

Southfields Grid Residents' Association

Minutes of Open meeting held on Tuesday 24th July 2018

1. Apologies

SGRA Executive Committee: Karen Gregory, Gerard Sebastian

Southfields Councillors: Terry Walsh, Kim Caddy

2. Key Points from Last Executive Committee Meeting - Charles

The following points from the last exec meeting were noted:

- We now have a new editor of the SGRA Grid News – Philippa Haslegrave
- We are in discussion with possible new street reps for Hanford Close and Merton Road
- SGRA Facebook page now has 1000+ followers
- The Southfields area on Nextdoor.co.uk now has 500+ households
- SGRA are looking to launch a twitter account soon

3. Enable Leisure and Culture / Wandsworth Tree Wardens

Pat Langley and Jessica Stocks provided an update on Enable Leisure and Culture activities relating to the maintenance of street trees in Wandsworth

- Enable are responsible for the maintenance of all 15,000 street trees in Wandsworth
- Southfields grid has a high density of trees compared to other areas
- Trees go through a two-year cycle of survey and maintenance cycle. The survey looks for damage to trees, any maintenance required on the trees (including need for removal), closeness to buildings and potential impacts on buildings to ensure a sensible compromise between protecting trees and protecting houses
- Trees will be removed and not replaced if it is proven they are causing subsidence to actual buildings but not garden walls
- Where trees are removed due to damage these are replaced where possible with trees of the same type
- Within the grid the ground east of Clonmore Road to Merton Road is London Clay and more susceptible to subsidence. West of Clonmore the ground is gravel
- The survey of trees in Southfields has just been completed and resulting maintenance work should be completed by the end of the year. Parking is often an issue when performing maintenance so please follow any parking instructions
- Enable have been able to buy 500 extra trees both this year and last year to further replacement of missing trees and plant a few new trees

A number of questions were raised to which Pat and Jess responded:

- Can anything be done about trees overhanging onto the pavement? Jess responded that any issues should be reported to Enable who will deal with the issue as soon as they can
- On the Merton side of Revelstoke Road "Please water me signs" are put onto trees. Could this be done in Wandsworth? Pat responded that this is not necessarily needed. Trees less than one-year old are watered regularly. Older trees do not need watering as they take ground water through their roots

- Is there any policy on the fruit trees which often lead to slippery/dangerous pavements? Pat responded that they push for extra street cleaning to be put in place and they tend to avoid planting these trees now.
- It was noted that there seems to be a lot of ants on trees at the moment. Pat responded that it is currently their breeding season and the ants do not cause any issues for the trees
- Is there a specific policy on the resin covering around the bases of trees? Pat responded that this is not the responsibility of Enable however he is not aware of any big programme to do this or any specific policy on this. This is done more on a case by case basis and there are pros and cons to this and mixture of opinion on doing this
- Tree maintenance sometimes seems to be done at the wrong time of year during the summer which can harm nesting birds. Pat responded that with 7,500 trees a year to maintain this needs to be an all year round process. He also stated that there is no evidence that summer maintenance harms trees and that if bird nests are known to be or found in a tree then they will not go into tree (and can be prosecuted if they do)
- Finally, Jess mentioned that they should be contacted with any issues or questions around street trees. The contact details are shown below:
 - Email: trees@enablelc.org
 - Phone: 0203 959 0070

David Devons from Wandsworth Tree Wardens gave an update on the organisation:

- Wandsworth tree wardens (WTW) is a volunteer organisation whose objectives (taken from their website is):
 - “To promote for public benefit the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment through the planting, care, nurture and cultivation of trees throughout the borough. We aim to raise public awareness of the many benefits that trees in the urban environment provide and the unique hardship that city trees are subject to. Our principal focus is on *street trees*, those trees which are planted in the public realm, mainly residential streets and roads and, to a lesser extent, trees in parks, commons and new public urban spaces.”
- The WTW tree wardens meet four times a year and their activities include monitoring trees for damage and assisting in the watering of trees during periods of low rainfall (they have just produced a leaflet to advise on this)
- The WTW are also working with Wandsworth Council to update the Wandsworth tree strategy which is currently being re-written. This includes how to deal with new developments to ensure trees are replaced
- More information is available on the WTW website at: <http://wandsworthtreewardens.org/>
- A question was asked if there were any tree wardens in the grid. David was not sure as the contact details were not available due to data privacy issues

