



Southfields Grid
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Open Meeting held on Tuesday 26th May 2020, via Zoom

Chair: Charles Runcie

Apologies for absence: none

Charles explained this meeting was originally to be the AGM but this was not possible due to the current pandemic. The Committee will take soundings from other Residents' Associations about the next steps and will continue to discuss. The hope is that by autumn we will be back for physical meetings, but this is not certain.

Charles invited Fleur Anderson, MP for Putney, Roehampton & Southfields, to give an update on her work:

Constituency matters:

- a big thankyou to **The Alliance**, to businesses who are helping each other and to Iain Tattum from St Barnabas Church for the fantastic work going on in the Grid
- **Parliament**: a vast number of rules have been brought in and Fleur is representing those who fallen through gaps for a variety of reasons. She is aware that many, including local dentists and nurseries, need support and emphasised that constituents should get in touch with her for help. Telephone or Zoom surgeries are still ongoing
- **A Street Volunteers network** has been set up with a weekly newsletter and Facebook page (Putney Coronavirus mutual support group); currently 1400 people
- **Dons**, a local action group formed by Wimbledon AFC Foundation is active locally. The Manager at Southfields Sainsburys has enabled them to have a stall outside, where shoppers are asked to donate food and other items for those in need. Thank you in advance to those who give
- **Laptops and other devices** are being collected to give to local families in need. 10 were donated yesterday
- Scrubs are being made; there is still significant need for these
- **Changes to street organisation**: this is being planned in order to enable people to cycle/keep fit/move around safely. A paper regarding this is currently being written. Replingham Road has been mentioned. Putney Hill, Putney High Street and Putney Bridge are all seen as frightening for many of those cycling to central London. Safety on school streets at drop off/pick up time is also being considered. The Transport Committee meeting is on June 9th; please contact Fleur with any ideas; this is an opportunity to say what we want in our streets
- **West Hill/Granville Road traffic management scheme**: final decision to be made on 9th June. Charles explained that SGRA has already responded in favour.

1. **Matters arising from SGRA Update April 2020** (NB this update can be seen on: <https://www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk/2020/04/sgra-update-march-2020/>)

- Granville Rd: already mentioned by Fleur
- An updated database has now been collated, combining all names from street collection envelopes and attendees who have signed up at Open Meetings. Minutes of meetings will be sent via email with a link to the website. There will not be a deluge of emails

- Parklets: Charles acknowledged the debate around the issue of installing a 'parklet' area outside Boots/Cook and the tension between balancing the strong support for environmentally sensitive areas with requirements for easy access to businesses. Nina Kowalska/Green the Grid had carried out a survey to understand local views. This has been forwarded to the Council for consideration. SGRA will await the professional judgement by the Council.

2. Special Guests:

a) **Becky Watts, Southfields Grid Alliance coordinator:** Update on the Grid Alliance work

Charles introduced and explained the Alliance. Becky has been co-ordinating the What's App group every day since 23rd March and is doing a tremendous job.

Becky reported that it is generally quieter near the beginning of week. becomes gradually busier and that demand is still present. Prescriptions, shopping and dog walking are the main requests and all is going well. She acknowledged the amazing work the volunteers (around 60 people) are doing. Requests have come from further afield, such as Tooting and Chelsea & Westminster and St George's Hospitals and the reach is good. There are several people who do not have family locally and who might need a helpline/odd job line/phone call/extended family arm all year round; perhaps this could be developed.

b) **Cllr Guy Humphries:** Update on Public Realm, Council matters during lockdown

Guy reiterated the appreciation of Becky's and the Alliance's work.

Wandsworth Council news: the Community Hub is working well. They are finding that the volume is gradually decreasing and are looking into how to extend it to future.

The Refuse Centre at Smugglers Way is now open to some extent. It will be gradually going back to normal. Currently people can go on different days, depending on car number plates. Details can be found on the website. Garden waste is now being collected from households but not with the regular rubbish; however, it will be collected on the same day. Residents are asked to leave bags open at the top so that contents can be seen; maximum 5 bags.

