

Southfields Grid Residents' Association

Minutes of Open meeting held on Tuesday 23rd July 2019

1. Apologies

Southfields Councillors: Cllr Terry Walsh, Cllr Guy Humphries & Cllr Kim Caddy

2. Swim Wimbledon – Sophie Brunt

Sophie Brunt gave a presentation on the proposed open air swimming in Wimbledon Park.

The presentation is available on the SGRA website here:

[Swim Wimbledon Presentation](#)

Also the video mentioned in the presentation is available here:

<https://youtu.be/XsoNPQUg8iM>

Some key points from the presentation are detailed below:

- The Swim Wimbledon group are putting forward a proposal to allow open water swimming in the Wimbledon Park lake
- The water in the lake has been tested and passed EU bathing regulations
- The online petition to support this has attracted nearly 3,000 supporters so far
- The intention is to have as little impact as possible on existing lake users and the lake environment and wildlife, e.g. swimming will be early morning or evening, kayaks will be used rather than boats with engines and a clear marked off area will be used for swimming
- The Swim Wimbledon group is very keen to work with local stakeholders to ensure any concerns or impacts are mitigated
- The group need local support to make this happen and further information and links to the online petition are available at:

www.swimwimbledon.co.uk/

www.facebook.com/swimwimbledo...

A number of questions were raised after the presentation which Sophie responded to:

- Is it necessary to wear a wetsuit?
 - This not mandatory
- Will lifeguards be available?
 - Volunteer lifeguards will be on duty and if finances permit the lifeguards will be paid
- What payment options will be available?
 - Initially this will be club only subscription to take part. Moving forward pay as you go may be introduced
- How will “illegal” swimming either by non-club members or outside club hours be policed?
 - Current Merton bye-laws prohibit swimming in the lake and there are signs in place although this is not monitored by currently Merton
 - If swim club finances allow, then additional signage about when and under what circumstances swimming is allowed can be put in place

- During swimming club hours this will be policed by the club to ensure only members take part
- This has not seen to be an issue in other places where a swimming club has been set up
- What has the angling club reaction been to the proposal?
 - The angling club will be using a different section of the lake however the swim club want to work with them to allay any concerns
 - A representative came to the FOWP consultation meeting where the same presentation was given and advised he would feedback the information to the angling club who would then consider this proposal

2. SGRA Executive Update

Chairs Report – Charles Runcie

Friends of Coronation Gardens:

- The Friends of Coronation Gardens has been created to nurture and improve the gardens
- A committee is now in place and several meetings have been held with Enable regarding improvements including repainting the railings (which is now complete), more plants and a working water fountain
- A successful informal picnic was held on the 6th July as part of the Love Parks initiative
- A pre-Christmas event is also being planned which will involve the local schools
- The FOCG have also received a grant of £1,000 from Wandsworth to support their activities

Further information can be found at the FOCG website: www.focoronationgardens.co.uk/

Southfields Library:

- A focus group was held recently at Southfields library to allow feedback on local library services
- Sucheta Samant (Southfields library manager) reported that this was part of wider review involving library users, library staff and local community groups. A report of the findings should be published soon

Gas Works

- The gas works have now moved further up Augustus Road and are well away from the grid and as such impact on Southfields centre and businesses will now be reduced

Wimbledon Park Road

A discussion took place regarding the row of shops/businesses on Wimbledon Park Road which are under threat from developers

- It was noted that Corals had closed although this may be related to a merger between Corals and another company and the need to close certain outlets
- The properties are protected to some extent in the properties must still have 45 square meters of retail space and a shop front

AGM matters arising

- The pavement replacement schedule is now available however there are no grid streets currently on the schedule

Executive committee meeting matters arising

- The new post box close to the new Southfields post office (by the Tesco store) is now finally in operation
- We are still in need of a street rep for Elborough Street so please contact the SGRA if you are interested or know of anybody else who may be

Planning – Margaret Brett

Margaret provided an update on the latest planning news:

