

Southfields Grid Residents' Association Executive Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 28th April 2020 via Zoom

Members Present: Charles, Chris, Clive, Amelia, Gerard, Serena, Ann, Margaret and Karen. Becky Watts (Grid Mummies/Grid Alliance Co-ordinator), Ian Tattum (Vicar of St Barnabas), Cllr Guy Humphreys and Sue Wixley were present at the start for the Grid Alliance item.

Actions from last meeting	Owner(s)	Status
Set up a web page for sources of help during the Coronavirus pandemic	Sue W	Completed
Discuss ideas for next Newsletter	Charles, Karen and Philippa	Completed
New Actions	Owner (s)	Status
Contact Nina at GtG to feedback re: Parklets Contact Sidonie Forrest-Brown to suggest a collaborative meeting be set up	Charles	Open
Review method of collecting subscriptions	All	Open
Front Garden Awards decision	Amelia	Open
Map out relationship between SGRA and FOWP, GtG, SBF and FoCG	Charles and Serena	Open
Report back to Cllr Terry Walsh regarding Granville Road Traffic Experiment	Charles	Open
Progress membership database solution and set up Mailchimp. Liaise with Richard Silverstein	Serena	Open

1. Last Meeting – Actions and Matters Arising (discussed after item 2)

- Discussion on reviewing the method of collecting subscriptions to be kept on hold until the next meeting
- Front Garden Awards: Amelia fed back that the judges are keen to carry on. A date for the judging has not yet been confirmed. There is a query about whether the sunflower seeds distribution and competition can go ahead.

2. Grid Alliance Update

WhatsApp Volunteer Group: Becky gave feedback. In general, the amount of action on the WhatsApp group is quieter since the last meeting:

- One volunteer has offered to take all requests from one pharmacy, so these now do not go on the group request. There continue to be requests for other prescription collections, shopping, dog walking and occasional requests eg hearing aid batteries, food bank collections, turning electricity back on etc.
- Feedback from people is that it is a reassuring service and very much welcomed
- One disconcerting request was received (referred via another channel); the person was potentially violent and had a police record; Becky contacted an appropriate source and it was easily sorted out. No other difficulties.
- A few requests have come from outside the Grid, generally through pharmacies, as GPs are giving out details. A group from St Georges and a social worker had made contact; Becky used a local friend rather than put them on the group and this worked well.
- Andrew Dunley's support was particularly mentioned and thanked for his role.

Other points:

- Ann thanked Becky and emphasised how good it was to see Grid Mummies having such visibility in the community; Amelia endorsed Ann's thanks.
- Gerard suggested considering a 'light' version of the Grid Alliance in the future when the urgent need has subsided. Guy agreed but suggested seeing how things develop. Becky agreed and suggested discussing this with volunteers later

Guy gave feedback from **Wandsworth Council's work**: the Grid Alliance experience reflects what is happening with the council helpline. The number of calls has dropped; Monday morning & Fri afternoons are a little busier.

St Barnabas Church:

- Ian has been recommending volunteers to Becky.
- The church has been doing more with Riversdale School, including giving out an average of 7 parcels to families weekly. He emphasised links with schools and suggested he perhaps contact other schools to see who might need help?
- Ian has spoken to a contact, Mike, about the possibility of providing fresh vegetable supplies direct from market, using the Church as a base to deliver locally and potentially to develop a low-cost community shop from the Church Hall. Guy & Becky to liaise with Ian.

'Furlonteer': Becky outlined www.furlonteer.com which puts furloughed people who wish to offer skills such as finance, HR, social media, fundraising in touch with volunteer groups/charities. If we know of any charities who would appreciate such offers or people who would like to offer skills, please let Becky know via team@furlonteer.com. Please generally spread the word.

3. Grid News – 'Lockdown' edition

- A draft list of potential contributions and articles was circulated before the meeting. There is some very interesting content, including a piece by the owners of Lupo Bros
- Expected to be around 8 pages. Possible publication date: end of May/early June

4. Green the Grid/Parklets

Charles had previously circulated an email exchange with Sidonie Forrest-Brown regarding the recent Green the Grid query about reinstating a parklet area outside Boots/Cook. In summary, she explained that it 'may be possible to absorb some changes at this late stage' but that further discussion regarding detail is still to be held.

GtG have conducted a survey; Amelia gave a brief summary of the headline results as she understood them, broadly that out of 285 responses, 97% supported the council making the area as green as possible. Other statistics included 91% were supportive of the parklet reinstatement and that 90% of those who drive supported a parklet.

A general discussion regarding the SGRA position elicited the following points:

- Detailed discussion regarding the methodology used by both GtG and SBF (Southfields Business Forum) in their collection of views showed that there were discrepancies in the reporting which are difficult for SGRA to follow. For example, that business support both views: for and against a parklet
- A suggestion was made that a meeting with those concerned could be convened, with an aim to reaching a compromise. There was acknowledgement that there is a general agreement that bringing more greenery into the area is beneficial.

- The need to support businesses and maintain our position
- Planters have been requested as part of the Plan
- The Council may consider temporary structures in future
- Chris will send information round via a parklet website. The idea is to put parklets into communities, ie into parking spaces alongside roads and not necessarily on a main road. Grid roads other than Replingham could be a possibility.

Committee agreed that Charles will contact Nina and explain the SGRA are not planning to change the original position but have written to council, who, with professional knowledge and expertise, will ultimately weigh up all the evidence to get conclusion.

