

TILGATE FORUM MEETING

Minutes

Thursday 18 May 2017 7:30 – 9:15 Shackleton Road Community Centre

Chair: Richard Handy

The meeting was attended by 31 people in all; this number included WSCC Councillor Duncan Crow, CBC Councillor Francis Guidera, CBC Councillor Carlos Castro, Community Development Officer John Dale, Nick Hagon, Manager of Tilgate Park and Alan Gunn, Head Teacher at The Oaks School.

1. Welcome and apologies

RH welcomed all and passed on apologies from Henry Smith MP and Robert Edwards. The speaker from the WSCC Recycling team sent her apologies as well, promising to attend the next Forum to give her talk. DC was congratulated on being re-elected as WSCC Councillor for Tilgate and Furnace Green.

A group photo was taken of Forum members following a request from Crawley Observer. (Anyone who did not wish to be photographed could step aside.)

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

[The meeting was partially recorded, to help in completing accurate Minutes.]

The minutes from the Forum meeting held on 23 March 2017 were accepted, and are now on the Tilgate Community Forum website.

No matters arising were brought up.

3. Golf Course Update – Dan Lucking, Manager

DL attended from Glendale to inform members that the second phase of the treework on the golf course is complete now. Some areas were not gone into. In addition, 30% of the brush clearance has been achieved. Brush clearance will be continuing into next winter. In response to a query concerning the full accessibility of the path next to Shrublands, (raised by DC on behalf of a local wheelchair user), DC will send DL the information in full for him to look into.

Many different groups of people use the Golf Course apart from golfers: walkers, cyclists, dog walkers. Wayfinding will enable people to identify the correct routes from the many routes across the Golf course, and to maximise the use of the land. This is a joint project between CBC, Glendale, and the Residents' working group. Specific, maintained, routes are needed for safety reasons for local visitors and for visitors from outside Crawley, who may be visiting areas such as the Local Nature Reserve. These will be consulted on and should be agreed by 1st August and in place by 1st October.

Maps for walkers will be made available on noticeboards and on the website. In response to a query DL confirmed that all WSCC paths such as the one from Maidenbower will be maintained as well. Jacky Bradley from the Wayfinding group added that there would be signage for the safe use of paths – such as looking in the right direction for golf balls being played which may hit people on the footpath.

4. Parking Concerns – where are we now? Jennie Withall and Sylvia Handy

JW listed some of the parking and traffic problems highlighted by Forum members over the three years since the Forum began. The focus on parking issues in Tilgate has been a feature of our meetings since the very outset. SH continued with a summary of the consultation, survey and liaison with CBC undertaken by Forum members. In 2015 members voted on their preferences for where to create extra parking: two thirds voted for grass verges to be used to alleviate the perpetual parking congestion in Tilgate.

However, no overall strategy is apparent from any of the relevant authorities despite the on-going and worsening problems. See the attached appendix on page 5 for details of the issues and actions to date.

The Crawley Road Space Audit (RSA) is currently in progress and SH suggested that volunteer members put themselves forward to form a Forum sub-group, focusing on the problems faced by Tilgate residents in order to contribute to the RSA's role i.e. information gathering and future planning, or for the local councillors to put forward on behalf of Tilgate.

A wider discussion of problems and possible solutions ensued: why can't the car park at Thomas Bennett School be made available for K2 users at weekends, bank and school holidays? (One car recently parked on the central reservation in the middle of the dual carriageway next to K2, posing a significant hazard.) The derelict land at the side of the footpath to K2 from Winchester Road was suggested for consideration as a possible car park. (FG also stated that he has asked for the overgrowth on the joint boundary with the footpath to be cut back.)

There was concern that many verges carry the original Eurobell cables underground and so might not be suitable for parking on. The point was also made that grasscrete might be an option in this scenario as it would distribute the weight of a parked car. However, other services/pipes may also lie beneath a verge.

Forum members were asked to speak to SH if interested in the sub-group; several people have come forwards. Is anyone else interested in joining the sub-group? If so, please email the secretary at tilgateforum@gmail.com

Problems specific to Loppets Road at school times (i.e. the unsafe and inconsiderate parking of some of the parents) were discussed. AG and staff already encourage pupils and parents to walk to The Oaks school and are also considering starting a Walking Bus system.

5. Football for Older Ladies: Amy Fazackerley from Crawley Town Football Club

AF, Community Development Co-Ordinator at Crawley Football Club came along to tell us about Crawley Old Girls (COGs) football. The group was originally set up through the Crawley Town Community Foundation for the mothers of children who played football. COGs started with 10 mums who had never played football, despite their interest in it - currently over ninety registered footballers are on the books.