5. SGRA Executive Update

Chairs Report – Charles Runcie

Charles provided an update on his recent SGRA activities:

- Charles has joined the Wandsworth Tree Wardens (see above) and possibly looking at SGRA Street Reps having some involvement in the future
- Charles has been assisting in the resolution of a barking dog on Clonmore Street although there is nothing that we can do. Guy Humphries mentioned that this could be

reported to the council who would do what they could especially if it looked like the animal may be in distress

- The new SGRA website has been launched at www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk with lots of new contents and increase in contacts via the website. Any comments and suggestions for the website will be gratefully received
- SGRA summer picnic was held on Saturday July 7th. Attendance was down although it did clash with the England World Cup semi-final and it was a very hot day. Moving forward we need to review how/if we continue with the summer picnic
- The latest issue of the SGRA Grid News has been produced and is being delivered. This includes a SGRA subscription request to provide the funds to run the organisation, events and publications

Planning Update - Margaret

The following planning updates were reported:

- Wandsworth council has approved the latest design for the Southfields public realm improvements and the work is expected to start in the Autumn and continue for around a year and we are currently awaiting the Traffic Management Orders for the project. There are still some major concerns over the loss of parking spaces in Replingham Road and the impact on the businesses. Overall the changes are positive. Further details of the planned improvements can be found at http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200107/transport/2293/southfields_station_and_village_centre_public_realm_improvements.
- 150 Elsenham: Approval has been given for the conversion of 150 Elsenham Street into three flats. Wandsworth has a policy to protect small family homes under 150 sq. metres of internal space. However due to previous extensions the property was over this threshold.
- 46 Clonmore: We have objected to the large combined bin store and bike shed at 46 Clonmore. We are trying to green the grid and building over most of the front garden and installing such a large shed does not contribute to this aim.
- Caffè Nero has applied for planning permission to put tables and chairs on their forecourt in Replingham Road. A previous application was refused because this would cause an obstruction. Although the designated area they want to use is smaller anything placed near the corner would cause an obstruction. There are over 1,000 people passing during peak periods of the day here.
- Coronation Gardens: A local resident complained to families using the park for a picnic last week, claiming that the children were being too noisy. At the moment the very old byelaws apply but the new park byelaws should be in place in the autumn and there will be less restrictions on how the park can be used.
- 98 Pirbright Road: Planning for the “modern” brickwork on the exterior of the building has been passed. Guy Humphries was asked why this was approved. Although he was not involved in the decision he responded that local residents were asked for views on the planning application and it is the case that some people do appreciate this design. He also mentioned that alerts for planning applications can be set up for specific areas for those people interested in applications in proximity to their specific houses.

Crime – Clive

Clive reported the latest crime figures.

- May 2018: 27 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road out of a total of 126 for the Southfields ward.
- Within Southfields Grid:
 - Merton Road had the highest number of crimes with 8 and all other streets in the grid had 5 or less crimes
 - The highest category of crimes was Other Theft with 10 followed by Vehicle Crime with 6

Clive also reported annual crime figures for the last two years

- April 2016 to March 2017: 316 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road
- April 2017 to March 2018: 270 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road

Overall we still remain a low crime area.

6. Green the Grid Update – Nina Kowalska

Nina gave an update on the Green the Grid initiative:

- The first green the grid planting day was held in June and was a great success:
 - Over 170 households were provided with free plants and gardening advice
 - Lots of community engagement on the grid streets as people planted in their gardens or in the tree bases
 - There was good media coverage with an article in Brightside. Also the Wandsworth Guardian would like to do an article on GTG
- Following the planting day, the 500 tree bases in the grid were surveyed and:
 - 203 (41%) were empty
 - 192 (39%) were planted
 - 95 (19%) were not suitable for planting
- A further planting day will be held on Saturday 6th October
- GTG have now received a significant grant from Wandsworth Council which will be used to secure the organisation's future on a permanent basis. This will also possibly be used to provide planting packs to all the households who have signed up to GTG and also possibly providing community herb planting pots in the grid
- Further information about the group can be found on their website (<http://www.frontgardenfriendly.uk/>) and on the SGRA Facebook page and Nextdoor
- GTG is also always looking for volunteers to please contact them if you are interested

