



NOTES OF GENERAL MEETING 29th October 2015
Held at Woodberry Down Baptiste Church 7 – 8.30pm.

Attendees:

Guests: PCSO Matabur Rahman,
Jean Mann (Mungos Broadway)

Residents: Anna, EL, Geoffrey, Stephanie, Michelle, Ruby, Brian, Yvonne,
Athlem, Anne, Roger, Audrey, Lara,

VCRA Committee: Bennie, Mary, Chitra, Claire, Carol, Charles, Abi

Apologies: Emma Price (Triangle Centre), Groundwork, Manor House PACT,
Harriet (Committee), & all the Councillors. Michelle apologised for leaving early.

Bennie welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

1: Local Parks issues:

Paignton Park sewage issue
Groundwork & Community Action Plans
Friends Groups

Michelle introduced herself as the Chair of Paignton Park Friends group. She said that the group had been active in the past, specially when the Triangle Centre was being developed, however the group was no longer active. She felt it would be advantageous if VCRA took over the task of looking after the park.

She reported that the tasks included liaising with Thames water to fix sewage problems – there's a main sewer that runs into the park and erupts occasionally. Thames Water have said they cannot do anything to change the sewer system there as it is the main inspection area. Michelle thought pressure should be brought to move this inspection area so raw sewage was not contaminating the park with obvious health implications for users.

Groundwork: has a contract with Haringey, and is doing some bulb planting, trying to get local people involved but has struggled to do so. There is no longer a council gardener due to cuts so the estate management from Frederick Messer estate cuts the grass. Michelle explained that the area is not actually labelled a park – it is an Open Space.

Michelle also explained that should VCRA decide to take over, there were some resources available, some money from Tesco 5p bags etc.

Concern was expressed at the sewage problem and the general state of the park which was beginning to look neglected in some areas. Michelle was thanked for

her work to date, and she and Roger – also a member of the Friends group – were invited to join the committee, so that the committee could use their energies and knowledge in working on the Park. They both agreed.

The meeting was happy for VCRA to take on the role previously occupied by the Friends group. This group will now need to be dissolved formally. Michelle stated that she would stay onto the parks and other relevant mailing lists so that she could inform the rest of the committee of any issues.

The meeting thanked Michelle and Roger and co-opted them onto the VCRA Committee.

The meeting spent some more time talking about their two spaces, Manchester Gardens and Paignton Park. Groundwork had been doing some very good work in the Gardens, with some volunteers. Most volunteers came from Haringey Recovery Services. None of the regular volunteers came from the VCRA area, and as cuts continued to grow, open spaces will continue to be squeezed.

Action: Committee to give some more thought what might be done to stop further deterioration of the park spaces.

Committee, with Michelle now co-opted, to contact Thames Water about the sewage problem.

2. Police issues and local anti-social behaviour

PCSO Matabur Rahman provided an update. He gave apologies for other members of the team who were not able to be present.

The meeting discussed issues in relation to anti-social behaviour in Manchester Gardens, and PCSO Rahman reported that they were increasing patrols in the area.

On crime and anti-social behaviour, a resident on Berkeley Road reported that very recently at about 3:20am on a Sunday a youth had broken into her home where she was alone and demanded her car keys. He took the car, and it was later found damaged so badly that it was a 'write-off'. Her son reported that one of the problems stemmed from the new UPVC doors locking system. If you just closed the door it was not effectively locked, and could be opened easily. You needed to double turn the key properly otherwise your home was at risk. However the importance of this had never been communicated.

It was remarked that many residents in that area had these doors, and PCSO Rahman was asked whether it would be appropriate for police to provide leaflets in the area advising everyone to double lock their doors all the time if they have a UPVC one.

Also discussed was the fact that although there were police patrols during the day, there were none at night, when burglaries and other crimes took place. PCSO Rahman replied that the hours of SNT were only up to 2am. Concern was expressed at this by residents.

