

THE BEAUMONT NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Beaumont Residents' Association

JUNE-JULY 2015

Beaumont Residents Association

Minutes of AGM

Held on 24th February 2015,
In Mercy College Hall at 8.00 pm

Chairman; Des Maguire opened the meeting at 8.10 pm and welcomed all present.

A cash prize draw was held for all members present and there were five lucky winners.

The Minutes of last year's AGM were published in the 'Beaumont News' and were taken as read. There were no issues arising and the minutes were proposed by Noreen Maher, seconded by Peter Montague and adopted unanimously following a show of hands.

Neighbourhood Watch Report: A Neighbourhood Watch report was delivered by Noreen Maher. Apologies were recorded from Santry Community Garda, who was on holiday and unable to attend the meeting. Noreen reported that there were three District Neighbourhood Watch meetings held over the past twelve months. Burglaries in the area are up on previous year and 69 burglaries occurred in the whole of the H District during a 3-months period prior to Christmas. Only two of the 69 burglaries were detected. Lack of Garda manpower is thought to be a contributory factor in the low detection rate. Garda figures show that most burglaries occur between the hours 5.00pm. and 9.00pm. Very few crimes were recorded in the catchment area of BRA. This is likely to be a direct result of our text alert service, through which early warnings of undesirables operating in the area can be reported and Gardai notified immediately. Noreen encouraged Members to pass on even the smallest pieces of information to the Gardai, as sometimes the tiniest details can be vital in solving crimes. The Chairman described the BRA text alert system as an independently run 2-way text system and is responded to immediately -not always the case with officially run text alert systems, which can have a significant delay in response time due to no availability of Gardai.

The report was proposed by Pat Arnold and seconded by Des McLoughlin and adopted following a show of hands.

Ratification of Trustees: The Chairman explained the role of Trustees within the organisation and the Trustees Noreen Maher, Joan Ennis and Barry Doyle were proposed and their positions deemed ratified by the meeting, following a show of hands.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary's Report was delivered by Ann Cullen, giving details of community events which were organised and all actions taken by the committee on behalf of the BRA, over the past year. Following a brief question and answer session the report was proposed by Peter Montague, seconded by Sr. Kathleen and adopted following a show of hands.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was delivered by Grace Byrne, giving details of income and expenditure for the year. Concern was expressed at the resulting deficit showing in the accounts. The Treasurer explained that the shortfall was simply due to the fact that the income from subscriptions did not cover the expenditure on



Back row L to R: Cecilia Roche, Cathal Tuffy, Bernadette Howard, Ann Cullen and Des Maguire (chairman).
Front row L to R: Peter Montague (secretary), Joan Ennis (treasurer), Kevin Lyons, and Mariee O'Dwyer.
Not in photo: Leagh Kelly who was celebrating the birth of her baby boy.

events. The single biggest contributing factor to the shortfall was the expanded Christmas Party. This year the Seniors Christmas Party was opened up to all adult members on a trial basis to gauge the support for such an event. This was done due to the continued fall in numbers of Senior Members attending the Party in the previous few years. The trial was very successful and the numbers attending more than doubled from the previous year.

Following some discussion, the Treasurer's report was proposed by Noreen Maher, seconded by Pat Arnold and adopted following a show of hands.

Committee Members stepping down: Joseph Roche and Grace Byrne indicated their intention not to offer themselves for re-election to the committee: The Chairman thanked both members for their service to BRA and to the community. Joseph Roche offered his continued services to BRA as a 'Road Rep'.

New Committee Members: Mariee O'Dwyer (Dromawling Road) offered herself for election to the committee. Mariee was proposed by Ann Cullen and seconded by Kevin Lyons and elected unanimously by a show of hands. Outgoing committee members Ann Cullen, Des Maguire, Joan Ennis, Cecilia Roche, Peter Montague, Kevin Lyons, Leah Kelly and Cathal Tuffy offered themselves for re-election. All were proposed, seconded and deemed elected unanimously following a show of hands.

