

Southfields Grid Residents' Association

Minutes of Open meeting held on Tuesday 25th September 2018

1. Apologies

Southfields Councillors: Terry Walsh, Kim Caddy

2. SGRA Front Garden Awards - Amelia

Amelia gave a presentation on the recent SGRA Front Gardens competition. Key points included:

- Judging was performed during June and this year there were four categories – front garden, window boxes and pots, hanging baskets and guerrilla gardening
- Individual judges allocated gardens a bronze, silver or gold award (plant label/spike) in their streets and overall we handed out 70 bronze, 25 silver and 9 gold awards
- The prizes for the overall category winners were:
 - Front garden winner received £25 plus their name engraved on silver platter
 - The hanging baskets and window boxes and pots winners received £15 each
 - For the guerrilla gardening – each judge awarded a prize to one guerrilla gardening slot in a street and each winner was given a plant, kindly donated to us by 'Green the Grid.'
- The overall category winners were announced and received their prizes from The Worshipful the Mayor of Wandsworth: Councillor Piers McCausland
- The winners were
 - Window Boxes and Pots - 99 Elborough Street
 - Hanging baskets - 98 Elsenham Street
 - Front Garden – 171 Trentham Street

After the presentation a question was raised about where to go to get gardening information. Suggestions included start small, do some research (e.g. RHS website) and look at other gardens.

Finally, Charles gave a vote of thanks to all who took part, the winners, Amelia and the organisers and judges and finally the Mayor.

3. Green the Grid Update – Nina Kowalska

Nina gave an update on Green the Grid activities:

- Following the last Green the Grid planting day in June over 200 tree bases were planted
- The next planting day will be on Saturday 6th October and a grant was received from Wandsworth Council to help with the costs for this including the free distribution of 100 packs of bulbs and plants for autumn
- The group are also planning to
 - Add some gardening information to their website
 - Work with/encourage other residential areas/councils to promote similar green initiatives

4. Replingham Road Gas Networks

Representatives from Southern Gas Networks (and associated contractors) gave an update on the gas works on Replingham Road and answered a number of questions. Key points from the discussion are highlighted below:

- SGN have found that parts of the main which needed repairing have previously been covered in concrete (perhaps because it goes over the tube line). This along with further problems found with the gas main have led to the works being extended by 3 weeks
- The repairs involve large size of mains and the resources required are highly skilled and limited in numbers
- The hours of working cover 8am until 6pm seven days a week and although there may not always appear to be many workers there the works does involve a lot of preparation work which is then quick to finish
- A question was raised if the road junction could be opened once the work on Replingham Road was complete however the SGN responded that due to the nature of the work that was not possible

A number of issues were raised on the traffic management and issues as a result of the works (particularly in Pirbright Road including numbers of parking suspensions, speed and volume of traffic, non-residents using roads and ignoring signage and the lack of traffic enforcement):

- A specialist traffic management company is used and all changes put in place are reviewed and agreed with Wandsworth council
- The green man timings on the traffic lights are controlled by the traffic management system and will not allow the green man when traffic is moving
- Don from the Southfields SNT reported that the SNT are doing what they can but are unable to have a police presence their all the time. Also the mobile speed camera has been on Pirbright Road and Standen Road but only limited time is available to use the camera. However, he will feedback the request to increase the number of SNT patrols and particularly the use / availability of the speed camera
- A representative from the Wandsworth traffic co-ordination department at the council had been invited to the meeting but was not able to attend as it was outside his working hours (he did attend the gas works meeting earlier that day). Charles stated that the lack of representation was disappointing. Guy Humphries from the council stated he was there to represent Wandsworth and stated that the he had asked for parking officers and Southfields SNT (and the mobile speed camera) to be there as much as possible. He will reiterate that request given the feedback in the meeting. Also if you see issues then report these to the police
- SGN were asked if they could do more however they responded apart from the signage they are not responsible for traffic enforcement this is the responsibility of the police and council enforcement officers
- SGN were asked if further signage could be put in place for these (and future) works further away from the area to discourage traffic arriving in Southfields, e.g. when leaving the A3 at Tibbets Corner
- Justine Greening stated that she is well aware of the problems and that signage is absolutely key. Also she is pushing for a blitz on speeding in the area with the use of more fixed / mobile cameras and additional “smiley face” cameras. Guy Humphries responded that the council is looking at this for Replingham road

The intentions for the original planned works on Augustus Road were also discussed:

- SGN are in discussion with Wandsworth as to when these works will be performed and if they will continue immediately after the current works or whether there will be a hiatus. SGN are keen to replace the pipes as soon as possible however the council are in favour of stopping the works for a while and a final decision has yet to be made
- The works will involve one-way traffic being in place up Augustus Road
- Margaret Brett also stated that these works could potentially have an impact on the timings of the works for the Southfields Realm improvement plan

Finally, Charles thanked the SGN representatives for attending the meeting and responding to the questions and issues raised.

