



Key Dates in the History of the Hockering

1893: George Baker Smallpeice, whose forebears in the seventeenth century lived in the Norfolk village of Hockering, inherited from his father c.120 acres of land in the Parish of Woking comprising White Rose Farm, Heathside Farm and “Hockering” – a house and garden of around one acre situated at the present junction of Hockering and Pembroke Roads. He lived there and died in 1900, leaving his estate in trust for his three infant daughters.

1904: On 2nd August the High Court gave approval for the Trustees to sell parts of the lands as a building scheme. As advertised by Messers Smallpeice, Allen & Co, surveyors and auctioneers of Woking, the sales plan envisaged a “Hockering Estate” comprising 107 ‘high class residences’– on land that basically comprised the western half of the present day Hockering Estate.

Even before the High Court ruling some individual plots of land, mainly near the entrance of the estate and including the property “Hockering” (later re-named Aldridge House), had been sold - but they were not immediately developed.

1905: Hockering Road, to the present Cleardown corner, was laid out in flint and gravel.

1909: On 1st October Walter George Tarrant, a builder of Byfleet, acquired all of the remaining Smallpeice land. In 1911 he acquired some of the previously sold but undeveloped land.

Tarrant was a keen adherent to the then fashionable Arts and Craft style of environment and he rapidly started to sell and build on a much grander scale than that of the Smallpeice, Allen plan.

He imposed a schedule of restrictive covenants on all lots to benefit the land as a whole. These included:

- No building other than one detached house to be erected on any lot.
- No building to be used for the purpose of any trade, business, or manufacture.

1910: On 18th November Tarrant acquired, from the Lovelace Settled Estates, further adjoining land to the east from part of Roundhill Farm. Thus was formed the c.80 acres of the present day Hockering Estate. During these early stages of the Estate development, Tarrant, a member of the Surrey Archaeological Society, unearthed fragments of a small Iron Age vessel, a grain storage jar and a quern stone for grinding wheat. The finds, dated to the 1st century AD, suggest that the Hockering may have been the site of a Romano-British settlement closely associated with farming.

1911: Tarrant deposited with Woking Urban District Council a plan for laying out a new road to complete the network of Hockering Road, Danes Hill, Cleardown and Knowl Hill – totalling some 1.4 miles. The

Dowager Countess of Lovelace strongly supported Tarrant's strict exercise of a "building scheme" for the whole Estate together with the above restrictive covenants.

1913: On the 8th November owners of 17 houses built thus far met at Aldridge House, owned by Mr J Proffit, and agreed to form a Committee of Residents to take over from Tarrant all responsibility for managing the Estate. Owners agreed to pay to the Committee an annual charge of 6d in the £ of the rateable value to be applied "in maintaining, cleaning lighting & watering & making the roads & preserving the privacy of the estate" (sic).

The benefits, stipulations and conditions of the covenants passed to the Committee on behalf of the freehold residents. The Committee thereafter dealt with all matters concerning the grants for the release and variation of planning consents (a situation that continues today).

In July Tarrant erected four stone pillars with gates at the main entrance to the estate to prevent the use of through traffic.

1915: Mr EV Barratt took the Chair at the first Annual General Meeting of residents.

At the meeting it was noted " the employment of a road caretaker to give his entire services on the estate for the maintenance and cleaning of roads" .

1920: Gates were erected at the Maybury end of Roundhill (the then name of the extension of Hockering Road beyond the Cleardown corner). The gates later became known as Eastgate. The annual charge on residents was raised to 9d in the pound.

1923: The AGM approved the request of Mr H Jacobs, of Manor Heath, Knowl Hill, that he should erect and maintain at his own expense gates at the bottom of Knowl Hill similar in design to 'Eastgate'.

1924: Mr AP Grubb (Greenways, Danes Hill) elected Chairman.

The roadsman's hut was moved from the garden of Knowl Rise (Hockering Road) to its present position in Danes Hill.

Rhododendrons were planted at the Cleardown corner to help screen the nearby electric transformer.

The Cleardown gates were installed.

1927: The Committee postponed the question raised at the AGM that the roadsman should be provided with a cottage on or near to the estate "because of the difficulty of finding a suitable site".

1928: The AGM papers first recorded that "a majority vote present at the meeting will bind residents generally."

