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ASHTEAD'S CIVIC SENSE OVER 500 RESIDENTS JOIN ASSOCIATION

That Interest in civic matters is very much alive in Ashtead was evidenced by a crowded attendance in the Peace Memorial Hall on Thursday last week for the first general meeting of the newly-formed Ashtead Residents' Association, which over 500 residents had already joined.

Mr. C. P. Cox, chairman of the promotion committee, presided, and thanked the officers, the provisional committee, and the many ratepayers who had helped in the preliminary organisation. An eloquent appeal for further members was made by Mr. C. Broxup. As "John Citizen" he and others wanted to know many things, he said. They could not go tripping into the local Council Chamber and say what their requirements were. They had to send a delegate to do the job for them, and they had to see that he was fitted for the task of putting the ratepayers' point of view.

An association provided them with the means of learning about civic government and how expenditure should be applied. For instance, they wanted to know why Ashtead, with a higher residential weight, was represented on the Urban Council by only five members out of 19. They were dissatisfied with the educational facilities. Why was there no public library in Leatherhead? They wanted to be satisfied about the housing situation. It appeared to some that there was an overriding of building covenants. They did not want houses crowded together when there was so much open space in Ashtead.

He, as a new resident, was grateful to the old residents for the way they had preserved the amenities of the village. There must be no dissension between old and new residents. They must unite in this objective. One of the association's objects was to encourage the younger generation to take an early interest in civic life. If that were done there would be no dearth of candidates for urban and borough candidates. Mr. E. C. Given, of Streatham, congratulated Ashtead on the fact that 10 per cent, of the ratepayers had already joined the association.

There was a lively discussion on the constitution and selection of the committee to whether the provisional committee should be re-elected or a new committee formed. Major R. Gildea Robertson said that never in the years he had lived in Ashtead had he seen such a large and enthusiastic meeting. He thought it spoke highly for the preliminary organisation. The committee should carry on as it was until the annual meeting in March. Mrs. RUXTON, a member of Leatherhead Urban Council, agreed. She was delighted that the association had been formed, and was of the opinion that Ashtead ought to have a bigger representation on the Council.

Mr. C. C. Trotter, also a member of the Council, wished the association success. There was nothing more necessary than to have a good civic consciousness in the community. The population was growing enormously. The rateable value of Leatherhead and Ashtead was just about equal, and he thought Ashtead ought to have two more representatives. Two thirds of the money went to the County Council, who hitherto had been entirely responsible for education. The Leatherhead Council had done all they could to expedite building. A statement from the chairman of the

Housing Committee with regard to the cause of delays was to be published at the week-end.

The following officers were appointed: Chairman, Mr. C. P. Cox; vice-chairman, Mr. A. Y. McInnes; hon. secretary, Mr. A. W. Fitzgerald; hon. treasurer, Mr. H. Baker; assistant secretary, Mr. P. L. Thorpe; hon. auditor, Mr. C. Broxup; committee, Messrs. H. Baker, C. P. Cox, A. W. Fitzgerald, C. Gosden, Dr. A. S. Halliday, Miss W. I. Harding, Messrs. A. Y. McInnes and P. L. Thorpe, and Mrs. Rennison and Miss Keyes.