

Minutes of Heatherside Ward Residents Association Meeting (17th April 2018 - Heatherside Community Centre)

Present

Committee members - Kirsty North, Caroline Hibberd, Katherine Sargent, Larry Bain

Heatherside County Councillor - Edward Hawkins

Heatherside Borough Councillors - Paul Ilnicki, Jonathan Lytle

Mary Keys - Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity Trustee

John Skipper - Surrey Roads petition organiser

Len Williams - Heatherside Pillar coordinator

Maureen Hume - Camberley Alzheimer Cafe

Approximately 40 local residents

Apologies received from Ian Cullen, Borough Councillor

Agenda Items

1) Welcome and Introductions

Kirsty introduced the committee, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

2) Chair's Update

Kirsty gave a brief update on outstanding issues from previous meetings. She confirmed that there had been some unfortunate delays in the works to Cheylesmore Park but that it was now underway and would hopefully be completed soon. There was a brief discussion about the information that had been provided to local residents about the park redevelopments. Kirsty confirmed that all the houses surrounding the park had received information directly about the work.

Kirsty also gave an update on the Heather Ridge Arcade planning application which had been discussed at some length at the previous meeting. Since the last meeting the application has been withdrawn though indications had been given that it might be revised and resubmitted in a new form. The previous application had received a good number of objections both from local residents and organisations such as Natural England.

3) Planned Events

On Friday 20th HWRA are hosting a Quiz night at Heatherside Community Centre. We have a number of teams already booked but there are still some spaces available for anyone who would like to join us. The cost is £5 per person with teams of between 4 and 6. Kirsty explained that events like this enable us to raise funds so we can host events such as the Christmas celebrations. Both this and the previous quiz we hosted have proved quite popular so we may hold another later in the year. We are still interested to hear if anyone has any ideas for other events we could hold. Kirsty explained that we may run another Table Top sale if there is interest and potentially combine it with one of the Pop Up Coffee Shops.

The next Pop Up Coffee shop is this Saturday in the Community Centre, 10-11.30. The event will be raising funds for the Charlie Grainger Fund. This is a monthly community run event raising funds for a different charity or good cause each month. All are welcome to come along and enjoy a drink and a cake and meet other local residents.

Graham Tapper is taking part in Run Frimley 2018 raising funds for the Frimley Park Hospital Stroke Appeal. Anyone who would like to sponsor him can do so at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/graham-tapper3>

4) The Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity

Kirsty welcomed Paul Ilnicki and Mary Keys who are two of the trustees of the Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity. Mary gave us an excellent talk on the history of the Fuel Allotments and the projects they are involved in supporting.

The Frimley Fuel Allotments cover a large wooded area adjoining the military land in the area between the Old Bisley Road and The Maultway. It dates back to the 1800's when the land was gifted to the people of Frimley Parish to provide them with a source of fuel i.e. firewood.

In the 1980's a large part of the Fuel Allotments were rented to Pine Ridge Golf Course and as a result the charity makes an income of over £100K a year. The amount is somewhat dependent upon the amount of use the golf course receives as more money is paid if there is greater use. They also receive a small amount of money from the EE phone mast sited on the land.

The appointed trustees are responsible for distributing the money in three separate areas. They make grants to individuals, to groups and also provide money to elderly people as a fuel grant at Christmas.

Money is only granted to those who meet the criteria of need, hardship or distress and is governed by Charity Commission rules. In addition, only those within the GU15 and GU16 areas

are eligible to apply for help.

Example of the grants include money given to upgrade church kitchen facilities, grants to Girl Guide groups and the purchase of kitchen appliances such as washing machines to those in particular hardship or struggling on a limited income. When grants are made to individuals these are usually made in the form of goods rather than money to ensure that the money is not misspent.

When an application is made to the charity a trustee visits to assess whether the application meets the criteria of need, hardship or distress. Mary explained that these visits can sometime be upsetting as often the people concerned are living in poor conditions. Paul also added that seeing how people who have been faced with adversity cope and overcome it can be a humbling experience. For larger grants meetings are held 4 times a year where the trustees discuss applications. In emergency situations a number of trustees may meet to enable funds to be made available at short notice.

