

## *AGM Meeting 29.4.23*

The following core members attended: Steve Wehrle Chair; Tim Webb Vice Chair and Treasurer; Gill Webb Secretary; Karen Dungate Webmaster; Julia Burton; Peitra Napier; John Pead; Jean Seager and Andrew Stotesbury, Stella Geddes sent her apologies for absence.

Steve began the meeting with apologies for absence from 4 members and for a couple of people who had booked to attend but since could not make it. Thirty members did attend alongside the Committee.

Steve gave a brief history about how our group was first formed. The first meeting was held on 1.12.21 and 55 people attended that meeting. Already at that time we had gained 660 members. At that meeting several concerns were mentioned with the Areli Plan. These included: the heights of the planned Towers, the number of blocks, the density, the strain on the current infrastructure, and the complete change on local views in the area.

Back to the present day we currently now have 2,581 members in our “Nuts to the Walnuts” Facebook group.

Steve thanked Paula Peters and Tamara Swift both present ,who have both spent considerable time campaigning and talking with lots of local residents in the High Street.

He thanked Nicky Forsyth who supplied 20,000 leaflets free of charge.

James Rose was also thanked for doing several NTTW videos – some of these he also did free of charge.

Stephen Smith was thanked for designing the two NTTW posters.

There was a mention that Areli are now hoping to raise £13 million by putting up for sale the Crown site in Orpington which includes the cinema and the retail premises below it..

Steve then gave the Chairman's report which included the following details:

Our Facebook group was formed on 3rd November 2021 when Steve and Tim first made contact.

On 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021 (just before Christmas!) Areli published their Planning Application.

One of our members designed our campaign leaflet and 20,000 were delivered to 387 local roads informing the Public of Areli's Plans.

Campaign posters were printed and we had many pop up stands in the local area where we were talking to members of the Public.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022 we had our Public Meeting in the Town Square, which was attended by over 350 local residents.

By the closing date for comments on the planning application over 3,600 had been sent in to Bromley Council.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 Areli withdrew their Planning Application!

In November 2022 Councillor Pauline Tunnickliffe stated that any future application by Areli would not include the Leisure Centre, and that Bromley would refurbish on the current site.

Our campaign was originally about Areli. More recently however, part two has been about the proposal for the regeneration of the Walnut's Leisure Centre.

An online survey has been carried out by Alliance Leisure asking the public (which includes members of the Leisure Centre and non members) what they would like to see in a refurbished Leisure Centre.

We have been told that altogether there were over 6,000 comments on these surveys that were for The Walnuts and also the West Wickham Leisure Centres.

Alliance Leisure also invited a number of people to attend focus groups to offer their opinions on what they would like. Some meetings were online and some face to face. Four members of our Core team attended these meetings.

A figure of £23 million has been quoted to refurbish both Centres.

Tim gave the Treasurer's report as follows:

Our previous treasurer Lynne Harding-Sharman has stepped down for personal reasons. Before she resigned the accounts were independently assessed.

We are an unincorporated club or society and we wish to change one or more of the signatories. Gill will be removed as an authorised signatory and Steve will be added in her place, Lyn will also be removed as an authorised signatory.

The minutes of this meeting are therefore authorising the updating and the incorporating of these changes so we can now authorise this in accordance with the signing rules for our bank account.

As the mandate from the Nat West Bank states:

“if you're a charity or an incorporated club or society – the minutes of your meeting authorising these changes.”

We have received donations up to date of £998.00. The current balance is £202.77 and we wish to thank everyone for their donations.

The money has been spent on leaflets, posters, the making of videos and also setting up a website. Incidentally on the day of our public meeting, at short notice the BBC cancelled and we were very glad that James Rose was available to film our guests and speakers so that we had a video of the day.

**Committee Election:**

The current Committee members are all willing to stand again. A vote was taken and everyone was happy for the current members of the committee to be re-elected. The Committee consists of 10 members.

Steve spoke about Areli being involved in other projects besides Orpington, including Maidenhead and Brentford. Any future plans Areli may have for Orpington are not yet in the public domain. Tim added Areli have met with and are continuing to meet with various Ward Councillors.

The meeting was open for questions:

Andrew asked if there had been any recent feedback from the Councillors and Steve replied not yet.

A question was asked about whether we were involved with the upkeep of the Indoor Shopping Centre. Steve replied we have written to Orpington 1st but they did not reply to our last e mail.

Karen said at the time of the previous Planning application Areli had promised business start ups and flexible leasing arrangements. As Tikehau through Areli own the Indoor Shopping Centre could this be pursued? Steve said we can try Orpington 1<sup>st</sup> again and also the Council.

Julia mentioned the Supplementary Planning Document is due to be ratified early this Summer.

It was suggested that Areli delaying their next Planning application could be good news as it gives time for the SPD to be put in place.

Paula Peters spoke of her experience when taking part in one of the focus groups for the LC, it seemed to be a tick box exercise with fairly basic questions about pricing and transport.

Tim said when the scoping report for the LC is published in the Autumn he hopes it will be available in the public domain.

The subject of the LC's boiler was brought up. We were told there would be a reconditioned boiler in place in March which has not happened. Steve wrote to the Council 10 days ago and is still waiting for a reply. It was suggested that if members write in it will keep the pressure on the Council to get this done.

There was a discussion suggesting someone from the Core team put their name forward to be a potential Councillor.

John Pead said Labour in St Mary Cray 100% support our campaign. This has been discussed before and Steve and Tim have no plans to put themselves forward for this role.

Julia said can our members keep alert to any new large building developments in Orpington that members aren't happy with and let us know on the Facebook site.

Paul Spearman asked about alternative leisure facilities if and when the Leisure Centre is refurbished. We suggested members get in touch with their Councillor and say we need alternative local facilities.

Tara said as a grandmother she can see how important the soft play Buzz Zone is in the Leisure Centre and also the under fives soft play area in the Shopping Centre.

Gill has asked the Council about providing temporary alternative soft play. She said the answer she received was to try other MyTime Leisure Centres that provide soft play.

The point was made that for families with young children it's not always easy to travel outside of the local area.

Alicia Munday, a Bromley Council employee, has said there will be no temporary pool.

Paul kindly thanked members of the Core team for all our efforts.

Steve and Tim thanked people for attending this meeting and concluded that they will keep members aware of any new significant developments in the future.

The meeting ran from 7.35pm to 9.15 pm