

Copthorne Residents' Society

Executive committee report for 2023

The Executive Committee

1. Your executive committee was (with roles): Joe Watts (Chair); Fred Cleary (Treasurer); Sally Williams (Secretary); Linda Coles (website); Jim Forder; Gordon Ross (wine evenings); Hasmita Bheda (IT and open gardens), Kirsti Eraneva Dibb (open gardens), Mike & Melisa Collins and Jas Bassan. At the end of this year, and in accordance with the Rules of the Society, 3 members (Linda, Hasmita and Kirsti) will stand down and intend to stand for re-election. Melisa Collins is also standing down. There will be at least one vacancy on the Committee for 2024.
2. The Committee met six times during the year.

The Trustees

3. The society began the year with three Trustees: John Rhodes, Andrew Gallagher and Mark Clare. The committee is grateful for their continued support. In November we were very sad to learn of the death of John Rhodes. We will look to recruit two new trustees in 2024. If you would like to be considered for the role please contact Joe Watts (cophthorneresidents@gmail.com)

The Society's constitution

4. The Society last revised the rule of membership in 2020. As a Society we may need to consider whether a society with a trustee structure is the most appropriate structure for the future. Alternative models **may** include being a Limited Liability Company or a Community Interest Company. The AGM in 2024 will be an opportunity to initiate discussion on this topic. If you have particular experience in legal matters or setting up such bodies and would be willing to support the Executive Committee, please get in touch.

Road Matters

5. The road is generally in good condition.
6. The gullies and drains were cleared in June 2023 (they were previously cleared in 2018). Our thank to Graeme Dibb for organising the contract with support from John Eldridge.
7. It is important that residents keep mud and grass cuttings away from the drain covers. If you have boundary stones on your verge make sure they are 30 cms back from the road
8. The lines on the road were repainted in August 2023 (they were previously painted in 2019). The extended yellow lines near the junction to the Green have made turning into the road significantly safer. Out thanks to Jim Forder for organising the contract and for the residents moving their cars on the day of the works.
9. Two bags of hardcore were supplied by the Society to Chess Vale Rise and then spread by volunteers from the Rise.
10. In two separate incidents a tree fell into the road temporarily blocking it for cars. In both incidents there was an excellent response from residents to get the debris off the road to allow cars to pass. Thanks to all who helped. However please remember you are responsible for any trees on your property and are advised to take professional advice where necessary.

11. Snow and salt: the salt bins have been maintained. There has been no need to spread salt during the year.
12. We have continued, with the help of the Trustees, to pursue the ownership of the section of road from the boundary between numbers 50 and 52 Copthorne Road and the junction with the Green. This section is neither owned by the Society, Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) nor Herts County Council. We continue to seek to have that section of road repaired.

Planning Applications

13. The committee has posted a final version of the Society's "Considerate Building Policy" on the website following discussion at the 2023 AGM. Please follow this policy if you are having work done and please keep out of building sites if not authorized.
14. The committee will continue to pursue the agreed policy of upholding covenants should such matters arise.

Subscriptions and Road Fund

15. The subscription was raised from £65 to £75 for 2023. To-date 83 houses have paid their subscription for 2022.
16. If you have not yet paid, we can accept subscription payments by direct credit to the Society's bank account (Barclays Bank, Rickmansworth branch Sort Code xxxxxx; Account number xxxxxx). Please make sure that you provide a reference that will allow the committee to identify your payment as follows: House Number/Name, Road reference, Surname. For road reference can you use the following abbreviations; CR - Copthorne Road; CC - Copthorne Close; CVR - Chess Vale Rise; U – Uplands; and MC - Millthorne Close
17. Please email us at Copthorneroadresidents@gmail.com once your payment has been made so that we can ensure it is in the society bank account. We will also use your email to keep in touch – please provide if we don't have it.
18. The subscription for 2024 will be set at the AGM – the recommendation of the Executive Committee is that the rate is maintained at £75 but we review next year with further information on likely future road surfacing costs which may require a substantial increase. We will send out invoices for the 2024 subscriptions as in earlier years and seek to follow up non-payers.
19. During the year the Committee considered options to get everyone in the road paying towards the future resurfacing costs. It was agreed to encourage non-payers households to pay with targeted messages about the need to contribute and the benefits of membership. These efforts met with limited success. It was agreed to prepare a comprehensive notice to all such the houses in the road giving the current years position on payment - a draft will be available at the AGM.

Social Events

20. In May the Society held another very successful street party this time to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles. The Party was planned by Hasmita Bheda from the Committee and supported by an invaluable team of volunteers.
21. In June there was another successful Open Gardens. Thank you to all those that shared the joy of their gardens for an afternoon – a lovely way to get to know neighbours.

22. The Society held its 4th Wine and Cheese Appreciation Evening in October 2023 and continued the good spirits of earlier events.

23. After a busy few years with Street Parties, Open Gardens and Wine Appreciation Evenings, there are currently no plans for social events in 2024. The Committee welcomes suggestions for future social events particularly to welcome the families new to the road. Suggestions welcome.

Website

24. Members can contact the committee through the email: cophorneroadresidents@gmail.com.

25. The Committee has continued to update the website for the Society through the year. Suggestions for further improvements are welcome.

Neighbourhood Watch

26. Many thanks to Richard Saunders for his continued vigilance and reports.