Mary explained that it can be hard to reach the people in the community who are experiencing the greatest hardships and that advertising and publicising can be difficult.

Applications for assistance from the charity can be made using the application on their website at <https://www.frimleyfuelallotments.org/> or paper copies can be collected from their office at High Cross Church in Camberley or a selection of other places listed on their website.

Mary talked about the maintenance work that goes on to ensure the Fuel Allotments land is clean and safe for local people to use it. The land is open to local residents who can walk on the land and also still collect firewood for fuel.

They hold twice yearly litter picks when they ask the groups they've supported to come along and help collect litter from the allotments. Unfortunately there is a lot of litter left behind by those using the allotments and dog waste is a particular issue. These are normally held in October and May during term time. The next litter pick will be held on May 19th and all volunteers are welcome. Equipment will be supplied and the group will meet at 10am at the far end of the Pine Ridge Golf Club car park. Other maintenance work is carried out by tree surgeons etc. to make sure it is a safe environment as the charity have a duty of care to people using the land.

Mary took questions from the audience which included a request for further information about the new SANG (Sustainable Alternative Natural Greenspace) which is located on the land along the Bridleway running between the two sections of the golf course. This is land which is to mitigate the impact of the new housing development at the former Ridgewood Centre site. Mary confirmed that there will be additional income from this to the charity. This areas will also be managed by a new management company being set up.

Kirsty thanked Mary for coming along and for all the information she had shared with us.

Larry mentioned that in addition to the Fuel Allotments Charity, Heatherside Church also has a contingency fund which is available to help those in dire urgent need, for example if a family desperately needed clothes or other household goods following a house fire.

5) Esso Pipeline Replacement

There are two Esso fuel pipes which run from Fawley to Heathrow providing aviation fuel. These run through the Heatherside area and along the strip of land between The Maultway and the fenced off military ranges. There is a consultation currently being carried out into the proposed replacement of one of the pipes with work likely to begin in 2021. As part of this consultation a number of potential routes have been identified for the new pipe to run along. There is a wide corridor where the pipe crosses Heatherside with a number of options for pipe routing including a route through the Frimley Fuel Allotments or another possible route involving the pipe being laid along the roads through Frimley past Frimley Park Hospital and up the Chobham Road and Old Bisley Road to the Maultway.

Residents who live in properties within the proposed pipeline corridor have received letters from the consultation company about any potential implications for the land they own. There have also been leaflets distributed to other properties which may be affected by the replacement works.

Full details about the proposed project and the potential routes can be seen on the website at <https://www.slpproject.co.uk/> and paper copies of the plans are also held in local libraries and Council offices. There are also a number of exhibitions being held for members of the public to find out more and ask any questions. The initial consultation is open until the 30th April and residents can give their views on the website above.

Caroline Hibberd attended one of these exhibitions and spoke to the meeting about the information she had gathered. She expressed her particular concern over the massive disruption which would result if Esso decided to route the pipe along the hospital/Chobham Road/Old Bisley route especially given the number of schools along this road and the existing traffic issues at the beginning and end of the school day. She explained that the exhibition staff had indicated that if any work was likely to be carried out in road length sized chunks with potential disruption for 2 to 3 months at a time!

One resident who had also attended the exhibition said he had been told that the Crown Estate (e.g. MOD) were not keen for the pipe to be routed across their property and had so far refused to discuss this with the consultants. Consequently there was a chance that the road route described above would be chosen as there was less resistance to use of the land. He was advised that it would be sensible to form a group to protest against this if local people had a strong opinion against it.

Concern was also expressed by landowners within the proposed corridor that the amount of land needed to install the pipe would result in their gardens being excavated or trees being damaged or removed. It was suggested that such a project might also cause a blight on housing prices as it would have to be revealed as part of the selling process.

6) Heatherside Pillar

Len Williams provided an update as to the status of the Heatherside Community Pillar Project. The first phase of the project, i.e. the collection of the pledges for the contingency fund is nearly complete. To date £685 has been collected against a target of £500. In addition, Some local businesses, i.e. The Mehdi Restaurant and the Barber Shop, have indicated they are prepared to contribute to the hardware fund. These offers will be firmed up and other local businesses will be contacted to see if they are also prepared to become co-sponsors.