5. Matters arising from Last Open Meeting - Charles

The following points from the last open meeting were noted:

- It was reported that a number of issues had been raised regarding trees and these had been dealt with very quickly and effectively by Jess and the team at Enable who attended the last open meeting
- The homeless person who was sleeping on Wimbledon Park Road has now moved away
 - Justine Greening stated that she has met with the council to ensure better planning this winter for the homeless who end up in this condition for a whole different range of issues and reasons. Guy Humphries stated that the council acts as a hub for homeless support and does try to co-ordinate activities
 - St. Barnabas along with a number of other churches offers shelters to the homeless over the winter via the Glassdoor organisation (<https://www.glassdoor.org.uk/Pages/Category/shelter>)

5. SGRA Executive Update

Planning Update - Margaret

The following planning updates were reported:

- Caffè Nero's application for planning permission (2018/3407) to put tables and chairs on their forecourt in Replingham Road has been approved but only for a temporary period of 18 months. The Planning Committee expressed concerns about the measurements and location of the proposal. The site is on a corner that is often congested and the immediate area is about to undergo substantial changes under the Southfields Public Realm Improvement Project. This had not been considered in the report and so only limited permission was granted to see whether it is compatible with the public realm works.
- Work has started on the new Sainsbury's site.
- Southfields Improvement Scheme. There was a meeting in early September with the council officers now dealing with this: David Tidely and Sidonie Forrest-Brown. Abigail Hone who did the design has now left. They seemed to be receptive to the idea of not having the parklets and listened to the concerns about parking. At the moment the idea is to start these works at the station but they need to dovetail with SGN about the replacement of the gas main in Augustus Road. It now seems unlikely that there will be works in Replingham Road in the next twelve months
- The Post Office has moved but they have reduced the promised opening hours. The Council officer now dealing with the improvement works promised to see if she can get the post box removed from its old site as PO HQ are reluctant to implement this. The new Post Office will take in post especially as the post box has now been sealed.

- The north side footpath at the bottom of Replingham Road is closed because of the damage to the wall of Riversdale School. This occurred at the weekend when a stolen car being chased by police crashed into the wall demolishing it and causing damage to the newly refurbished area behind it. The driver was not injured and has been arrested.
- EE and 3 are to apply for planning permission for a mobile phone mast opposite Southfields Academy near to Hanford Close. This is described as a radio base and includes a 20m high monopole supporting 3 shrouded antennas and 2 300mm dishes along with 4 equipment cabinets to be installed at ground level and development ancillary thereto.
- There are prospective changes to traffic near West Hill in rush hour. There will be a six-month trial, starting next year banning early morning traffic (7-10am), from Withycombe Road and Princes Way except for buses and cycles.
- A question was raised regarding 98 Pirbright Road and the lack of planning notices for the “modern” brickwork on the exterior of the building has been passed. Guy Humphries responded that although he was not involved in the decision local residents were asked for views on the planning application. 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.

Nick Steiner also mentioned that Kings Georges Park Community Forum has been set up which will include the generation of Neighbourhood Plans. A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development and growth of an area. The Neighbourhood Area boundaries are being reviewed and may include the Southfields Grid.

Crime – Clive

Clive reported the latest crime figures.

- July 2018: 23 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road out of a total of 133 for the Southfields ward.
 - The 23 crimes included 6 for other theft and 6 for violence and sexual offences
 - Merton Road accounted for 8 crimes, Hanford Close for 4, and all other streets for 3 or less crimes. Five roads had no crimes.
- Moving forward it was agreed we will look at putting crime figures onto the SGRA website
- A question was raised as to why the Southfields SNT are not represented at all SGRA open meetings. Charles responded that they are made aware of all open meetings but are not always available due to shift patterns and operational needs. An effort will be made to arrange for an SNT update at the next open meeting in November
- Ed Gretton (one of the Merton councillors for the Wimbledon Park area) noted that there had been a spate of car thefts in his area with cars being stolen during the night