The Public Realm Improvement Scheme started again today (26th May); workers are under strict guidelines regarding PPE/social distancing. Nearly all council services are still running.

Parklets: there is a query about possibly putting them back in. The decision has not yet been made and the council is currently assessing. It is a separate issue rather than part of the current plan.

Nina Kowalska outlined the results of the survey, for example 93% respondents wanted a green wall. TfL will look into this. Greening the benches was also popular. 91% were in favour of a parklet. How people travel was surveyed: 5% public transport, 4% drove. 90% of those wanted parklet. The survey has been formally submitted to council. Nina fed back that there were lots of thoughtful comments regarding the environment and greening the high street.

Margaret Brett from SGRA explained that a traffic survey was carried out at the beginning of the process. Boots the Chemist particularly was against a parklet; the concern for businesses being that if parking is taken away it will impact on them as some customers need to park close by for physical reasons.

Guy will try to 'tread the delicate tightrope', no snap decisions will be made and everything will be taken into account.

Charles suggested that, as there will be no tennis at Wimbledon this year, perhaps this might enable the Public Realm work to catch up.

Trevor Howe raised an issue about front gardens in the central block of Trentham Street. 3 gardens are being paved over completely; he queried whether planning permission had been sought and is it necessary? There may be danger of more gardens being paved over as the contractor has been seen seeking more business. Guy responded that front gardens can be

paved but 25% area should be permeable. Please check with council if you have plans. Trevor to send the house numbers to Guy.

Charles suggested that GtG might perhaps knock on doors and leaflet to advise householders. Also that local estate agents are key in liaising with new householders; perhaps this can be looked into.

c) Wimbledon Park Update, guest Cllr Ed Gretton

Charles explained that he had tried hard to get a speaker from Merton but they were unable to provide one. He noted that 1/3 of the Park is Wandsworth and 2/3 is Merton; Merton manages the day to day running.

Ed thanked Charles for the invitation. He has been working with FoWP to pick up issues and outlined the key ones. He called a meeting with Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah (Cabinet Member for Commerce, Leisure and Culture, Merton) and discussed the following with her:

Events: the Big Top has recently been reseeded. The event was not a success and is unlikely to return to the Park. All future events will be charged much higher prices. Merton Council has accepted that extra money will go direct to IdVerde (the contractors who maintain the park) so hopefully there will be an improvement of all events throughout the year. The Pumpkin Patch will have another chance; it has better management.

Fireworks: a 'sustainable' bonfire has been requested for the future

BBQs will be banned this summer (Covid19), perhaps by next week. The council has been asked for a longer-term ban; this is going to consultation, along with plans for the water play area. Models of existing play areas in both Merton Park and Kingston may be considered by the council.

Karen Gregory asked what else residents can do to move these things on faster? Ed suggests that residents contact him and Nick from FoWP with any concerns.

d. Tube embankment clearing:

The issue of recent unexpected pruning/trimming on the tube embankment between Wimbledon Park and Southfields was discussed:

Leonie Cooper (London Assembly Member, Merton & Wandsworth) explained that she has contacted TfL through its dedicated internal Assembly Member helpline. This has a 28 day turnaround (even longer for members of the public) so is a difficult route to access. In addition, she has written to Heidi Alexander (Deputy Mayor, Transport & Deputy Mayor, Transport for London) and Shirley Rodrigues (Deputy Mayor, Transport and Energy). Stephen Hammond MP has also written to his contacts. There has been a concerted effort to investigate the issue urgently.

The Environment Team at GLA quickly contacted TfL to register their concern. They were given specific assurance that the policy is NOT to raze greenery to the ground. However, some cabling is needed to be put in and some cutting back is necessary. They have promised Leonie that they will not over cut.

