

Minutes of Heatherside Ward Residents Association Meeting

(10th July 2017 7.45 p.m. Pine Ridge)

Present

Committee members - Kirsty North, Caroline Hibberd, Katherine Sargent, Rev. Larry Bain
Borough and County Councillors - Jonathan Lytle, Paul Ilnicki, Ian Cullen, Edward Hawkins
Approximately 30 local residents

Agenda Items

1) Welcome and Introductions

Kirsty welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, especially those who have not attended a meeting before. She mentioned that we have recently held a successful Quiz evening for which we had received good feedback.

2) Update from the treasurer on fundraising events

Caroline gave an update on the fundraising events we have held this year. These raised the following amounts (after costs such as the hire of the Community centre have been deducted)

Pop up coffee shop - £75

Table top sale - £120

Quiz - £140

Caroline explained that HWRA need to raise funds to allow us to host events such as the Christmas tree light switch on. Just to pay for the insurance to cover events like this we need at least £400 a year. In previous years we have been lucky enough to receive grants from Surrey County Council and anonymous donations to fund the tree and lights. We have also been able to use the Church's insurance to cover the insurance. However this isn't something which can be relied on in future.

Caroline was asked about the possibility of sponsorship by local businesses for the Christmas tree. We have already been very lucky to have the support of several local companies in previous years. However, if anyone is involved with a business or company who would like to offer sponsorship please contact us at heathersidewra@gmail.com

A number of suggestions were put forward as potential ways to raise funds. Events such as a bingo evening or beetle drive seemed popular though there are potential issues with licensing

laws for events such as bingo. Similarly raffles can be tricky legally as is passing a collection bucket round at events. Katherine Sargent suggested the possibility of crowdfunding. This seemed a popular idea and would allow anyone who wanted to contribute to get involved. Andy Ward suggested that a quiz after an HWRA meeting might be fun. The committee will consider this idea but would also welcome suggestions from anyone else for fundraising activities.

3) Cheylesmore and Heatherside Play Area Redevelopments

At the last meeting Nicky Sherlow from Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) gave a presentation on the planned redevelopment at Cheylesmore Park play area. Kirsty has been in touch with Nicky for an update. The council are currently waiting to receive quotes and proposed play equipment schemes from various companies. These are due to be finished by the 31st July and then there will be further consultation with residents before a decision is made. The works are planned to be carried out in the autumn.

Kirsty reported that work has recently been carried out in the main Heatherside park. The tunnel has now been covered with artificial grass which will hopefully be a lot more hard wearing and significantly less messy than the original turf. This seems to have been well received by residents.

Graham Tapper reported that the play area in Maguire Drive is still inaccessible to residents of the new Ridgewood (Heathlands) development. This was raised at our last meeting in April and despite developers putting a gate in this is still blocked by a fence preventing access. Apparently the council have put the work to create a path to the fence out to tender and are waiting on this before the issue can be resolved. Kirsty agreed to ask Nicky Sherlow for more details on this.

4) Heatherside Signage

Len Williams, a resident of Heatherside presented his proposals for signage for Heatherside. This was briefly discussed at the last meeting but due to lack of time we had asked him to save the full details for this meeting. Len feels that Heatherside is presently invisible, with only a couple of signs to the church being the sole signage to the area. He believes Heatherside has many of the characteristics of a village such as a church, shopping area, pub, school and Post Office but that we are regarded as merely a suburb of Camberley. He feels that a vibrant community of 6000+ people should have its own identity and appropriate signage to reflect this.

Len has been in communication with various organisations to try and enable signs to be erected to identify Heatherside to members of the public. These have included Skanska who have

agreed to fund signage and Surrey County Council (SCC) who would be responsible for allowing the placement and type of signage.

Unfortunately Len has run into some difficulties in getting SCC to agree to the wording he would like. The suggestion of signs saying 'Welcome to Heatherside Village' were rejected because Heatherside is not a village. He then proposed 'Heatherside welcomes careful drivers' but this was also rejected as this is considered a boundary sign and therefore not appropriate in Heatherside.

Len has written to David Hodge (Leader of SCC) and asked for support. His response (full letter in Appendix A) was that there is no need for safety signs, such as those welcoming careful drivers, to be placed in the area as there have not been accidents or injuries to justify it.

Len suggested that this left us with options such as a sign saying 'Welcome to Camberley - Heatherside' or that we should perhaps look into the possibility of trying to become recognised as a village or urban village such as Poundbury in Dorset.

