people to propose candidates for Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and to put themselves forward as Committee Members. The following were unanimously elected:

Chairman – Grant Scott; Secretary and Treasurer - Alan Cooke; other committee members – Bill Duff, Betty Field, Clive Taplin, Geoff Wilcock and Nick Wood.

Grant Scott was appointed as the Area Panel Representative, with Alan Cooke elected as his deputy.

The next committee meeting was set for July 9th at 7 pm.

7. **Any Other Business**

a) PCSO Carol Manton asked for volunteers to assist a colleague by attending sessions at John Street Police Station to discuss their perceptions of danger from flooding and from terrorism.

b) Dr Orange reported that the Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere project had been awarded full UNESCO status as a world class area, entitling it to apply for international grants to improve the biosphere further.

The meeting closed at 8:25 pm.