Bennie explained that the residents association had effectively taken over the role of Neighbourhood Watch as well, however any area was only as strong as the residents in it were active and vigilant. The NW function was not a primary function of the association, however if more people wished to get involved and focus on anti-social behaviour and crime that would be welcome.

Action: to put information about locking these doors on our website.

PCSO Rahman also said that advice about the festive period would soon be provided, and he urged residents to take the leaflets about firework and bonfire safety that he had brought.

Bennie raised that point there appeared to be some private security patrols in the area, that were organised by members of the Jewish community. He did not know if it was just for short periods covering key dates or a regular patrol, noting that more members of this community had moved into the area recently.

A resident reported that they do generally work with local police.

Action: Committee to try to find out more about this private security.

It was also noted that now the Woodberry Down developments had private security, it could be that criminals were being 'flushed' further into South Tottenham from this area.

Other issues raised included: contact problems with SNT – their phone number was not working properly, there were problems with youths riding motorbikes recklessly on Vartry Road, and it was suspected that some of them were connected with the damage in Manchester Gardens and other anti-social behaviour.

PCSO Rahman reported that there were issues with respect to drugs in Wiltshire (??) gardens near Sainsbury's on Green Lanes, this was being dealt with. He also reported that burglaries had dropped in the area.

3. Traffic Issues:

- Cycle Hangers

- Cycle Super Highway Plans

- 20 mph speed zones/local traffic congestion

Bennie reported that it was an achievement we have a couple of biker hangers in the area. He invited Geoffrey who had been actively campaigning for this to report. Geoff handed out some leaflets with information. He reported that others, including Molly and Ruby had been involved with trying to get the hangers. Haringey abysmally had had a total of 4 in the entire borough! They now have 2 more!

The reason that they are still empty is because there has been a delay in getting keys however they are both over subscribed. The task of maintaining the hangers has been outsourced to cyclehoop.com

Obviously hangers take parking space and it was recognised among the committee that there was a growing issue with parking availability. The controlled parking zone now in the area around Tiverton was possibly exacerbating the shortage of parking spaces. Geoff had identified possible places for more hangers that would not take up parking spaces. However the council at the moment were being reluctant, indicating that space was needed for turning.

Another area that could be used was an area in front of Stamford Hill Primary School where it adjoins Seven Sisters Road. Everyone was asked to identify further areas.

The meeting agreed that it was happy to continue to support additional hangers, however that we needed to be sensitive to the need for residents to park cars.

Bennie raised that over the years the issue of whether we should have a controlled parking zone had been debated and had to date been rejected. There were advantages and disadvantages. It would however deal with the problem of commuters driving into the area, parking and then taking the tube. This issue would continue to be debated as changes to the area continued. It was also noted that the Volvo business and the fact that Woodberry Down development had increased private housing without the provision of parking was causing possible further parking pressure in our area, this was also true of the new flats in the buildings opposite Manchester Garden where there was no parking.

Cycle superhighway plans:

Bennie explained the plans for the area. Claire raised concerns about the need for traffic calming around the top of Holmdale Terrace where bikes were in danger of being hit,. This bit was in Hackney.

Local traffic issues:

Charles wondered if some of the roads needed to be one-way in order to prevent a growing problem with road rage, as the residential roads narrowed with cars parking on both sides they effectively were one lane roads and confrontations between drivers trying to go opposite ways were a problem.

It was noted that while the area was in theory a 20 mph zone this was never enforced. Enforcement would make a real difference.

Concerns were expressed about increased heavy load activity in Berkeley Road (and the corner of that road and Vartry Road) because of the Dairy business. The business had been there for many years and had not been an issue but it perhaps the business had grown suddenly. The concerns included:

- Very early morning (around 4am) traffic noise disturbing many households around the dairy
- 9pm - 10.30pm and early morning unloading, causing a serious obstruction in the road. Concerns were raised about access for emergency services.
- Floodlit until late at night which created light pollution in the back of those houses backing onto the dairy (Vartry Road).