Road Reps: The Chairman thanked the following Road Reps for their service and commitment to the community and to BRA: Frank Gurry, Aidan Buckley, Kay Maguire, Martin Culhane, Lisa Whelan and Robert Evans. **Freda Parkes** (Beaumont Road) indicated her willingness to act as 'Road Rep'. Freda was welcomed to the BRA team by the Chairman.

Membership Fee: As discussed during the earlier Treasurers report, the association is incurring a loss each year for the last few years. The Chairman said the increasing losses and are not

sustainable and cannot be allowed to continue unchecked. Appropriate remedial action must be taken in 2015 to stop the 'loss-making' and ensure BRA lives within its means going forward. The meeting agreed that the loss-making should not continue. The Chairman stated that there are three simple options available to the Membership to stop the losses: **i)** increase membership fee, **ii)** curtail the number of events, **iii)** charge those attending events. The meeting generated lively discussions on the best options available and how best to proceed. It was stated that the membership fee has not increased since the inception of BRA in 1996 and it might be timely increase the fee at this time. It was generally agreed that increasing the membership fee was the way to go and following a short discussion on the amount of the increase, it was agreed that an increase of €5.00 was appropriate. This proposal was passed unanimously following a show of hands. The membership subscription for 2015 will be **€20.00** per household.

A.O.B. Problem with St Paul's Special School: The Chairman outlined to the meeting a long-running issue BRA is having with St Paul's in respect to an access gate from Coolgreena Road. The gate is designated 'emergency gate' for emergency vehicles access only. A condition of the Planning Permission associated with the gate clearly states this. Prior to constructing the gate some years ago it was agreed between St Pauls and BRA, that the gate would not be used as a regular access but would remain closed at all times save for emergency vehicles access. This was the case and the gate remained locked for many years. However, during last summer the gate was opened up by St Pauls without any notice or consultation with BRA. It is being used by cars, taxis and construction vehicles as a regular access to St Pauls. The gate is seldom locked and on many occasions is left wide open through the weekends. In addition to bringing additional traffic onto Coolgreena Road and

Check out our new website: www.beaumontresidents.ie

Newsletters, photographs and much more, going back to 1997 can be found on the website.

The site is a 'work in progress' and there is much more to come. The site will be updated regularly so please check-in for the latest.

adjacent Roads, it is a huge threat to the security of BRA Members. The Chairman said the gate has become a 'rat run' for people and the grounds of St Pauls are being used for unsocial activities. BRA letters sent to St Pauls School have not received a response and the Chairman expressed concern with what appears to be a breakdown in communications and relations between the parties. The meeting was concerned by the lack of response from St Pauls and agreed that BRA should pursue the matter and take appropriate action to have the gate restored to its former state.

Post Office Relocating: It was confirmed to the meeting that the Post Office on Shantalla Road is to relocating to Supervalu, Lorcan Avenue, Santry, in May -despite the wishes of many in the community. The reasons given for the move include; the present facility does not comply with security and access regulations, numbers of customers are decreasing and the Post Office will ultimately close leaving the area without a Post Office. The Chairman had regular communications with Fred Quinn, Operations Manager, An Post and with Ian McDonnell, owner of Supervalu. He also had one-to-one meetings with both men to convey to them the strong feelings BRA Members (An Post customers) had against the move. He presented the results of a BRA text survey which showed that 65% of members were against the Post Office move. Both Fred and Ian were very receptive and expressed empathy with those who were

against the move, however, compliance and commercial issues would take precedence. According to Ian McDonnell, the new post office will be larger, have wheelchair access and be more user-friendly than the existing one. Mr McDonnell has indicated his willingness to sponsor a courtesy bus for elderly customers who are discommoded by the new location of the Post Office. A car / minibus will run from Dromawling Road and Beaumont Road via Shantalla Road to Supervalu –probably on Fridays to facilitate the elderly collecting pensions - for a period of six months on a trial basis. Precise details of the transport will be announced nearer the time.