Once the first phase is complete the second phase, i.e. design of the final, will commence. This will begin before the end of April when a questionnaire for the design themes will be sent to all of those people who have contributed to the contingency fund. As yet no artists have come forward to assist with the design of the pillar but Len hopes to put out a second call for assistance on this. Len has received an offer of help and assistance with this project from Andy Harris who was also present at the meeting.

Len has also arranged a meeting with SHBC council officers to discuss the practical aspects regarding the pillar location. SHBC has indicated, via Cllr Lytle, that they are prepared to actively support the project. This will be progressed to identify the scope of the support.

If anyone wishes to pledge money toward the pillar or ask any questions Len will be at the Pop Up Coffee shop on Saturday.

Kirsty thanked Len for all his hard work on this project and he received a round of applause from the audience.

7) Camberley Alzheimer Cafe - Man with a Pan project

Maureen Hume joined us from Camberley Alzheimer Cafe to tell us about their brilliant initiative 'Man with a Pan'. The idea of this scheme is to run courses to teach older men how to cook. Maureen explained that many older men have no experience of cooking and consequently are left in a very difficult situation if they are widowed or in a position where they are caring for partners suffering from an illness. She gave examples of men surviving on biscuits and sandwiches because they did not know how to cook even basic meals. The scheme also helps with combating isolation and loneliness and enables the men to make new friends.

The courses are run at St Mary's Church and has the support of a chef. Other courses which

have been run there include cooking on a budget for those on a low income and healthy heart cooking to support people with heart issues and diabetes.

The Man with a Pan scheme has been entered into a National Lottery People's Projects competition with prizes of up to £50k. Maureen explained that if they win they will have funds to enable them to run further Man with a Pan courses and Healthy Heart cooking courses. Maureen would like to be able to invite graduates of previous schemes to come back and use their skills to cook 100 meals, 50 for those in the community or attending the church and the others to go to local homeless people.

Maureen would be hugely grateful for any votes to help them win the competition. Please vote and share using the link below. The competition closes on the 30th April.

<https://www.thepeoplesprojects.org.uk/projects/view/man-with-a-pan-course>

8) Road Surface Issues and Petition

John Skipper spoke to the meeting about a petition he is putting together to put pressure on Surrey County Council (SCC) to repair more potholes and maintain roads and pavements. This petition can be signed online or he is holding a paper copy for those who wish to sign it. The link for online signatures is <http://petitions.surreycc.gov.uk/HeathersideRoads/>

He explained that he wished to support the work of our County Councillor (Edward Hawkins) but that he hopes direct action will be more effective than sitting waiting for SCC to act. He is also planning on having a meeting with Michael Gove MP to ask him to put more pressure on central government to increase funds to SCC for road maintenance.

Edward Hawkins then covered a number of issues including the roads within his update.

9) Councillor Updates

County Councillor Updates

Edward Hawkins gave an update on all the issues he's been dealing with since the last meeting. The full text of this may be seen in APPENDIX A at the end of the minutes with the main points summarised below.

Planning

Edward explained that planning has now been granted for the first phase of the houses at Deepcut (approx 236) and for the new primary school which will be completed in two phases, the second commencing once a certain number of houses have been built.

In addition to this, the initial phase of the Local Area Plan has now been agreed. He explained

that as a borough we need to be building some 380 houses per year. However because of the intensity of development already in Surrey Heath and the limited land supply this is just not easy to achieve. He is hopeful that SHBC may be able to agree with Hart District Council to take some of our shortfall.

As part of the local plan, there was a process called Strategic Land Availability Assessment. The SLAA document identifies parcels of land and assesses their suitability, availability and viability for residential, economic and other uses to meet Surrey Heath's needs over a 15 year period. However, the SLAA does not make decisions about which sites should be allocated for development. The purpose of it is to provide evidence about potential sites so SHBC can demonstrate the provision for the amount of new housing and other uses that must be planned for. Edward explained that developers do not need the consent of the landowner to propose a site and as a consequence an unsuccessful bid had been made to propose housing on the Frimley Fuel Allotments.

