**Notes on meeting on 11 January 2016**

**at the home of Chris & Ann Lovelace, Braeside, Johns Road**

**to discuss the forming of a Johns Road Residents’ Association**

The meeting was attended by 21 residents.

After drinks, nibbles, and introductions all round, Chris entertained us with a light-hearted song he had written parodying the trauma of a visitor’s first-time drive to Johns Road!

Chris then put forward some reasons for initiating a Residents’ Association (RA) and suggesting that it would be a team effort by residents:

* Johns Road is a great place to live and could be a very attractive lane. A few weeks after the top of the road had been resurfaced with planings from the Approach Road it looked at its best - mid morning the sun out, level, and no parked cars.
* At its worst it is extremely unwelcoming and potentially perilous for visitors on foot or in cars, as well as for horses. While residents have had to get used to the condition of the road, visitors do not like it – some park in Paynesfield Road and walk, (this is an unpleasant and messy business, particularly in the dark).
* There are often vehicles which don’t belong to our residents parked illegally too near the turning, which makes it dangerous when driving out from Johns Road into Paynesfield Road, particularly at night when it’s pitch black.
* Public service vehicles, ambulances, and delivery people do not like the road, and indeed the Refuse Collection Company has threatened to stop their operatives to working in the road unless we improve the surface. Other delivery companies have refused to drive down it.
* Pot holes are the main problem. A number of methods to improve the road have been tried over the years and it is disappointing to see how the recent attempt to resurface the top of the road didn’t last and that it’s reverting to its bad old ways. (yet there is a section of the road which has held up better than the other). Although most of the attention centres on the top of the road, perhaps because everyone uses it, the lower half of the road has its problems too. Not potholes, but the surface and the entrances to properties.
* So what can be done? It’s a tough call. The forming of a Residents’ Association is a first step. It will represent everyone in the road and when we are communicating with, say, the Council the Association should have more authority than a group of individuals.

**Our main considerations could be:**

* **To properly discover the status of the road; i.e. Bridleway or Private.**

When the Council made Johns Road a Bridleway in 2000 we were not told at the time that, because they could not trace the original owner of the road, we ceased to be Unadopted and became Private. We were also not told that in making us a Bridleway we could only resurface the road with either tarmac with concrete or just concrete which would mean closing the road for a week while it set and paying the Council to close it.

* **To establish the responsibilities of each household in the event of an accident to pedestrians or horses, and should we be insured?**

When, during a recent winter, a tree fell into the road it transpired that the Council were not interested in whether residents could access the road, only whether horses could get past.

Some newer residents when buying their properties had to purchase an Indemnity.

* **To investigate installing road signs to try to reduce speeding and to deter non-residents parking.**

Some residents and delivery vehicles are still driving too fast which, when the road is wet, grinds the surface down and, if potholes are full of water, then deepens the holes even further and splashes nearby cars.

* **The deteriorating road surface and what the surface options are and their costs.**

John Howard had investigated the cost of resurfacing from Paynesfield Rd up to his drive and was told £6000. He explained that in Crossways they found it best to put asphalt into potholes when they were dry. This cost residents £200 initially and then £50 annually to maintain. It was also mentioned that putting bags of tarmac on top of the asphalt makes the surface last longer.

With any resurfacing drainage will also have to be investigated.

* **How can we limit damage to the grass verges?**
* **Investigate if the condition of the road affects property prices.**

It was felt that it would not significantly affect prices, but would limit the number of prospective purchasers.

* **The cost of any surfacing and signs and how they can be funded?**

When, about 3 years ago, Linda obtained quotes for resurfacing from Braeside to Brentor the cost varied from £3,000 to £12,000. Suggestion made of forming a Management Company.

* **Look at improving the lighting in the road.**

Would the Council provide lighting – apparently years ago there was a street light outside Brentor. Some people were happier with the road being dark. Some felt that it was not easy to walk down the road in the dark. Perhaps residents could install their own automatic lighting which only comes on when someone walks past. This could also deter burglars as some residents have had number plates and tyres stolen, and recently a stolen truck was abandoned half way down the road.

The idea to form a Residents’ Committee was approved by a show of hands and it was agreed that Chris Lovelace would chair for a year and Linda Bennett be Secretary. The following residents agreed to help the Association: John Howard, Dave Wood, Trevor Sykes, Allen Moat, Lee McDermott, Dorota (Dotty) Davis, Steve Bull.

The Committee would meet as soon as there was some information on the items below:

**Forming a Johns Road Residents Association** / Trevor Sykes to check on legality and other relevant issues to give the Association the proper authority to act and represent residents.

**Opening a bank account** /Treasurer required.

**Design of an Association letterhead**/ John Bennett to offer up a design.

**Researching the status of the road** / Allen Moat to liaise with Linda on the paperwork that already exists regarding the Council making us a Bridleway.

Meanwhile, Dave Wood, who has connections with the Building Industry, has agreed to get some advice and costings on some alternative treatments for the road.

Our thanks to Chris and Ann for their hospitality.