5. Relationships with other local organisations

4 organisations – FOWP, GtG, SBF & FoCG

Discussion included the historical context of how the different organisations came into being and elicited that some areas require further understanding in order to clarify the relationships.

Serena and Charles to do this and put on website and other appropriate communication links

6. FOWP – Amelia

The Big Top: The Chair of the Gardens Committee wrote to Wandsworth Council about the Big Top being in situ (on the Wandsworth part of the park) for too long over the Christmas and New Year period. Wandsworth have responded and have said that Merton will need to ask for planning permission for any structures which are up for longer than 28 days.

Paddling Pool: No update on the paddling pool situation. We have asked, but no responses have been forthcoming.

Toilets: A survey of the sewage pipe size by Thames Water revealed that they are small and hence the frequent blockages. The £40,000 which was supposedly available to refurbish and upgrade the toilets is now in limbo as Merton Council have indicated that they wish to spend that money on asphaltting the car park at the Wimbledon Park Road entrance. It is anticipated that this would bring them an income of circa £20,000 per annum. Cllr Ed Gretton has requested, yet again, that this money be used for the toilets

State of the grounds: The state of the grounds continues to cause concern. Despite much lobbying no re-seeding or restoration of the grounds has taken place. The Pines & Needles area will be reseeded soon. Sickness levels have been high both at Merton Council and Idverde which may account for the lack of any recent action. The Chair of The Gardens Committee felt that enough time had been given to restore the grounds. Given that there has been very little response from Merton Council she will look into putting an official complaint to the Ombudsman.

Covid-19: Various proposals had been put forward as to how to make the park safer during lockdown. The idea that, for example, the stadium might be put aside for use by joggers was not accepted by Merton Council. Johnny Perkins (AELTC) has been asked whether the golf club grounds might be opened up. He said AELTC have set up a 'Force for Good' initiative and are looking at ways in which the golf course could be used by the community eg for NHS workers. No definite answer was given but he said that AELTC would be consulting with the community.

Wimbledon Neighbourhood Planning Area: This group has a forum and will, in time, set up a Neighbourhood Plan for Wimbledon. This in turn is intended to give Wimbledon residents and businesses a voice in setting up planning policy in Wimbledon. This only includes

Wimbledon (currently) which means that the Wandsworth part of the park would not be included as 'jumping boundaries' makes the task more difficult. It is another layer of planning and FOWP are not too sure how this would work if only part of the park was included. Nor how being a part of this group would work as it is currently rather vague. Charles signed himself up on behalf of SGRA.

The National Grid: They will be taking out all the underground equipment from the glade area (near the railway line) of Horse Close Wood. This may include significant digging from the Revelstoke Road car park towards the wood. These works were originally planned for May but have been delayed until possibly June/July

LB Merton Flood Study Stage 2 (Wimbledon Park dam): a commentary on this unpublished report by Dr Dawson was circulated following discussion at a recent FOWP meeting. The commentary is a summary of Option 5 and called 'The Capability Brown Design'. Dr Dawson felt the Merton Engineer's options were not viable so he and Martin Sumpton, Vice Chair of the FOWP, have put forward an alternative proposal.

7. Granville Road traffic experiment

Cllr Terry Walsh has contacted us to say that Wandsworth Council will be reviewing the experiment and are minded to make it permanent. Their view is that it is a qualified success. The SGRA committee view is that we are pleased if it helps schools and will await the result.

8. Executive Update

Planning Notes – Margaret

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.

There is an application to create a basement at 7 Heythorp 2020/1125. This house has already had a rear and loft extension and this will create further disturbance to the neighbours. However, the Council can only consider what is visible at ground level.

The Council is still taking planning applications and the Planning Committee held a virtual meeting to conduct its business.

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)

Work on the improvements is in abeyance at the moment.

Tideway is gradually opening up work in the park. Its staff are not using public transport. They have issued an invitation to a public drop-in Skype session for 5 May from 3-5pm.

Finance – Chris

- No new information since the last meeting

Crime Update/Stats – Clive

- The latest figures are not out yet
- The organisation of Police UK has changed so information may be provided differently in future
- Information via Nextdoor is that parcel theft is continuing as is car theft, but it seems less.

Friends of Coronation Gardens update - Charles

- Winter Wondergarden, 3.30-5pm on Saturday December 11th will need to be reviewed
- Details are on the website about first year's activities and AGM. The finances are in a good state
- An organisation called Wandsworth Green Space Forum has 9 local gardens represented. They meet on a quarterly basis and Charles has attended. The next meeting is the first week in May

9. AOB

- a) **Proposal by Gerard to make Grid residents aware of the small businesses operated and run by individuals from their homes in the Grid.** All in agreement. Karen and Clive offered to help Gerard to take it forward. Item to be included in next edition of the Newsletter. Chris recommended a clear definition of 'small businesses' and to include all, eg artists

b) Update on Database

Mailchimp will be used to manage the database. All streets details to go to Richard Silverstein who has kindly offered to help to set it up. Serena to manage database via Mailchimp and liaise with Chris and Richard

- c) Gerard wrote to GtG (Nina) to ask if any contact was made with nurseries regarding excess plant stock. Amelia to find out the outcome

Date of next meeting:

26th May 12.45 - 2.15 pm instead of AGM. However, this is currently under review and a remote AGM may be organised.