Edward gave the news that the marketing for the London Road Block in Camberley is now under way. This may include up to 350 flats. It was suggested by members of the audience that SHBC should concentrate on trying to improve employment opportunities in the town centre rather than more houses/flats. There was some criticism of the decision to allow so many town centre buildings or sites to be converted from offices to residential properties. Edward explained that building flats in the town centre was important as it took pressure off other sites in the borough. There was a suggestion that the new flats on the London Road might be up to 8 storeys tall. This information was not particularly well received.

County Budget

SCC continues to struggle financially. In the last financial year there was a shortfall in the planned savings £24m was drawn from reserves to meet the shortfall. Although SCC has made £540m of savings in the past eight years Edward expressed concern that continually drawing upon savings is not sustainable. He did say however that SCC are gradually finding ways to make services more efficient and to reduce spending. In better news, there is about £20m to be made available to the County with smaller sums to the Boroughs and Districts through the Business Rates Retention Pilot. However, this is a pilot and may not continue.

Members Allowance

Edward briefly ran through some of the projects he spent his £6000 on last year including Heatherside Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch and Heatherside Parish Church - Safety Fencing at St Francis Church and Heatherside Preschool.

Edward mentioned that he hoped to support Carwarden School with money from his allowance this year. Another area which he feels needs work is the planters on the Heatherside shops. There was a brief discussion about the poor state the planters are in and what systems would be in place to ensure they are maintained if they are replaced. One idea was to replace the present planters with wooden seats. Cllrs Jonathan and Paul said they had already made a request for CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money to be put towards this. It was also suggested by audience members that local businesses might be asked to sponsor seats/planters. In addition to the planters Edward would also like to see consideration given by SCC to other works on the central area of Heather Ridge Arcade.

Edward explained that he will have a sum of money (£7,500) to spend on small community related repairs but the criteria is yet to be advised.

Ravenscote

Edward has attended various meetings and discussions around traffic and parking issues and has been pushing for both a reduced speed limit and a speed table outside Ravenscote. Basic designs have been prepared for the later and a ballpark cost is put at £40k for the work. This provoked a number of comments that speed isn't the issue in this area and that what would really help would be the removal of one of the crossings outside Tomlinscote as this is the cause of massive congestion in this area. The poor state of these crossings was also mentioned with large potholes making driving over them hazardous. Edward agreed to go and look at these the following day. The issue of drop off and pick up provision continues to cause problems.

Road Works

The Meadows roundabout works are due to start June / July this year and the work will take 8 to 12 months! This provoked groans from the audience.

Road Repairs

The average number of pot holes reported and repaired in Surrey over the last few years in February was 3,516 and March 3,851. A total of 7,367. The figure for the corresponding months this year are February 6,524 and for March 8,377. A total of 14,901.

Edward explained that there is a pothole fund from the government of £100m. Surrey gets £1.8m; Hampshire £2.9 and Devon £4.4m. The allocation is based on the number of miles of road despite the fact that the intensity of use of our roads is much greater than in other more rural counties. Edward is launching an e-petition seeking "Fairer Funding for Surrey's Roads"

which HWRA will share as soon as it is online.

Edward talked briefly about some of the main questions he is asked by residents in relation to road repairs. He is frequently asked why SCC do temporary repairs and then return to repair the road later and also why big holes are fixed and the others left.

Apparently all defects are prioritised from P1 to P4 with P1 being an emergency response and longer response times for lesser defects. This means it may be a few days before some are fixed. In addition to this due to the number of defects contractors are doing more temporary repairs to enable them to cover more ground and then returning at a future date to complete the repair. This does not cost the county any more money. Crews also have to prioritise the significant holes rather than filling all the holes as this enables them to tackle the maximum number of significant holes per day.

Edward stressed once again that he would like to be contacted as soon as a pot hole appears as this means he can inspect them and make sure they are fixed as soon as possible. He was pleased to report that there are a number of large potholes where his intervention has sped up the repairs. Edward said he was glad that he had been able to get the worst part of The Maultway resurfaced as this had been in a dreadful state.