Traffic, Speeding & Signage: The issues of speeding, rat-runs, ramps and signage were raised and discussed. Coolgreena Road and Coolatree Park are suffering from a high volume of 'rat runners' during rush periods in the mornings and evenings. Proposals to discourage rat-runners and slow down the speed of traffic included; the constructing ramps on Coolatree Park, a 'no right turn' from Beaumont Road onto Coolgreena Road during rush periods and the erection of electronic signs.

The option of having a one-way traffic flow on some roads was also discussed, but it was felt that this may only cause confusion, add to existing problems, and increase the speed of traffic, adding to dangerous conditions. The need for safety signage (children signs) was expressed. The whole issue of traffic, speeding and signage will be an issue for the incoming committee.

POST OFFICE MOVES TO SUPERVALU



The Post Office based in the Centra shop on Shantalla Road is moving to Supervalu on Lorcan Avenue in early May. This is happening despite strong representations by BRA to An Post and to the owner of Supervalu, Ian McDonnell. The existing premises are not compliant in respect to new Security requirements and

Wheelchair access. The Post Office is losing customers and in its current location and format will soon not be viable. This would mean the complete loss of a Post Office in the area resulting in customers having to travel to Omni Shopping Centre or Artaine Shopping Centre to conduct their business. These were the arguments put forward by Fred Quinn, Operations Manager at An Post and Ian McDonnell, owner of Supervalu when Des Maguire met both men separately to voice the disapproval of many of BRA members to the move.

The existing Post Office will close on Friday evening, 8th May and reopen in its new location in Supervalu on Monday morning, 11th May. Opening will be the same as before, however, going forward it is expected that the Post Office will remain open through lunchtime. A 'parcel collection service' will be available daily until 10.00 pm. The new Post Office will be fully compliant in respect to security and disability access and will be more user-friendly.

Existing customers need to take no action as all customers details will transfer automatically with the Post Office. Customers are advised to attend as normal at the new Post Office.

BRA has negotiated with Ian McDonnell a free transport service for the elderly and those who are seriously inconvenienced by the Post Office move. The service will be available on Fridays on a trial

basis and is primarily aimed at elderly pensioners who walk or use the bus to get to the existing Post Office. Two transport routes are envisaged as follows: i) a minibus or taxi will start at 10.00 am and run from Dromawling Road (Elm Mount end) turn left onto Beaumont Road towards Collins Avenue, U-turn back along Beaumont Road, Beaumont Grove, Beaumont Road, Shantalla Road (passing Centra shop) and onto Lorcan Avenue to the Post Office, with pick-ups along the route. ii) a second minibus or taxi will start at 10.30 am on Beaumont Road (bus stop adjacent to Beaumont House) and run along Beaumont Road, through Beaumont Crescent across Beaumont Road to Coolatree Road, Beaumont Road, Coolgreena Road, Coolatree Park and Coolgarrif Road to the Post Office with pick-ups along the route. An afternoon transport services (same as above) will commence at 2.00 pm and 2.30 pm respectively. Return journeys will depart the Post Office about 45 – 60 minutes minutes after arrival. This is an estimate of the transport arrangements that may be required and flexibility is essential by all parties if this is to work the way it is intended. If you have a particular need for transport and you are not on either of the aforementioned routes, please contact the BRA Team via text of phone.

We hope the above transport arrangements will help ease any pain and inconvenience associated with the Post Office move and resulting longer distance to travel. We were reminded recently by an elderly pensioner that the Post Office move will improve her life as the new location is nearer to her than the existing location –so it is not negative move for everyone.



BURGLARIES CONTINUE TO BE A HUGE PROBLEM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The Cabinet has approved proposals to introduce new legislation to allow for longer sentences for offenders who carry out multiple burglaries in private dwellings. The proposals include stricter bail conditions for those charged with a number of burglaries and consecutive prison sentences for those convicted.

The Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald said burglary is a serious offence and "always has the danger to escalate into an offence against the person". "It is the combination of the serious nature of the offence and the fact that burglars tend to be repeat offenders that warrants specific measures aimed at prolific burglars." The minister has also asked Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan to review the Garda response to burglary. The rate of burglaries increased during the recession and Ms Fitzgerald indicated at the Fine Gael conference in Castlebar that she was planning to introduce new measures to tackle the issue. Ms O'Sullivan is also reviewing the force's response to the crime of burglary and further announcements are expected. Operation Fiacła had been set up to target prolific burglars and organised travelling gangs across the country, with another Garda operation (Acer) in the capital, but the minister is still concerned and met senior Garda management last February.

Luckily, here in Beaumont, burglaries and crime in general is very low. Our area has one of the lowest rates of crime in the whole of Dublin. Maybe this is not all down to luck! It is well known that the harder one works the luckier one gets –and so it is with the low crime rate. Neighbourhood Watch together with the text alert system is a key driver in making Beaumont a hostile environment for burglars and other criminals to ply their trades.

Burglaries have increased significantly year-on-year for the last number of years while Garda numbers and resources have decreased during the same

period. It would be reasonable therefore, to assume that there is a correlation between the rise in crime and the fall in Garda resources. The safety and security of a community appears to be devolving back to the residents living in the community and their abilities to effectively protect themselves. BRA has taken very seriously the issue of crime prevention and has invested considerable time and effort in ensuring Beaumont is a safe secure place for everyone who lives or works in the area. It is the No 1 priority of the BRA team and will continue to be so –and we must not become complacent just because we are in a good place at this time. Recently a resident said to me "there is no need for a text alert system in Beaumont sure nothing much happens here" this was the best endorsement and compliment we could have ever received –though he did not intend it as a compliment. While nothing (in crime terms) keeps happening, BRA is very happy and is doing a good job. The BRA team cannot themselves prevent crime, we need every BRA member to be vigilant and report any suspicious persons, vehicles or activity to the BRA team. Should you observe suspicious activity, try to get and note as much information as to can; description of persons, direction travelling, vehicle type colour and registration, etc. Report your suspicion immediately –don't wait for others to report it.

We advise that you post the BRA notice "we are watching" on your front window or door. We have a few notices available if you need them. It is conspicuous that a significant number of BRA members have not posted the "we are watching" notice and when the question 'why' was asked at the recent AGM, it was stated that the notice looked too scary. Maybe a welcoming smiley face would find its way onto more windows and doors –but would the Burglars get the message.

St Paul's Campus; Issues with Gate & Changes of Governance

The recurring issue with the gate at the end of Coolgreena Road is causing problems once again. When the gate was constructed as part of the new school building more than 10 years ago, BRA in its submission to the Planning department stated that it had no objections to the construction of the building or the gate provided the gate would be an emergency gate and used by emergency vehicles only. The Planning Permission issued contains a condition to this effect. BRA also agreed with St Paul's that the Building Contractor could access the site via Coolgreena Road during the course of the building works and on completion the new gate would be closed and locked save for emergency vehicles use. BRA also agreed with St Paul's for the construction of a self-locking pedestrian gate. Both gates were constructed and remained closed and locked until September 2010 when St Paul's school decided unilaterally to open the main gate. Objections were raised by BRA and St Paul's closed the gates.

During the summer of 2014 St Paul's school undertook building works and opened the main gate to construction and all vehicles. The gate was opened by St Paul's without communications or warning of any kind. BRA sent a letter to St Paul's on 29th July 2014, requesting that the gate be closed. The letter received no response. BRA sent a letter on 29 January 2015, to the CEO of the Mater Hospital. The letter received no response.