It was suggested that perhaps it would be nice to place a sign on the playing fields next to the WI centenary tree in the style of the village signs presently seen in Deepcut, Frimley Green and Mytchett. An image of a large redwood tree was suggested as a possible suitable emblem for Heatherside. This would tie in with the large sculpture outside the council offices. Other suggestions for signs were made including 'Heatherside - Home of the giant redwood' and the more humorous 'Heatherside - home of the giant potholes'!

Len has agreed to do some further investigation into these possibilities and will report back at the next meeting.

5) Concerns regarding the state of the roads

Peter Ludlow spoke to the meeting regarding his concerns about the potholed state of the roads locally. Many people agreed with the points he raised. He is particularly concerned about the Maultway where there are huge areas with patches missing from the road surface. He highlighted that these are a particular hazard to small cars and cycles and in many cases road users are having to go round rather than through the potholes. He believes that sooner or later there will be a serious accident as a result and asked whether it would take a fatality before the County Council acted to repair them.

Other residents also complained about the inefficient way potholes are dealt with and the poor quality of any repairs which are carried out. Under the current system potholes which have been reported are measured and marked if they are considered large enough to warrant repair. Other smaller holes are ignored. This means certain areas of roads, for example the Edgmoor Road/Old Bisley Road roundabout are continually being patched but that these repairs do not last. Surely it would be more efficient to resurface the whole roundabout area properly so that

the surface does would last and not need constant visits, measuring and patching?

Edward Hawkins (our newly elected County Councillor) agreed with everything that was said and explained that he is trying to get the pothole issue addressed. He said he felt the state of roads in Surrey was abysmal and a disgrace. He explained that the government give grants for the repair of roads but this is based on an amount per mile. It does not take into account the intensity of road use. As a consequence Surrey which have 100 million miles travelled on our roads receives a lower grant than Hampshire because we have fewer miles of roads.

6) Community Safety Update

Unfortunately our PCSO's were unable to make it to the meeting, they are presently covering 6 areas and are extremely busy.

If you need to contact the local PCSO's contact details for Vince and Sian can be found on our website <http://heathersidewra.weebly.com/contacts.html>

7) Councillor Updates

a) County Councillor

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Edward Hawkins explained to the residents that he was very concerned by current proposal to reduce Household Waste and Recycling centres as cost saving measure by SCC. Under the presently proposed scheme the site at Swift Lane in Bagshot would be closed and the Camberley site at Wilton Road would be open only 5 days a week. In addition the allowance of non household waste would be abolished. Residents would also be required to prove they were residents of Surrey to use the centres.

Edward urged residents to respond to the consultation which can be found here and which is open until the 7th August.

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/e-i-directorate-programme-group/shaping-surreys-community-recycling-centres-1/>

Edward was asked whether he could give any figures on flytipping. According to SHBC in 2015/2016 there were an average of 22 fly tips a month rising to 24 a month in 2016/2017. Average tonnage was 14.96 in 2015/2016 and 7.75 in 2016/2017. However there were no figures available on whether the number of fly tips on private or MOD land had increased.

Trees

Edward said he had been invited to attend a meeting later this month with Bovis Homes to try

and resolve the ongoing issue of tree and shrub maintenance. A tree work schedule has been drawn up by Bovis but it was felt to be incomplete by the tree officers at SHBC so it needed to be revised. The ultimate intention is that the borough council take over the responsibility of these areas in exchange for a settlement of money from Bovis. However, the land needs to be in a suitable state before it is handed over. Edward said that all new developments now have a clause which prevents a recurrence of a situation like this in the future.

Social Care

Edward highlighted the huge financial challenge being faced by SCC in funding social care. There is a particular issue of children being 'dumped' at Cobham Services. Many of these are from outside of the UK with no background information or paperwork. SCC has to foot the bill to look after these and other young people and adults at an enormous cost. It is difficult to place these children in foster homes as they require specialist support. Consequently they are placed in residential homes which can cost up to £200,000 a year per child.

Dalston Close Issue

Nigel Ralphs once again raised the issue of the keep clear sign which has recently been painted on the turning circle in Dalston Close. Edward explained that he was aware of the signage and the difficulties it is causing some residents. He is putting pressure on SCC to get it removed and will be in contact with Mr Ralphs once he has further news.