1931: Mr MFSM Magill was elected Chairman.

1933: A petition by ten owners to have Knowl Hill gate permanently closed, because some residents did not shut it, was not granted.

1935: A proposal to build houses in Knowl Hill at a density of four to the acre was denied on grounds of restrictive covenants.

1936: Mr H Machin was elected Chairman.

1939: Mr J Harris was elected Chairman.

1940: A proposal to lease Combe End (Danes Hill) to Surrey County Council as a secondary school for boys was denied on grounds of covenants.

1941: Owners of houses requisitioned by the War Office sought compensation for damage by troops to roads, and to a gate pier at Knowl Hill. It was agreed at the AGM to postpone a claim until the end of the war. There were continued complaints that the army left the gate open!

Sir John Woodhead (Chevremont – now Carn Brae, Hockering Road) was elected Chairman.

1945: AGM approved the resumption of lighting on roads, and the attempt to get the Council to pay the cost – which they did in 1947.

1949: The AGM approved to have 'the rubbish dumps' cleared for £15.

1950: A proposal to convert Combe End into seven flats was denied on grounds of covenants.

1951: A Special General Meeting (SGM) was called to allow the Committee to negotiate a Deed of Release for the conversion of Combe End into two houses (Combeside).

1952: Highlands (a single house on what is now the 'Highlands Development' in Danes Hill) was compulsorily requisitioned by Surrey County Council as an Infants Home.

1953: A Council proposal for the compulsory purchase of Rockhurst (Danes Hill) for conversion into flats was later withdrawn after strong opposition by the Committee on grounds of restrictive covenants.

1954: An SGM of owners approved that the Committee should execute a deed of release from restrictive covenants for Knutsford in Danes Hill (now Pigeon Forge) to build a second house (a new Knutsford; now Oak Gables) on its land.

Later, another SGM approved the conversion of Rockhurst into two houses (Little Rockhurst, Cleardown).

1957: An SGM approved the conversion of Heriot House (Knowl Hill) into two houses (West Side).

1958: Two SGMs were called re Greywell House (Hockering Road). The first in respect of dividing the house into two; the second for the later request to build two houses on the land each with the requisite minimum one half acreage. The latter was approved.

1959: An SGM was called to approve the development of five plots of land on the lower east side of Knowl Hill.

1960: Plans were instigated to develop land off White Ladies in Old Woking Road, some of which had frontage on Knowl Hill.

1961: An SGM was called to approve variation and release of covenants of Stapleford House (Danes Hill) for the building of a second house (Holloford).

A proposal to develop land at Hockering Gate, which had frontage on both Hockering and Heathfield roads, at four houses to the acre, was strongly opposed on grounds of the restrictive covenants in the original 1909 conveyance of the Smallpeice Settled Estates.

1963: The Committee, and 35 individual owners who benefited under the covenants, successfully petitioned the Lands' Tribunal to have the development of Hockering Gate restricted to the approved density of two houses to the acre. (Thus Hockering Corner was built.)

Note: From this period onwards, the Committee approved development applications, and executed variations and deeds of release with appropriate covenants, without calling a meeting of all owners.

1965: Woking Council confirmed the policy of maintaining the established density for the Estate of a minimum of half an acre of land per house.

1966: A proposal at the AGM was unanimously approved to strengthen the Committee's ability to deal with 'speculative and unsympathetic' development proposals by forming a Private Company, to which owners would assign individual rights into a collective provision for the benefit of the Estate as a whole. However, after considering the matter further, the Committee minuted that "this was not a favourable time and the question was deferred".

At this meeting, after 25 years as Chairman, Sir John Woodhead retired, and General Sir Roderick McLeod (Fairhill, Cleardown) was elected in his place.

Plans were instigated to develop land of Byggon Hill (now Glenhurst House, Knowl Hill) for plots in both Knowl Hill and Hockering Road.

1968: The Convent School at Aldridge House by the Hockering gate was demolished and the land developed for houses in Pembroke Gardens; but access to the Estate was not granted.

1969: A referendum on a proposal to have humps to curb excessive speed was not carried.

The Council deferred a decision to put a blanket Tree Preservation Order on the whole Estate, leaving the Committee to continue to decide on all proposals for tree work.