- The application for 235a-237 Wimbledon Park Road (2019/1231 is still outstanding). There are numerous objections to this development
- 17 Replingham/6 Pirbright is also outstanding (2019/1369). This is an unapproved flat
- There is an application for permitted development as a flat in the basement of 245a Wimbledon Park Road (2019/2583). This is likely to be considered permitted development despite the unsuitability of the space for a dwelling
- There is an application for permitted development to make a small dwelling behind the new Post Office (2019/2365) in a rear storeroom. This will bring unused space back into use
- There is an application to convert much of the rear of 26 Replingham (2019/2562), Robin's Cakes, to residential. This will take operational space for the cake shop out of use and limit the use of the front of the shop but it meets current guidelines. Access is at the rear and there is amenity space
- Central government did not implement one of their more contentious proposals for giving further permitted development rules to allow upward extensions on houses and shops. There is also still some protection for shops being converted to residential where the Council has concerns
- Thames Tideway has acknowledged the objection to the design of the 'bunker' they are leaving in King George's Park and considering if there are ways of mitigating it. They are also looking for community schemes to support and have provided labour to perform painting of the scout hut and at Riversdale School. Please contact Margaret if you aware of any community projects they could help with
- Southfields Public Realm This will not start now until the autumn - no reason for the delay has been given. There will be drinking water fountain available at the station under the Mayor of London's scheme
- The Post Box outside Tesco's in Replingham Road is finally in use after being put there 6 weeks ago
- A Council officer is considering remarking the eroded 'keep clear' road signs on Replingham Road. Something may be done by the end of August
- Heathrow Consultation. Views on Heathrow expansion are required by 13 September. The amount of land they want to acquire is bigger than Birmingham Airport. The Council has just been granted the right of appeal in their attempt to secure a judicial review of the government decision to allow the expansion to proceed
- The speed limit in Durnsford Road in Wimbledon Park is now 20mph but changes to 30mph in Merton Road. We should consider how they can be brought in line

A question was raised regarding the Z-Group property in Southfields which only seems to open as a pop-up bar during the tennis championships. Gill Habershon from the SBF stated that the property was sold some time ago but there is no information about what is going to happen to it

A further question was raised regarding the old Nat West Bank. Gill Habershon from the SBF stated that the property did not go to auction as planned although there has been lots of interest in the property there is no concrete news on what is going to happen to it

Crime Figures – Clive Williams

Clive reported the latest detailed crime figures for Southfields covering April and May which had seen an increase in May.

- May 2019: 28 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road out of a total of 133 for the Southfields ward
- April 2019: 20 crimes reported in Southfields Grid & Pirbright Road out of a total of 101 for the Southfields ward

For May Merton Road has 6 crimes and all other streets had 4 or less. The crime breakdown included 5 – Other theft, 3 – Violent offences, 2 – Anti-Social behaviour, 2 – Burglary and 2 – Vehicle crime

Crime figures are now available on the SGRA website:

www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk/crime-on-the-grid/

A number of other crime related issues were discussed:

- We were reminded during these summer months to ensure windows and doors are locked when properties are empty
- The issue of parcel theft from front gardens/doors was raised. The police can only progress this when the perpetrators are caught in the act and they cannot use video from home security cameras as evidence. We were reminded that alternate delivery arrangements can normally be provided although delivery drives sometimes ignore these
- The next Southfields SNT public meeting will be held on Saturday 17th August at St. Barnabas
- An issue of gangs of youths who are using/selling drugs and congregating around Carlyle Court on Pirbright Road was raised

Street Reps Update

- Kyra von Schottenstein commented on the latest Grid News which she thought was the best ever
- Kyra also commented on noise levels from recent event at Wimbledon Park including noise from cars
- A point was raised regarding opening and closing times of the park. The park should close at 9pm but the park keepers are stretched such that gates are sometimes closed earlier or later than this. This is an issue which needs to be raised with Merton

3. SGRA Front Garden Awards – Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty

Amelia gave a presentation on the SGRA Front Garden awards.

The content from the presentation is available on the SGRA website here:

[Front Garden Awards Presentation](#)

The key points included:

- The awards will be presented at the September SGRA open meeting
- Awards were given for front gardens and tree bases

- The front garden winner was 135 Heythorp street where the resident has only been gardening for 2 years
- The front garden runners up were 98 Elsenham Street and 44 Lavenham Road
- Judging of best sunflowers will be performed in August

4. Green the Grid Update – Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty

Amelia gave an update on Green the Grid upcoming activities:

- The GTG will have a stall and gardening workshop at the upcoming Southfields Harvest event on Saturday 28th September
- On Sunday 29th September the GTG will arrange a walk around the grid to look at the best gardens from the SGRA front gardens awards and will hopefully include discussions with the winning garden residents

Charles also mentioned the #GiveaPlant initiative being organised by Enable as part of the Wandsworth Love Parks and National City Parks campaign. As part of this an eco-friendly company has made 1,000 reusable and recyclable aluminium plant pots (made from recycled aluminium) filled with flowers or herbs that are being given away to colleagues / partners / stakeholders / community groups a plant. Charles has received a number of these for the SGRA and FOCG and had some with him to give away on the night of the meeting.