In addition COGs success was recognised in the Crawley Community Awards where they won the Group Achievement Award, following their national success in the Football Association Women's Football Awards.

If any ladies are interested in joining in have a look on www.ctcommunityfoundation.com .

Crawley Town also host weekly mixed Walking Football for the over 50s at Checktrade Stadium in Broadfield – Fridays 12-1 for £3.

6. Updates from local Councillors and questions

DC – Pavement repair/road resurfacing. Loppets Road pavement is due to be re-done from 03 July 2017 onwards; DC will forward details to AG about this. Shackleton Road pavement

is the next to be re-done and residents will receive notification before the work starts. DC has also nominated Oates Walk and will press for this. The pavements will be re-done with tarmac, not paving slabs. Queries about potholes: Livingstone Road was cited as especially bad. DC will include this road in those he is putting forward for mending. Scott and Weddell Roads are already in the pipeline to be surface dressed. Hazelwick Avenue is going to be done – there were more complaints to DC about this road than any others.

FG – has been dealing with complaints that parked cars have been blocking access into garages at the back of Boswell Road. The grass areas at the back are still being used for parking and one car is currently fenced in there now. FG has suggested to CBC that the extensive bramble patch in the vicinity be turned into extra parking space (possibly 30 to 40 spaces) to reduce pressure on the kerbside parking in the area.

Tilgate Parade pavements: FG has asked for this to be cleaned again and this is due to be done later this year in July, followed by a two year rolling programme. As the Parade is very busy, given the number of visitors who use the shops etc., FG will push for an annual clean. Chichester Close play area – FG will push for work to be done on the play equipment which is showing its age.

FG is now the shadow cabinet member for Wellbeing.

CC – CC congratulated NH and others for the launch of the Friends of Tilgate Park group, held on Mayday.

Number 2 Metrobus pilot (the extension of this route into Tilgate Park) – CC informed the Forum that this has been reported as successful, and encouraged everyone to use it at weekends and Bank Holidays.

CC is also considering a consultation concerning the possibility of a new play area around the Nash Road/ Chantrey Road area.

Community Gardening at Boswell Road: CC hailed this as an example of how to get residents involved in similar projects.

Lastly, CC mentioned the local growth of jobs and suggested this as a possible future presentation, and he would also like to hear from the Police Commissioner about how the Sussex Police are tackling local issues.

7. Tilgate Park – update from manager Nick Hagon

NH gave us a rundown on what has been happening in the Park:

Working Party on the Heather Garden: as well as volunteers from the Forum and the Friends of Tilgate Park, the Recovery College, (for those with mental health support needs) has also been involved in work based on gardening training. NH thanked all volunteers who have donated their time and effort to supporting the Park.

NH suggested future dates for Working Parties on the Heather Garden on the second Wednesday of the month at 10.00am (tea afterwards) as follows: 14th June, 12th July, 9th August, 13th September, 11th October, 8th November and 13th December. Saturdays can be suggested if interested volunteers cannot do a Wednesday. Bring thick gloves, wear suitable footwear.

Metrobus extended route number 2 into the Park: concern was raised about other vehicles passing behind the buses at weekend/bank holidays, so the bollards will be raised on these days to prevent any vehicle from passing at all.

The Friends of Tilgate Park launch went very well, despite the downpour at lunchtime.

NH suggested community gardening in the Tilgate area: if you see a neglected area do make enquiries with CBC or WSCC first, but the idea of Friends of a road such as those in Boswell Road could be extended, and could be popular with many people and schools as well. NH judges many gardens and is happy to advise.

The programme of repairs in the Park and the extension of the Nature Centre zones

continues, and the refurbishment of the stable area is under way.

Parking: NH is trying to reduce parking, and looking at alternative parking provision.

Race for Life: this will take place in the Park on 24 and 25 June this year. Race for Life arranges buses from town to the Park to reduce parking in the Park.

Following queries the following emerged: it appears that Metrobuses announce that customers get off at the Whistler Close stop for Tilgate Park. While this is the case during the week, it is not so for weekends and Bank Holidays while the pilot extension of the route is on-going.

One visitor commented that it may be of use to count and record the number of volunteer hours that are worked for the Park, as this could prove of benefit when approaching other organisations for support and/or advice.