A query from the Chair was 'Do TfL need to inform householders whose gardens adjoin the tube line of their intention?' Leonie didn't think they do as it is TfL land, but she suggested it would be common courtesy. There is evidence in the past they have done so, but clarification is still outstanding. She will find out.

Fleur Anderson has also made contact with TfL. Reasons given for the current work included: Avoidance of fires and maintaining reasonable undergrowth. Assurance was given that no trees with nesting birds would be pruned. They know their work is being watched closely. A letter will now go out to those streets affected.

Cllr Terry Walsh agreed with what has been said by Leonie and Fleur. He has recently walked the route from Wimbledon Park to East Putney. TfL usually tidy up the embankment for the Wimbledon Tennis fortnight and although this is cancelled this year, still need to do the work.

He noted that either side of Southfields station there are oak trees and other mature trees which are a concern. He also noted that, looking from the bridge at Southfields, foliage/bushes are touching the north bound trains and are therefore a safety hazard; this will be attended to. Staff at Southfields station will be able to explain to passengers what is happening.

3. SGRA Executive Updates:

a. Planning (see Appendix I for detail) *Margaret Brett*

Highlights:

- Planning applications are currently very quiet
- Colman Court, Kimber Road is the current main issue
- Tooting Transition Town has taken on the tree bases garden concept and has received a grant.
- Merton Rd speed limit perhaps to be extended to 20mph once it comes into Wandsworth; note that it goes past 2 schools

b. Finance *Chris Puleston*

Chris outlined the key figures:

- Brought forward from last year: **£4,018**
- Income 2019/2020: **£6,894**: 64% advertising, 36% street collections. Advertising is up, street collections are down 18%.
- Expenditure 2019/2020: **£6526**
- Carrying forward into next year: **£4386**
- Expenses include: Grid Newsletter; Green the Grid which was given £578 and Coronation Gardens was given £384. Charles explained that SGRA gives funds to help local functions, for example Window Wanderland which was given £100.
- The Spring Tea Party was cancelled so no costs

c. Crime *Clive Williams*

Clive reported the latest detailed crime figures for Southfields covering March 2020. Detailed crime figures (including break down by street and type of offence) are now available on the SGRA website: www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk/crime-on-the-grid/

Key points:

Reported crimes in March for Southfields Ward were down by 2 on February's figures (124 in March, 126 in February); however, there was a substantial increase in crimes on the Grid and Pirbright Road, from 20 in February to 35 in March.

Once again there were more vehicle crimes reported than any other offences with 12, up one from February and making up almost a third of crime reported in the SGRA area. All other offences reported were five or under. Revelstoke Road has the highest at 5.

April's figures are not yet out; the SNT meeting on 23rd May suggested they will be lower.

d. Communications *Charles Runcie*

The SGRA currently has:

- **1488 Facebook followers**
- **402 Twitter followers**
- Website: the Alliance info and other pages are updated daily. **Up to 100 people per day are currently accessing the site**
- **Nextdoor: regular postings to 2056 people in 1402 households (58% of their total)** are registered for the Southfields Grid neighbourhood

- 'Grid News' newsletter is always well received. A 'Lockdown Special' is being published in the first week of June and will include stories, interviews, photos etc about how the Grid has faced the lockdown. A copy will go to the Archive Centre in Battersea.

4. **Front Garden Awards:** *Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty, Chair of judging panel*

Amelia confirmed that the Awards will go ahead and take place from **27th June – 11th July**. There will be gold, silver and bronze awards and the tree bases awards.

Spectacular Sunflowers will take place in August. 300 envelopes have been taken already; Amelia thanked GtG with whom the Front Garden Awards works closely. She emphasised that these events help gardens on the Grid to be more attractive, improve wellbeing, help wildlife and she made the point that you live longer if you garden! All these contribute to sound ecological environment.

Details on website and Facebook and an item will be in the Newsletter.