Overgrown vegetation

Several members of the audience asked what could be done about overhanging trees and bushes, in particular trees overhanging the footpath on Old Bisley Road near to the footpath cutting through to Maguire Drive. Kirsty replied that the best way was to report them online and that she has been reporting a lot of areas recently. Kirsty expressed her frustration at the way these reports are dealt with. She explained she had seen the officer from SCC inspecting an area which had been reported and asked him to look at another bush which was causing a problem. However he refused and would therefore have to make another visit to the same site at another time once it had been reported. This is ridiculously inefficient and Kirsty asked Edward to see if this can be raised with SCC as an issue.

The link to report any potholes, overgrown trees or bushes on SCC/Highway land is

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/do-it-online/report-it-online>

b) Borough Councillors

The councillors were asked to give any updates they had but also particularly on the lack of progress on the Wellingtonia Avenue, proposed Public Space Protection Orders and on their understanding of Contingency plans affecting Surrey Heath in the event of a disaster.

Wellingtonia Avenue

Jonathan Lytle spoke about the Wellingtonia Avenue. He said he had received information from SHBC that there were further planned works to be carried out over the next few weeks to clear the sides of the path, flailing to be carried out in mid September and a planned bulb planting exercise in the autumn where local residents may be able to get involved.

Phil Green (the Heatherside tree warden) and other residents spoke out about their frustration with the lack of progress so far. It seems as though the work had been started and not finished and while SHBC keep promising that it will be completed this has not happened and the whole area remains a mess. Phil highlighted that there are still large tree trunks to be removed, other debris and tree stumps which need grinding out. He is angry that SHBC have not delivered what they promised.

Katherine Sargent read out an extract from an email received by HWRA in March from Daniel Harrison who is the head of Greenspaces at SHBC. This was in response to our complaint that the work seemed to have been abandoned.

“Regarding your request for an update on the work plan for Wellingtonia Avenue I have been informed that our contractors (Glendale) will be on site for a day this week and the following two weeks to clear any remaining debris. I have also been informed that Glendale have already carried out some flailing of the bamboo which had overgrown from a private garden.

Moving forward, a schedule has been agreed with Glendale which will include flailing the area twice a year, applying weed spray along the fence lines twice a year, a minimum of 10 x grass cuts per year and monthly litter picks.”

Clearly this promised work hasn't been completed and 4 months later the area still doesn't seem to be any closer to being finished to the standard we were told it would be.

In addition, we were also told that posts would be installed at the Inglewood end of the avenue to prevent incursions onto the land, these still aren't in place.

Jonathan agreed that he would liaise with the relevant people at SHBC to find out why there had been a delay in completing the works and also find out the timetable for when further work will be carried out. He will let HWRA know when he finds out and we will publish any

information we receive for residents.

There was also discussion about the possible relocation of dog waste bins to less prominent locations. One resident asked whether the posts to which the bins were attached would be removed if this was the case, citing an example of a bin which had been relocated some years ago but the post to which it was attached had been left behind.

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's)

Katherine Sargent asked the councillors if they could provide any updates or clarification regarding the PSPO's planned for Heatherside. There have been a number of discussions on Facebook groups locally particularly around the proposed dog control orders covering not only Heatherside park but all the parks in Surrey Heath. Unfortunately the councillors were unaware of the complaints that had been made. They were unable to provide any further detail or information about this or the other PSPO's covering alcohol and psychoactive substances use and antisocial behaviour.

SHBC are still carrying out consultation on these zones and residents are urged to read the proposed measures and fill in the survey here

<http://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/council/consultations/public-spaces-protection-orders-final-consultation>

Contingency Planning

Gordon Whiteman, a local resident, asked the county and borough councillors if they were aware of the contingency plans held by the County and Borough Councils and whether they knew what role they would play in the event of a civil emergency. The councillors were unaware of the specific details of the plan but committed to finding out more about any plans in place, any role they might have in these situations and how emergencies of this type might impact the residents they are representing.

Following the terrible tragedy at Grenfell Tower in June residents asked the councillors to find out specifically how emergencies such as forest fires, a plane crash and potential terrorist attacks might be dealt with. It was agreed this subject would form an agenda item next time.

Communication

A number of residents questioned why the councillors seem so reluctant to communicate information to them, especially outside of the quarterly HWRA meetings. Cllr Ian Cullen in particular was asked why he never had any updates to share with the audience. He declined to comment and said that he had nothing to say. Kirsty expressed her frustration with this

situation and asked if he really felt that it was appropriate to be in a position where he was elected to represent us and yet did not appear to want to communicate to or engage with us in any way? He once again declined to make any kind of comment. Kirsty said she felt there was little benefit to him being at the meeting and asked him several times to leave as there was no need for him to stay any further. Cllr Cullen left the meeting.