1976: The first documented reference in the Minutes to the Hockering Residents' Association.

1980: On the death of General Sir Roderick McLeod, Mr A Stalewsky (The Wyke, Hockering Road) was elected Chairman.

1982: A Royal Wedding street party was held at the junction of Cleardown and Danes Hill.

Strong objections were raised to the proposal of Surrey County Council to sell Highlands for use as a private Nursing, or Old People's Home.

1983: Mr Stalewsky retired as Chairman and Mr BH Garai was elected in his place. Mr HA Woellwarth (Danes House, Hockering Road) was elected Deputy Chairman.

1984: Highlands was sold to a firm of developers with planning permission for five houses. Deeds of Release were granted.

1986: The Constitution was adopted and four Trustees were appointed to be responsible for all property of the Association - other than monies for which the Committee remained responsible. The Trustees henceforth authorised on behalf of the Association all deeds of release, variations, imposition of covenants etc. in respect of land over which the Association has rights.

1987: An Extraordinary General Meeting was called to consider the re-siting of the Cleardown Gate further into the bell-mouth. The proposal was rejected.

The first annual Summer Party was held in the grounds of Danes House, Hockering Road.

The Association, in the name of the Trustees, was granted by HM Land Registry, the Possessory Title to the freehold of the roads, footpaths and verges.

1990: The Hockering was designated a Conservation Area under section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 "in view of both the fine architectural qualities of many of the properties and the general character of the estate....".

1993: A Neighbourhood Watch scheme was set up in conjunction with the Woking police.

1995: Dr LCF Blackman (Griffin House, Knowl Hill) was elected Chairman.

A resolution at the AGM was approved in favour of having CableTel installed throughout the Estate.

1997: Negotiations started early in the year with a developer who had acquired Greenways, Danes Hill, and had made a range of planning applications to build up to three houses in the garden and on the back land.

During this period, the developer made repeated attempts to challenge the Association's ownership of the roads and verges, and even the very privacy of the Estate.

1998: An EGM was called to approve a £500 levy on all owners to provide a fighting fund for the Committee to oppose the developers various challenges.

1999: A final agreement was made with granted rights, appropriate covenants and a capital payment for the formation of a new roadway, to be owned by the Association, to service a single house (Denton House) on the back land of Greenways.

An EGM was called to approve the return of the levy to members and the retention of the capital sum to create a Legal Fund for the purposes of protecting the rights and interests of members against future unworthy or illegal property development.

In April the Trustees were granted Absolute Title (SY570826) to the roads, verges and footpaths of the estate.

A survey showed that members were strongly opposed to the installation of electrically operated gates.

An EGM was called to approve the installation of CCTV security systems at the four gates.

2000: "The Hockering Estate - Its History, Management and Customs" booklet was prepared and given to all residents.

A Hockering Millennium street party was held in July at the top of Know Hill.

Mr and Mrs HA Woellwarth donated the flagpole erected at Cleardown corner.

2001: New pedestrian gates and trellis fencing were installed at all four entrances and the plethora of signs was reduced to a single notice at each entrance.

2002: A Coronation Jubilee street party was held in June.

2003: On the retirement of Dr Blackman and Mr Woellwarth, Mr RW Savage (Burford House, Hockering Road) was elected Chairman and Mr A Till (Trigoni, Cleardown) was elected Deputy Chairman.

2007: On the retirement of Mr RW Savage, Mrs. S Davies (Raintree, Cleardown) was elected Chairman.

2008: All residents were given a booklet "History of the Hockering Estate, Woking, Surrey" by Dr Blackman.

2010: On the retirement of Mrs Davies, Mr D Cribb (Craigmore, Hockering Road) was elected Chairman.

2012: On the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of HM The Queen a street party was held during the only rain free hours of a very wet day.

2013: The gates at Knowl Hill, Cleardown and Eastgate were automated. The Estate celebrated the centenary of the first Committee meeting to which all past and present Committee members were invited.

2014: On the retirement of Mr Cribb, Mr J M Lewin (Sefton, Hockering Road) was elected Chairman.

2015: An upgrade to the CCTV system was initiated.

2016: An automatic Number Plate Recognition System was implemented.

2018: On the retirement of Mr Lewin in July, Mr R Browne (Highlands, Danes Hill) was elected Chairman.