Carol told the meeting that she had found the Dairy staff very helpful when she need to have her new back staircase brought into the garden, they had allowed her to do this over their flat roof.

Action: friendly approach to the Dairy to have a discussion, after the Committee have had a discussion about this.

Geoff wondered if it was time to take stock as to whether the calming measures originally put in at the junction of Holmdale and Vartry were actually slowing traffic. If not, and the indications were that it may not have, then removing the narrowing of the road would automatically provide a further 10 spaces or more of car parking which be of benefit.

Agreed more thinking needed to think about traffic calming ...

4. Planning processes and recent approval.

Anna reported that despite a number of protests against planning application, the building at 11 Franklin had been approved by the council when the owners re-applied asking for approval for a property with 9 bedrooms. The building work was causing huge disturbance and problems in this small road. The property itself once built would change the nature of this road completely, to its detriment.

It was reported that the Committee and individuals had written in strong opposition to the property, and concern was expressed that despite this the application had been approved. It appeared that the process no longer took any notice of what was a strong feeling amongst locals.

This property was drilling down 12 feet. Complaints had been made about the amount of dirt and mess created by the builders however no notice was being taken. Concerns were also expressed about the impact on structural integrity for the building and surrounding buildings due to the digging work.

It was agreed that the recent development was most disturbing. Whether the area could be protected in some way from further poorly considered building was discussed and it was **agreed to take this up with the Council – through Councillors.**

It was further recommended that it might be useless complaining to the council and to go safe to the Safer Contractor Scheme, they had a complaints process.

Bennie raised the issue of whether it was worth pursuing conservation status for the area, the style of some of the properties in particular the 'Warner' flats were well known. **Agreed to consider this along with the other planning issues.**

5: Refuse collections

Chitra asked if other residents had problems with their collections as she had been having problems. Many residents said they had, including their rubbish not being collected or food from the food containers being strewn around on collection day. **Agreed to take this up with council/councillors.**

6. Haringey Recovery Services report:

This had formerly been HAGA. Jean Mann explained, and HRS now focused as a recovery service only for those who wished to be abstinent. They provided users structured treatment, ways in which to use their time gainfully, and volunteer for things such as working with Groundwork in Manchester Gardens. They also provided work and training services and counselling. They provided their services with user involvement. Other than those who were unable to work, they also assisted functioning workers who accessed their services in the evenings and weekends. HRS had come about through a contract between St Mungos Broadway and HAGA. It was a borough wide facility.

During discussion, Jean admitted that there might be some anti-social behavior as a result of where they were, and indicated that as well as other users they also provided a service where courts ordered drug testing. Substance abuse was linked to crime. The service did their best but like many other services were very stretched and constantly facing cuts. There were almost 50 staff and volunteers. Local residents were welcome to volunteer.

7. Winter shelter and Winter Wonderland (bazaar)

Charles reported that the Shelter would run from January to March for 6-7 weeks. They had been running the shelter for 6 years, there had been some recent management issues but would continue to run the shelter. This would be on Fridays. Volunteers and donations were needed.

Volunteers that worked in the shelter would need to be 'vetted' obviously, but volunteers could do other things, for example every year Deborah and Marcus did loads of washing, taking blankets and clothes and washing them and bringing them back.

Donations of food and bedding might be needed, it was important to check what was needed first.

Winter Wonderland bazaar:

Working with a partner, it was proposed to run a bazaar in support of Turkish speaking and muslim groups. This bazaar would trade like a charity shop with second hand goods. Out of these discussions a proposal to run a Winter Wonderland had been suggested, and when plans were firmed up, VCRA input would be valuable.

The meeting agreed to support both initiatives in any way the residents could. They were reminded that The Triangle Centre would almost certainly also be organising a Christmas Fair and it would be useful to try not to clash with them. It might be that VCRA had a role in both events.

Action: suggested that the church prepared a leaflet advertising the shelter on one side and the bazaar on the other and VCRA would ensure its distribution.

Ends.