Edward reported that he has put forward a request that works are carried out to Old Bisley Road / Edgemoor Road roundabout; Part of Edgemoor Road and to Inglewood Avenue. Residents asked when the large hole at the top of Old Bisley would be fixed. Caroline said it has been there for nearly 3 months now with no work. Edward said he would try and find out more.

Social Media

Edward said he is always happy to receive messages from residents but he would appreciate an email or Facebook message in addition to tagging him in posts.

Borough Councillor Updates

Jonathan Lytle gave an update on behalf of the three Borough Councillors.

Works are continuing on Wellingtonia Avenue though there have been some delays due to the snow and wet weather. As a consequence of this the wildflower seed has not yet been sown though this is planned before the end of April. The wet conditions have also caused a delay to planned branch and debris clean up as the machinery used might cause damage with such wet ground.

Phil Green asked what was happening with the planting of the replacement trees, Jonathan said he would chase this up with SHBC officers and let us know.

Jonathan confirmed that the works to Cheylesmore Park were now underway again as

mentioned earlier by Kirsty. Kirsty asked him to feed back to the Council that the Heatherside park had flooded again very badly over the past couple of months. Despite soakaways being installed the park is unusable whenever there is heavy rain as it does not drain away.

Graham Tapper asked Jonathan what the situation was regarding the blocked gate between the new Ridgewood development and the Maguire Drive Play area and other parts of Heatherside. Despite this issue having been raised several times at HWRA meetings over the last year there still seems to be no progress. The developers have built a gate in their fence but SHBC have still not made a gap in their fence to allow access through. On opening the gate residents are met with a fence blocking them! Jonathan explained that works to create the new cycle path here have been delayed due to waterlogged ground conditions but that once this was complete the consultation on the new play park here would begin. He was unable to explain why the fence panel was still blocking the route but said he would try and find out more from SHBC.

Jonathan gave an update on the latest situation regarding the land on Heatherside owned by Bovis Homes. Unfortunately there has been another change of staff at Bovis. Council officers are planning to meet with them to see if there is any progress however latest indications are that Bovis are planning on carrying out yet another survey of the land they own. The car park off Cumberland Road was cited as a particular problem as the surface is in a very poor condition but it is not being maintained at all by Bovis. Jonathan agreed that the car park was in a completely unacceptable state.

10) Next Meeting Date

The date of the next meeting has been set for Tuesday 3rd July at 7.30pm once again at Heatherside Community Centre.

11) AOB

Paul Ilnicki mentioned that he has continued to press for improvements to the rail service between Camberley and London but that so far there is disappointingly little progress to report. However Kirsty highlighted that there had been plans to scrap the few direct services to London which are fortunately not going ahead so at least this was a positive step.

APPENDIX A - UPDATE FROM EDWARD HAWKINS

General News

Planning granted for the first phase of the houses at Deepcut. Also granted for the new school which will be completed in two phases, the second triggered by the number of houses built.

The initial phase of the Local Area Plan has now been agreed. As a borough we need to be building some 380 houses per year. With the available land supply this is just not possible so we will be looking to Hart to take some of our shortfall.

As part of the local plan, there was a process called Strategic Land Availability Assessment. The SLAA document identifies parcels of land and assesses their suitability, availability and viability for residential, economic and other uses to meet Surrey Heath's needs over a 15 year period.

The SLAA does not make decisions about which sites should be allocated for development. Rather, it provides evidence about potential sites so that the Council can demonstrate whether there is adequate provision for the amount of new housing and other uses that must be planned for. One of the areas put forward for possible development – but not accepted – was Frimley Fuel Allotments. Developers do not need the landowners consent to put sites forward. The marketing for the London Road Block in Camberley is now under way. The initial thoughts are that an integral part of the development will be a new car park plus flats – say 350 units.

County Budget

In the last financial year there was a shortfall in the planned savings and we needed to draw of the reserves to balance the budget to the tune of £24m. We cannot continue to do that. SCC has made £540m of savings in the past eight years.

Last year I said that I wanted to get value for money. Things are slowly changing and there is a greater emphasis on doing more for less. Still a long way to go but progress is being made. There is about £20m to be made available to the County with smaller sums to the Boroughs and Districts through the Business Rates Retention Pilot. This is a pilot and there is no guarantee that the funds will continue to be available.