5. **Local parks update:**

a) **Friends of Wimbledon Park:** *Nick Steiner, Chair, FoWP*

Full details can be found on: <https://www.southfieldsgrid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SGRA-2020-05-26-Newsslider-FOWP.pdf>

- Nick clarified that the Park closing time is 8pm. Details can sometimes be incorrect as Merton tends to change them without warning.
- The key current issue is the safety aspect of the dam holding back Wimbledon Park Lake. See attachment for details of this very important issue
- Toilets: are part of a bigger plan for development of the café; see attachment
- Revelstoke Rd car park entrance: a planning application has been put in so the community garden provides an attractive entrance
- Damage to field: FoWP are working with Ed Gretton on this. A FoI request has been refused to find out profits etc. Nick has appealed.
- BBQs are an annual issue and guidance from Merton is changeable.
- Horse Close Wood car park: will cost £40k to resurface & is currently being submitted for a Wandsworth Planning application
- The table tennis table will be coming out soon

Discussion: Katrina Ure explained that people have been locked in with baby/bikes etc late in the evening and that turnstile appears to have been closed? Nick will check this; it is unusual. There is no sign on WPR saying when the park closes and there are currently no warnings in place.

Leonie explained she is in constant contact with Caroline in Merton so residents can send queries to her and she will pass them on. There are currently problems with Idverde across all parks/boroughs etc due to staff being furloughed/sick etc. BBQs are causing a problem across boroughs and this is under discussion.

b) **Friends of Coronation Gardens:** *Susannah Perry-Greene, Vice Chair, FoCG*

- FoCG have been told by Wandsworth there will be minimal maintenance by them in the Gardens this year. Local residents have been requested to water flowers and trees
- The long-term aim is to make the gardens a pleasant place. There are lots of plans: opening the playground; equipment checks; the back area to be redesigned as herb garden for local schools; repaving paths (an application to Local Heritage is in action)
- Anti-social behaviour is down
- On a more personal note, Susannah is offering 1 hour of her graphic design time for free to all small businesses. People can contact her direct on info@perry-greenedesign.com

6. **Encouraging small businesses:** *Gerard Sebastian, Vice Chair, SGRA*

Gerard outlined the history to this idea, which started with Street Reps who helped a local musician. Gill Habershon has asked Southfields Business Forum members to accept the offer to list SBF members on the website. The next edition of Grid News (early June) will include an invitation to all small businesses to do so, with details.

7. **Green the Grid update:** *Nina Kowalska, Chair, GTG*

- The planned Spring events were cancelled due to Covid 19 but GtG has noticed an incredible enthusiasm around nature and gardening. They receive at least 12 emails a day asking questions, sending pictures of tree bases, front garden planting, pots etc and this is heart-warming
- GtG is most active on Twitter and Nextdoor
- They have been involved in the 'Close to Nature' campaign. Ideas such as putting labels on trees and talking to the new Tree Officer at Enable are under way
- GtG are very pleased that Tooting Transition Town contacted them regarding planting tree bases and have given them support.

8. **Any Other Business**

a) **Iain Tattum** (St Barnabas Church) updated the meeting on the current activities at the church:

- They are hosting the SW Fruit and Veg organisation – www.swfruitandveg.com - (which supplies communities and charities such as Help the Aged) for 3 weeks. They are hoping to run low cost fruit and veg fairs for rest of summer. Most food from the Food Bank has been going to Riversdale and Albemarle Schools, around 25-30 parcels per week.
- About 30 small businesses, eg NCT/dance classes are based at church hall; they are beginning to think how they might start to open and are hoping to return gradually from July onwards.
- Supporting a writing competition for pupils at local schools, with a nature theme, in conjunction with Lucy Jones. They are hoping to particularly encourage children who living in flats, multi home occupancies etc. So far only 10 submissions but are eagerly awaiting submissions from Southfields Academy and Riversdale School. The aim is to publish writings.

c) **Sucheta Samant from Southfields Library** told the meeting about the Wandsworth Librarians Facebook page. She has been folding withdrawn books and using them to publicise e-resources and social media. She demonstrated one that says 'FACEBOOK' and another that says 'PRESS READER' and encourages people to look at website and Southfields Twitter page: https://twitter.com/Better_SFLib

9. **Date of Next Open Meeting** – Provisionally Tuesday 21st or 28th July, via Zoom, time tba

Appendix (i)

SGRA Planning Notes May 2020

The Council is still taking planning applications and the Planning Committee is holding virtual meetings to conduct its business.