Communications – Charles

- Charles introduced John Berkoski who has been working on transforming the SGRA website into the central comms hub
- Any suggestions for improvements to the website, further information or photos of the local area should be sent in via the contact details in the website or the SGRA Instagram account (@southfieldsgrid) for photos
- Moving forward we will be looking to generate some stats on website traffic

6. Southfields Business Forum Update – Gill Habershon

- Businesses are suffering badly due to the gas works and reduction in traffic/parking with some businesses reporting up to 50% decrease in turnover
- Sainsbury's are in discussion with the council on a number of issues prior to commencing construction work although Guy Humphries responded that there were no blockers in place now
- Nat West Bank: RBS are currently negotiating with the freeholders of the site and the site is expected to go to auction early next year
- The new post office at Southfields Food and Wine is now open however it is only opening for the normal post office hours rather than the promised extended hours
- A number of concerns have been raised regarding the fruit stall outside Southfields Food and Wine. The council will be sending an enforcement team to understand if they are there legally and if the required rent/rates are being paid
- The Southfields Christmas Lights event is scheduled for Dec 5th however this is dependent of the progress/status of the ongoing gas works

7. FOWP – Capability Brown Weekend Update – Nick Steiner

Nick Steiner of the FOWP provided a review of the recent Capability Brown weekend in Wimbledon Park (held on 8/9th September):

- All planned events took place
- Overall turnout was low and the park was generally quiet anyway for the time of the year
- However, some events did attract a good turnout including Zumba, bat walk, tennis, the Capability Brown walk and the musical events by the local schools
- A review of the overall event will be undertaken to understand any lessons learnt
- One suggestion was to increase the marketing activities for the event

8. Forthcoming Events

- The Southfields Harvest festival will be held again this year on Saturday 29th September from 12-3pm at St. Barnabas church
- The Tiny Baroque Ensemble will be performing at St. Barnabas church on Friday 5th October
- The next Green the Grid Planting day will be Saturday 6th October
- A charity quiz fundraising night will be held at St. Barnabas church on Friday 12th October to raise money for the Glassdoor organisation which supports the homeless

15. Any Other Business

- Merton Cllr. Ed Gretton reported the decision by Merton Council to not ban BBQ's in Wimbledon Park. However, they may set up a specific BBQ area in the park
- A question was raised on the current state of the SGRA finances and the street collections compared to other years. It was reported that collections come in all across the year but following the meeting its was confirmed that currently we have nearly reached the figure for last year with £2,385 collected so far compared to a total of £2,577 last year. For last year the average per household was £1.14 with the highest per street being £2.13 and the lowest £0.94

Appendix 1 - Dates of Future Open Meetings

All meetings commence at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated.

Date of Meeting	Type Of Meeting
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Tuesday 27 th November 2018	Open
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Appendix 2 – Attendance List

Name	Role
Charles Runcie	SGRA Executive Committee - Chairman
Nigel Rawson	SGRA Executive Committee - Secretary
Richard Mowthorpe	
Donald MacIntrye	SGN/Forefront
Stuart Porter	SGN/Forefront
Andy Round	SGN/Forefront
Joe Fagan	
Andrew Dunley	
Graham Skyrme	
Guy Humphries	
Guy Griffith	
Jackie Pearce	
Kyra Von Schottenstein	SGRA Street Rep
Kim Bolton	
Sarah Hall	
Chris Lorenz	
Blanca Rodriguez	
Sue Wixley	
Umair Bashir	
Stuart Matheson	
Johnny Perkins	
Diane Miles	
Mike Caswell	
Lesley McCaul	SGRA Street Rep
Clive Williams	SGRA Executive Committee
Rosemary Langford	
Nick Steiner	SGRA Street Rep
PSCO Donald Lopez	
John Berkoski	
Margaret Brett	SGRA Executive Committee
Gerard Sebastian	SGRA Executive Committee
Lorraine Hilton	
Chris Hilton	
Jayne Sheek	
Fiona Guthrie	
Shiraz Dato	
Trevor Howes	
Ann Kerr	SGRA Executive Committee
Derek Spencer	
Peter Jackson	
John Habershon	
Gill Habershon	
Justine Greening	
Chris Puleston	SGRA Executive Committee – Treasurer
Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty	SGRA Executive Committee
Nina Kowalski	
Ed Gretton	