On 18th February 2015, BRA received a letter from Cathy Henneby, Director of Services, St Paul's Health. Ms Henneby's letter pointed out that there are now two separate entities in St Paul's Campus; i) St Paul's Special School, funded by the Department of Education ii) St Paul's Health, governed by St Paul's Child and Family Care Limited, and funded by the Department of Health (HSE). These very significant changes occurred in the last year. It is worth noting that last year The Beaumont News carried an article on the changes that were about to happen in St Paul's, the Mater Hospital insisted on a retraction of the article and an apology. In her letter, Ms Henneby went on to say that she was not aware of any issue with the gate and if she was, she would have attended to the matter. She stated that the gate was a matter for St Paul's school.

On 15th April 2015, BRA sent a registered letter to Angela Leonard, Principal, St Paul's Special School, reminding her that she was in breach of our agreement, threatening the security of our area and to restore the gate to its original state. The letter also offered to meet with her. A response was received from Ms Leonard dated 23rd April 2015. The response letter stated "... following some changes in St Paul's Hospital we are now in a position to lock the back gate from 5pm in the afternoon until the following morning and at weekends/holiday periods..... gates will need to be accessed throughout the day, they will remain unlocked for the period while staff are on the premises"

A simple interpretation of Angela Leonard's letter is; St Paul's school will use the gate as it sees fit during school hours. Ms Leonard's response is arrogant and shows no respect for the agreement with BRA and has no regard for neighbours. This aggressive behaviour does little to foster good neighbourliness or build relationships. Ms Leonard's response is not acceptable to BRA and more robust action may be required to stop her aggression and prevent fleets of buses rolling up and down Coolgreena and adjacent roads in the not too distant future.



BENEFITS OF BRA MEMBERSHIP

For just 40 cent a week you are entitled to:

Community Participation: BRA builds and bonds the community. Membership of BRA gives members partnership in the very strong, safe and secure community of Beaumont. It may take only a couple of years to build a large estate of hundreds of houses and apartments. It can take many times longer to build a community. The more members in BRA, the better, stronger and safer the community is. Beaumont is lucky to have such a wonderful community so come on, sign up, get connected, feel connected and be part of it.

Representation: BRA is a single representative voice for the community. BRA represents and articulates the views and concerns of members to local Councillors, TD's, Local Authorities and Government Bodies, whenever the need arises. BRA is on constant alert for potential threats that might negatively affect the area from external and sometimes internal sources. BRA acts as mediators and participates in conflict resolution where disputes arise between neighbours or where commercial interests threaten or infringe on member's property or rights.

Communications network: BRA Team operates a 24/7 communications system via text, voice, email and Facebook. BRA communications network is available to Members to obtain or provide information and assistance. Its primary purpose and function is to communicate security alerts and potential threats, it can be used and is used for a range of messaging purposes including; lost and found pet, keys, spectacles, etc. Unlike most community Text Alert schemes which are operated by the Gardaí, BRA provides its own independent 2-way communications system whereby messages and alerts can be initiated by a BRA member to the BRA Team.

Crime prevention: Members can text the BRA Team to report suspicious individuals or activity of whatever nature on their road. BRA Team can immediately alert all other members on that particular road or on a wider area depending on the seriousness of the incident. At the same time, the BRA Team notifies the Gardaí of the alert / incident. Members continue to monitor the incident / suspects, relaying real-time information to the BRA Team until the Gardaí arrive and takes control of the scene.

The BRA Text Alert scheme has proved to be a huge success and ensures that Beaumont continues to be one of the lowest crime rate and

is one of the safest places to live in Dublin. BRA members are supplied with a sticker-notice for posting on their window or door, advertising that they are members of BRA and its text alert scheme.

Communications & Alerts to Home Phones: BRA Team operates a 24/7 communications system to home phone. Many of our elderly members have difficulties reading and writing texts messages—and may not have mobile phones. Utilising the latest hi-tech communications technology, BRA text messages are converted to voice messages and then delivered over a landline to a home phone.

BRA Helpline: BRA Team operates a 24/7 phone Helpline for members. This Helpline is primarily for members who do not have a mobile phone or who cannot use text. It can of course be used by all members.