There are no further developments on the revised plan for 235a-237 Wimbledon Park Road (2019/1231). There are objections from the shops on Replingham Road who will lose access at the back.

The application to create a basement at 7 Heythorp (2020/1125) has been approved as being within guidelines. However, a roof extension at 21 Elsenham (2020/0838) has been refused as being too big.

Out of area but there is an application to develop a further storey on Coleman Court in Kimber Road to create 20 1 bed flats. They also want to demolish the house that is there and create 3 2 bed flats. (2020/0530) There are 90 objections to this.

There has been a further application for Bank House, (2020/1466) the old Nat West site, which is a smaller development than that refused before. The design is in sympathy with the current appearance.

Local notes

Work on the improvements has started again and they are at the pavement area near the traffic lights in Replingham Road. The one-way part of Elsenham Street is blocked at Replingham Road.

Smugglers Way is open again for household waste, but restrictions apply. The Council are now taking garden waste but are encouraging composting. They are distributing more recycling sacks.

Wandsworth has received funding for ecargo bikes.

Parking enforcement is back.

The Council is introducing some new measures to create more space for people to move around. These include the potential closure of some roads, widening pavements and introducing 'one way' walking systems on others, and improving cycling routes. They are considering using barriers to widen footways and increase space for pedestrians, particularly outside shops and transport hubs; at bus stops where people queue; and to widen pedestrian refuges and crossings (both formal and informal) so that people can use them safely while maintaining the two-metre rule.

They are proposing a further extension of 20mph speed limits on the borough's B roads and to also press TfL to lower speed limits on their strategic "red route" network of busy trunk roads, as well as looking at extending the bus lane operating hours to 24/7. We are hoping that Merton Road will be included in this.

Appendix (ii) – Attendance List

Name	Role
Charles Runcie	SGRA Executive Committee - Chairman
Karen Gregory	SGRA Executive Committee
Serena Potter	SGRA Executive Committee – Secretary
Clive Williams	SGRA Executive Committee
Margaret Brett	SGRA Executive Committee
Ann Kerr	SGRA Executive Committee
Chris Puleston	SGRA Executive Committee – Treasurer
Amelia Obertelli-Moriarty	SGRA Executive Committee
Gerard Sebastian	SGRA Executive Committee
Becky Watts	Grid Mummies/Grid Alliance
Fleur Anderson	MP for Putney, Roehampton & Southfields
Cllr Guy Humphreys	
Cllr Ed Gretton	
Leonie Cooper	London Assembly Member
Nick Steiner	FoWP

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Susannah Perry-Greene	FoCG
Nina Kowalska	Green the Grid
Ian Tattum	St Barnabas Church
Cllr. Terry Walsh	
John Habershon	
Gill Habershon	Southfields Business Forum
Di Brennan	
Rosemary Langford	
Peter Jackson	
Sucheta Samant	Southfields Library
Mary Buckley	The Gardens RA
Trevor Hawes	
Cllr Kim Caddy	
Katrina Ure	
Aidan Magill	
Ian Simpson	Chair, WPRA
Shiraz Mehrundatoo	
Richard Silverstein	
Gordon Springett	
Francoise Cluzeau	
Janice Adamson	
Christiaan Moll	
<i>Downi</i>	
<i>Mathr1</i>	
<i>Nicky</i>	
<i>Lenovo YT3-X50F</i>	