8) AOB

Litter bins

Graham Tapper raised the issue of litter on Heatherside. He explained that in the whole of Heatherside there are fewer litter bins than there are in one street in Camberley town centre. There is clearly a big litter problem on Heatherside, especially at the recreation ground and Graham feels HWRA should start a campaign to get more bins, especially as SHBC are in the process of securing a new waste contract. Kirsty suggested that Graham might like to head up a campaign with our support.

Maultway Speed Limit

Edward Hawkins mentioned that there was consideration being given to reducing the speed limit from 50mph to 40mph on the Maultway and asked what the general opinion was on this. The room seemed quite evenly split with many supporting and many rejecting the idea. Graham Tapper pointed out that statistics show that most crashes are not as the result of speed but of driver error. He does not feel reducing the speed would make a difference. He feels the most useful work that could be done would be to create a roundabout at the junction of the Maultway and Old Bisley Road as there have been a number of nasty crashes here and the visibility of the junction is compromised by the road layout. A number of audience members also mentioned the hazard caused by lack of visibility at this junction due to overgrown plants on the verge, this has already been reported to SCC.

Fun Fair

Katherine Sargent reported that HWRA had been contacted by a resident who felt the hiring of the playing fields for a the fun fair in the summer and at Halloween was inappropriate and should not be allowed. He has asked HWRA to petition SHBC to have it stopped. However, previous requests to residents for feedback have drawn no other negative feeling towards it. None of the residents at the meeting felt it should be stopped either. Therefore HWRA will inform the resident that general feeling among those we have contacted is that the fair is a positive rather than a negative thing.

9) Date of the next meeting

The next meeting is yet to be confirmed as we would like to avoid clashing with SHBC and SCC meetings where possible so that the councillors are able to attend our meetings.

The next meeting will be our AGM where we will be electing a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Please let us know if you would like to stand for election in any of these posts.

The date and call for agenda items will be published in advance on Facebook, the HWRA website and by email to those on our contact list. If you'd like to be added to this please contact us at heathersidewra@gmail.com. Please let your friends and neighbours know about the association too.

Actions from this meeting

Kirsty North

To speak to Nicky Sherlow about the gate between the Ridgewood Development and Maguire Drive play area.

Len Williams

To carry out further investigations into the feasibility of a 'village green' style sign near the WI Centenary tree.

Edward Hawkins

To speak to SCC again about the pothole issue, especially on The Maultway and liaise with Peter Ludlow. Also to complain about the inefficient way potholes and overgrown vegetation etc are dealt with by SCC.

To liaise with SCC over the issue of road painting in Dalston Close.

Jonathan Lytle

To speak to officers at SHBC about the works on Wellingtonia Avenue and the current plan to finish the works there, also liaising with Phil Green.

Graham Tapper

To consider the possibility of a campaign to increase the number of litter bins on Heatherside

All Councilors (Borough and County)

To find out more about the SCC/SHBC Emergency Plans and explain their roles at the next meeting

All residents

Review and respond to consultations on Recycling Centres and proposed PSPO's

To send any suggestions for fundraising ideas through to HWRA

Appendix A - Letter from David Hodge to Len Williams regarding Heatherside signage

RE: Road Safety Signs for the Heatherside Ward

DC

David Hodge CLR <david.hodge@surreycc.gov.uk>

Reply

Wed 21/06, 17:49

You

Flag for follow up. Start by 21 June 2017. Due by 28 June 2017.

You replied on 21/06/2017 21:32.

Dear Mr Williams,

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposed signage for Heatherside.

The type of signs you are requesting are traditionally referred to as boundary signs. Although these signs often have messages such as "Please drive carefully", they are not primarily a safety sign and would only be used in conjunction with other measures should it be used to improve safety. A brief review of personal injury collisions on the main roads area (Cumberland Road, Edgemoor Rd and Matilda Avenue) shows that there were no personal injuries between January 2012 and Dec 2016. Although the data does not include damage only collisions, it suggests that safety is not enough of an issue to justify a system of safety measures beyond those already in place.

Surrey County Council's current policy on the use of highway signs allows the use of boundary signs only at boundaries to the county, any boroughs or districts, to an area of outstanding natural beauty, or to a town or village. With Heatherside a suburb of Camberley rather than a village of its own right, boundary signs would not be permitted under the current policy.

I am sorry that we cannot support your plans for Heatherside in the way that you currently wish. However, we hope that your plans for Heatherside are successful.

Yours sincerely,

David Hodge CBE
Leader of the Council

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