Community Events: BRA hosts a number of events each year for members including; Family Sports & Fun Day, Adults Christmas Party and Children's Christmas Party.



Neighbourhood Watch: BRA has built strong relations with the Gardaí. Information is exchanged and updated at regular meetings between the various Neighbourhood Watch Committees' across north Dublin and the Gardaí. Beaumont has an assigned and designated liaison Garda with direct contact details to facilitate effective and timely communications. Through this enhanced 2-way communications link between BRA Neighbourhood Watch and the designated Garda, both parties have a much better understanding and awareness of any potential threats to the community.

All of the above services (and more) are yours for just 40 cent a week (€20 per year)



1916 COMMEMORATIONS APPEAL FOR ARTEFACTS



As you probably know, next year is the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising. BRA wants to commemorate this momentous occasion in a way which tells the stories of residents or their relations' experiences of the event and its aftermath. Some of you may have stories to share, uniforms, photographs, weapons hidden in the attic. Some of you may have relatives who appealed to the government for a military pension in the years after the Irish Free State was founded. We'd love to hear your stories. Depending on what we unearth we'd like to have an exhibition, maybe a seminar, or a meet and greet where you can meet local historians and other neighbours with stories to tell. Maybe new light can be shed on your artefacts and stories.

Please contact Peter Montague, BRA Secretary at: 087 9188570 or Email: petermontague1@gmail.com to share any information, no matter how big or small.

CHILDS PLAY

Would you like your children to play with other children from the neighbourhood without organising play dates? BRA is proposing to set up a network of like-minded parents to supervise children's play in the park on Coolgreena Close. If enough parents show interest it would be possible to for children to play in a supervised and safe environment on a regular basis in the park. The purpose of this initiative is to get children out and away from the TV, Tablets, and PlayStations, out into the fresh air to enjoy informal play and get much needed exercise. It is also a great way for children to make new friends in the community.

NOTICE TO SERVICE PROVIDERS & BUSINESSES

BRA is collating a list of approved 'Service Providers' that can be recommended to our members. An approved list will be posted on the BRA website and will detail the services provided by each 'Service Provider' together with full contact details. 'Service Providers' will be subjected to a vetting process in order to obtain BRA approval and only those who are successful will make the list. The vetting criteria will include; quality of service, cost of service, security & safety and references. It is envisaged that only two of the same 'Service Providers' will be on the BRA approved list. Typical 'Service Providers' include; Plumber, Electrician, Painter / Decorator, Tiler, Window Cleaner, Carpenter, Roofer, Gardener, Handyman, etc.

BRA welcomes expressions of interest from 'Service Providers' on E:info@beaumontresidents.ie

BRA would also welcome expressions of interest from Businesses who can offer discounts, deals and other inducements or enhanced services or advice. Contact BRA on E: info@beaumontresidents.ie

In addition to posting the approved list on the BRA website, members will also receive a text message advising them of the approved list.

BRA needs lots of parents to volunteer and bring along their children so they can play with other children from their neighbourhood. Please register your interest in getting involved through the BRA text system.



Dates for your Diary in 2015.

20th June: BRA Family Sports & Fun Day.

28th November: BRA Christmas Party

6th December: BRA Children's Santa Party

FAMILY SPORTS & FUN SUMMER FEST

Saturday, 20th June 2015 @ 2.00 pm

In Coolgreena Close Park

Members Only



VARIOUS DISTANCE RACES TO SUIT ALL AGES

*Bar-B-Q * Bouncy Castle * Penalty Shoot-out + Face Painting
Fire Tender * Garda Patrol Jeep
Free Sweets & Drinks * Discount Shop*



**GREAT PRIZES, MEDALS and TROPHIES TO BE WON.
COME ALONG AND MAKE THIS A GREAT FAMILY DAY OUT!**

Event dependent on weather conditions.

Check our website: www.beaumontresidents.ie for updates and changes.