7. FOWP – Capability Brown Weekend Update – Chris Baker

Chris Baker from the Wimbledon Club and FOWP provided an update on the forthcoming Capability Brown weekend on 8/9th September:

- The Capability Brown weekend will be held on September 8th / 9th in Wimbledon Park and at a number of the park's sporting clubs
- The festival will include sports, music, dance, exhibitions and walks and talks in the park
- The event is being organised by the Capability Brown Society with the involvement of FOWP, Merton and all of the local sporting clubs (AFC Wimbledon, Wimbledon Park Angling Club, The Wimbledon Club, Wimbledon Park Golf Club, Hercules Wimbledon Golf Club and Wimbledon Park Bowls Club)
- The 8th is being mainly set aside for sporting events and the sporting clubs will be opening some facilities and/or providing free coaching over the weekend
- The 9th is being mainly set aside for arts and music including performances from local schools (Ricards Lodge, Southfields Academy and St. Cecilia's)

Further information about the event and all the activities taking place can be found here:
<http://thecapabilitybrownsociety.com/>

7. Southfields Business Forum Update – Gill Habershon

- Sainsbury's: A number of surveys are currently being planned / taking place after which demolition activities should start
- Nat West Bank: RBS are currently negotiating with the freeholders of the site and the site is expected to go to auction towards the end of the year. RBS are also looking to provide community banking and are looking for options to do this (e.g. local library)
- Fitting out of the new post office at Southfields Food and Wine is ongoing and the Post Office is expected to open on the 3rd August
- The Village Butcher will be closing for a few days to allow refurbishment
- This year during the Wimbledon Championships the local businesses worked hard to decorate the shops with tennis balls and rackets. The AELTC were very happy with this and will look to work closer with the SBF on this next year

A number of questions were raised to which Gill responded:

- Can anything be done to fix the "Budgens" sign which has been in disrepair for a long time? Gil responded that the SBF are chasing as is Charles of the SGRA however there is no information about when this will be fixed
- Is there any information on the homeless person currently sleeping in the shop doorway on Wimbledon Park Road? Gil has spoken to James Elvy of the SNT and the Council but they can do nothing. Action has to be taken by the owner of the shop. Adult Social care has been to see him but they can only provide help if he requests it

11. Southfields Events

Southfields Harvest

- The Southfields Harvest festival will be held again this year on Saturday 29th September from 12-3pm at St. Barnabas church
- The event will include amongst other activities - local produce, craft beer, apple juicing and a bake off event
- More information can be found here: <https://southfieldsharvest.weebly.com>

15. Any Other Business

- Front Gardens Competition: A focus of the next SGRA open meeting will be a report and presentation of the awards for the recent SGRA Front Gardens Competition

Appendix 1 - Dates of Future Open Meetings

All meetings commence at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated.

Date of Meeting	Type Of Meeting
Tuesday 25 th September 2018	Open
Tuesday 27 th November 2018	Open

Appendix 2 – Attendance List

Name	Role
Charles Runcie	SGRA Executive Committee - Chairman
Nigel Rawson	SGRA Executive Committee - Secretary
Robert Feitelberg	
Umair Bashir	
Guy Griffith	
David Devons	Wandsworth Tree Wardens
Pat Langley	Enable
Jessica Stocks	Enable
Marilyn Wilson	
Jackie Pearce	
Mary Buckley	
Nick Steiner	SGRA Street Rep
Diana Brennan	
Rosemary Langton	
John Habershon	
Gill Habershon	
Kyra Von Schottenstein	SGRA Street Rep
Margaret Brett	SGRA Executive Committee
Chris Puleston	SGRA Executive Committee - Treasurer
Peter Jackson	
Lesley McCaul	SGRA Street Rep
Clive Williams	SGRA Executive Committee
Kim Bolton	
Shiraz Dato	
Aidan Magill	
Cyril Birbeck	
Guy Humphries	
Katrina Ure	
Ann Kerr	SGRA Executive Committee
Nina Kowalski	
Trevor Howes	
Sarah Hall	
Rosemary Day	
Simon Wright	
Judith Edwards	
Chris Baker	
Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty	SGRA Executive Committee
Diane Miles	
Oliver Ashbee	SGRA Street Rep