5. Friends of Wimbledon Park Update – Nick Steiner

Nick Steiner of the FOWP gave an update on recent FOWP news:

- As part of the original constitution of the FOWP a forum was set up to allow discussions between all interested parties and stakeholders including local resident associations. This is becoming increasingly important given potential changes in the park and a consultation day and meeting was held in June
- The meeting held in June was focussed on sports provision in the park and some of the issues, e.g. under-utilisation of some facilities and the need for refurbishment of others
- The next consultation meeting will be held in September and will look at the lake report update, sports provision plan and consultation on landscape and biodiversity
- The Merton master plan for the park is now available although limited communications have been had with the FOWP on this

A number of other issues were discussed as detailed below:

- Charles raised the issue with the toilets in the park not functioning. Nick mentioned that this was addressed in the Master Plan and that there are some known issues with the pipework. This was highlighted as an issue that needs to be fixed and shouldn't be that difficult
- Nick mentioned that the earlier issue with opening and closing of gates has been raised with Merton many times but no resolution has been forthcoming
- Mary Buckley raised an issue of drug usage and dealing in the park particularly in Horse Close Wood which has been reported to the police although Nick stated that no evidence had been seen on the litter picks in the park
- Mary also raised the issue of the police in the park who are based in Merton and will not patrol the Wandsworth side of the park even though it is wholly owned by Merton. Mary spoke to the Southfields SNT who have said they will now patrol the park
- The issue of the water play area not yet working was raised. This should be open for 16 weeks over the summer but has not yet been opened and no specific reasons for this

provided. Ed Gretton the local Merton Councillor is following up on this to understand what the issue are and when the facility can be opened

6. Forthcoming Events

- The Southfields Harvest Festival will be held again on Saturday 28th September at St. Barnabas

7. Any Other Business

SW15 Hedgehogs – Jackie Underwood

Jackie from SW15 Hedgehogs gave an update on the state of hedgehogs in the UK and how we can help them:

- At the current rate of decline Hedgehogs could be extinct in the UK in the next six years
- Some things we can all do to help include:
 - Provide shallow dishes of water in your gardens to give them something to drink and meaty cat or dog food to eat. Jackie has taken 12 animals to the vets in the last 10 days suffering from dehydration
 - Provide access into gardens by raising or putting small holes in fences to allow hedgehogs into gardens to gain shelter
 - Create areas in gardens when Hedgehogs can shelter using small planks of wood or piles of leaves
 - Reduce the use of pesticide in gardens as this affects the food Hedgehogs would eat

SW15 Hedgehogs can be contacted at saveourhedgehogs@gmail.com

Southfields Memories – Margaret Brett

Margaret mentioned 'Southfields Memories' an upcoming event at St. Barnabas on Tuesday 10th September from 1.30 to 3.15pm. Year 6 students from Riversdale primary school will be attending to hear about the memories of Southfields from local residents and all are welcome to attend to join in the event.

Southfields Library Events – Sucheta Samant

Sucheta outlined a number of events happening at Southfields library including:

- Summer reading challenge for children
- An initiative in conjunction with Linden Lodge school to create tactile books
 - This is part of an initiative for communities to create space to help other communities. As part of this Southfields library is creating space for people who want to come and along and make these tactile books
 - A workshop will be provided to help people to make these books which will then go to Linden Lodge or other Asian or African countries which need the
 - Sucheta is looking for people to get involved in the initiative

Appendix 1 - Dates of Future Open Meetings

All meetings commence at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated.

Date of Meeting	Type Of Meeting
Tuesday 24 th September 2019	Open Meeting
Tuesday 26 th November 2019	Open Meeting

Appendix 2 – Attendance List

Name	Role
Charles Runcie	SGRA Executive Committee - Chairman
Nigel Rawson	SGRA Executive Committee – Secretary
Clive Williams	SGRA Executive Committee
Rosemary Langford	
Nick Steiner	SGRA Street Rep
Margaret Brett	SGRA Executive Committee
Ann Kerr	SGRA Executive Committee
Peter Jackson	
John Habershon	
Gill Habershon	
Chris Puleston	SGRA Executive Committee – Treasurer
Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty	SGRA Executive Committee
Sucheta Samant	
Kyra Von Schottestein	
Di Brennan	
Lesley McCaul	
Diane Miles	
Karen Gregory	SGRA Executive Committee
Sophie Brunt	
Terry King	
Kate Lyons	
Duncan Lyons	
Jackie Underwood	
Dr. Sadar Ahmad	
Mozir Ahmed	
Katrina Ure	
Shiraz Dato	
John Berkoski	
Mary Buckley	