

## Chairman's Report April 21, 2015

Good evening. Welcome to the 54<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Amersham and District Residents Association.

It's encouraging to see tonight's turnout and some new faces too. If this is your first meeting WELCOME. Mayor Walsh, it's very good of you to be with us this evening. Thank you for coming.

As I normally do, I'll start with the Committee changes.

This year we have lost two Committee members. Ann Terry who had been Environment Officer since 2005 has moved to the south coast to be closer to her family, and therefore resigned.

Guru Guruswamy who has been our Planning Officer since 2010 also resigned this year, having decided, quite understandably, to take retirement a little more seriously

People's situations are fluid and change is inevitable, if occasionally inconvenient.

We thank Guru and Ann very much for their hard work and dedication to the organisation.

We will miss them very much.

Fortunately, Linda Flett who rejoined the Committee in 2013 has agreed to cover the Environment Portfolio, and Les Jayatilakawho joined us last year has stepped up to do the Planning job that Guru did so admirably.

Thank you both!

I guess this is an appropriate point to make my annual appeal for help.

ADRA is in my view at a cross-roads. After 55 years we must decide what the futures should hold for us as a community organisation. If indeed there is a future. We keep busy, we respond to your concerns as you raise them, review and comment on planning applications, give input to Local and Regional/District initiatives, try to influence as best we are able things which will effect us all like HS2, but we don't seem to be able to attract much in the way of tangible support. Good wishes and thank you's are definitely appreciated, but in my view we are at the box in the flow chart where something needs to happen. We have been at this too long. I've been Chairman for 12 years, which is too long for anyone to be Chairman of anything. Lyn has been Secretary for 15 years. Geoff has been Treasurer for 20+. Carolyn, happily, stepped in to fill the gap left when Michael Teychenne died in 2012. It's simply not fair to expect these people to go on forever.

We need four new Committee members as a matter of urgency. Particularily since at this point I must tell you that this will be my last AGM as your Chairman. I have decided (again) that the time has come for me to stand aside. And Lyn has reached the same conclusion herself.

We are a volunteer community organisation which appears to have run out of volunteers.

Maybe it is time to rethink our future. If no one wants to serve, it's not reasonable to expect the incumbents to go on forever.

Guru has been following HS2 and I have told him that I will take over and do what I can to continue what he's so far. That will include representing ADRA before the Parliamentary Select Committee when our petition is presented later in the year.

Other initiatives we are pushing and/or supporting include accessibility at Amersham Station (lift through TfL)

Closer ties with the Amersham Society to support activities of mutual benefit. We do live in the same town.

The Chiltern District Plan

Support of the Amersham Action Group, on which we are represented by Les Jayatilaka. (Chairman Chris Wilson is an ADRA member).

Our Town Clerk, Janet Wheeler, who you may remember spoke to us 3 years ago, has asked me to make the following points;

The Hervines Park Consultation, which I drew to your attention at our last AGM, has now closed. It attracted over 400 responses, 28 of which were from sporting and community organisations. A consultants report is now awaited, which will be followed by a brief to Architects and a further consultation in the autumn on the final proposals.

Town Carnival (themed Amersham on Sea) plans are underway. It will be June 27. Expect to see a beach, a sandpit, donkey rides and a Punch and Judy show. Amersham Town Council, The Amersham Action Group and The RoundTable will all be supporting, and ADRA will be present with a stall, where we hope to tell a lot of people who aren't yet familiar with us just what it is that we do.

The Band Concert programme will run again this year, starting with the RAF Halton Band giving a concert on VE day.

Amersham in Bloom goes from strength to strength. There will be new beds outside Tom Yum at the Sycamore Rd. Rickmansworth Rd. roundabout, and also outside the public loos behind Boots. (ADRA contributed half the cost of the latter).

Amersham Town Council will have a new website in June, so your comments on that will be welcome.

And finally, a new infant play group, to meet in the KGV playing fields, will get underway in August.

So, there we have it,

Some of us are stepping down. We need help.

Your Committee will spend the next few months exploring all our options for the future, because you can't run a volunteer based community organisation without people. We are solvent, and have a stable membership. This should be easy! We just need some help.

Thanks for coming out tonight.