Members Allowance

Last financial year I used my £6,000 member's allowance to support the following

Heatherside Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch
Heatherside Parish Church - Safety Fencing at St Francis Church
Little Oaks Pre-school for Sensory Garden
Portesbury School for therapy equipment
Redz Performing Academy for Dance Costumes
Camberley Boys FC for new kit / training tops

1 st Frimley Scouts – Contribution to Jamboree
Heatherside Pre-school – Pre-school equipment

I understand that this year the sum allocated will be £5,000 but I do not have the criteria as yet. I would like to spend some money on Carwarden School. I would also like to do something about the planters on the Heatherside shops and replace the brick ones with some wooden seats. Not all will get done but it would be good if I could get a price from a local craftsman for one to start with. (Update – will work with the Borough Councillors who intend to use some of their CIL money for works here)

There is project started at County looking at all the property holdings throughout the County and once I get the list for Surrey Heath I wish to start dialogue as to what can be done with the central area as like everybody else I believe it is owned by County. I think everybody is aware of the planning situation above Sainsbury's.

Finally on this section, I will have a sum of money - £7,500 – to spend on small community related repairs throughout my Division. Just how far that goes and the criteria is to be advised.

Ravenscote

I have had various meeting and discussions on this. Matters have rather been slowed down due to the weather and road repairs. I have been pushing for both a reduced speed limit and a speed table. Basic designs have been prepared for the later and a ball park cost is put at £40k for the work. I hope that I can start to flesh out the proposal over the next couple of months. The real issue is where can parents park for pick up and with the three schools in close proximity, this is a tricky one.

Road Works

The Meadows roundabout works are due to start June / July this year and the work will take 8 to 12 months dependant on the restrictions we place on the contractors. There will be regular updates issued regarding progress and closures etc.

Road Repairs

The average number of potholes reported and repaired in Surrey over the last few years in February was 3,516 and March 3,851. A total of 7,367. The figure for the corresponding months this year are February 6,524 and for March 8,377. A total of 14,901.

There is a pothole fund from the government of £100m. Surrey gets £1.8m; Hampshire £2.9 and Devon £4.4m. This is not right and I have launched an e-petition seeking "Fairer Funding for Surrey's Roads" Please sign and post on as it is important that we get as many people as possible to sign up. I will put a note on Social Media as soon as the petition has been approved. Likely to be sometime this week.

Two of the biggest issues raised by residents are:

1. Why are we just doing temporary repairs and then coming back to repair the road later.

2. Why did we just do one big hole and leave the other defects.

I am informed that all defects are prioritised from P1 to P4 with P1 being an emergency response. We also have criteria built into the contract to manage the time scales for the different situations. P2s must be reacted to within a few days. Due to the number of defects contractors are doing more temporary repairs to enable them to cover more ground and they will return at a future date to complete the repair. This does not cost the county any more money; this is an operational decision which allows the risk to be managed.

The same issue arises when dealing with multiple defects at one site. As an example a crew dealing with P2's can do approximately 15 reported defects per day and if the defect at the bottom of your road is number 12 on the list, it will be done today, but if the crew stop and repair all the defects at all the locations and also do additional inspections of other areas of the same road, they will not get to your bit for about three days; hence they will only repair the main defect instead of the three that might be there and they will only repair what has been reported. Again this is an operational decision to manage risk and does not cost the county any additional money.

The important thing to remember is the clock does not start ticking until a defect has been reported and there is almost 3,500 miles of network to monitor. I have repeatedly asked that I am contacted as soon as a pot hole appears. I have quite a good record of getting the major ones repaired quickly but can only do this with residents help. I do not need a petition to tell me that there are problems with the roads.

I am pleased that I have managed to get the worst part of The Maultway resurfaced. I have also put forward a request that works are carried out to Old Bisley Road / Edgemoor Road roundabout; Part of Edgemoor Road – where I think that the problems are more structural – and to Inglewood Avenue.

Social Media

Great fun and a useful tool. I have even laughed at the first 30 times at the picture of somebody in a pothole in a snorkel. I do monitor a number of FB pages and try to respond but it would help me if I can be tagged for something urgent. I also use email and Messenger.