Finally NH introduced the greenery specimens that he had brought along; Crinodendron, Handkerchief Tree, Rhododendron, Azalea and Enkianthus. Forum members were invited to take the plants home.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 A query was raised regarding what future plans were for the building next door to the Community Centre. No-one appeared to know the answer to this.

9. Announcements

The Beavers have planned two further tidy ups and litter picks as follows:

5.45pm on Tuesday 23 May 2017

5.45pm on Tuesday 20 June 2017

As usual, meet at the junction of Winchester Road and Durham Close.

10. Raffle prizes donated by Art 'n' Craft (behind Tilgate Parade) were drawn.

11. Dates of next meetings - Forum Meeting and Committee Meeting

RH thanked all for attending and reminded everyone of the next meeting dates as follows:

Forum meeting: Thursday 13 July 2017, at the Community Centre in Shackleton Road, 7.30pm to 9.15pm.

For those members who would like to attend the next Committee Meeting, this is due to take place on Thursday 15 June 2017 at 6.00pm at the Community Centre above.

Contact details:

Tilgate Community Forum

Email contact point: tilgateforum@gmail.com Website: www.tilgateforum.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/tilgateforum/>

To raise issues about services dealt with by the County Council use:

<http://love.westsussex.gov.uk>

“Crawley Old Girls” football, and Walking football for over-50s (men and women):

<https://www.ctcommunityfoundation.com/>

or contact Amy Fazackerley, Community Development Manager on 01293 410000, or at amyfazackerley@crawleytownfc.com

Appendix to minutes of Tilgate Community Forum 18 May 2017

Parking Concerns – where are we now?

A summary of parking issues raised by residents of Tilgate and of actions taken

Parking problems in Tilgate, presented by JW

- Narrow roads
- Rows of terraced houses, without garages attached, so parking cars in road, leaving no room for more than one vehicle to pass
- Vans of all sizes are parked on residential roads
- Council garages in blocks are used often for storage, and cars are often too big to fit in garages
- Parking on verges and on greens damages services, pavements, kerbs and trees
- Large vehicles use the roads but cannot negotiate the junctions without driving across verges and pavements
- Churned up grass is a safety hazard, e.g. mud spreads to pavements making a slip hazard.
- Inconsiderate parking e.g. taking up two spaces with one vehicle (half a car's length each side),
- Parking on corners restricts visibility and forces large vehicles to drive on verges/pavements
- Parking across dropped kerbs blocks pushchairs, wheelchairs etc
- Crossovers intended for access only are used for parking
- Many individual houses have sacrificed their front gardens to make car parking, but this often reduces the street parking space by more than one car space
- 2 councils are involved: local council is Crawley Borough Council (which has done some Residential Improvement Plans to improve street scene parking) but Highways (and extra parking) are under West Sussex County Council
- Neighbours fall out because of inconsiderate parking, and argue about Disabled Bays (disputing the need and location for them)
- Poor environment degrades the street scene, and risks inviting further careless behaviour
- Green spaces and trees are under threat from encroaching parking (Crawley prides itself on its green spaces)
- Visitors to Tilgate Park nearby park on residential roads to avoid car park charges.

Actions taken, presented by SH

- Since Tilgate Forum started 3 years ago, we have had 6 meetings looking at parking problems
- We started with members putting Parking Hotspots on a map for Crawley Borough Council
- We were told about working with the Council, collecting opinion, identifying problems, making proposals
- Forum was told by Crawley Borough Council that if neighbours agreed, then improvements could be prioritised for Quick Fixes e.g. low fencing or posts to protect verges
- CBC officer showed Forum meeting the long process and great expense of providing just a few more parking spaces in a Parking Improvement Scheme

- Neighbours filled in questionnaires about problems and their ideas for solutions
- In 2015 Forum voted on preferences for where to create extra parking – two thirds voted for verges to be used
- Questionnaires which we used to survey one road + votes of members on preferences were passed on to CBC
- Result: One corner verge in the surveyed road was fenced by CBC – a Quick Fix to protect the verge but no extra parking.
- There seems to be no overall strategy for tackling the parking problems in Tilgate – and the problems are increasing.
- In 2016 a councillor requested, and a petition was sent, asking WSCC to look at the parking problem in Tilgate and Crawley
- 2017 a Road Space Audit is starting in Crawley. Community stakeholders may be able to contribute to this.
- If we can have a sub-group of Tilgate residents looking at parking problems and possible solutions, this group could prepare a contribution for the Road Space Audit, or for the local councillors to put forward on behalf of Tilgate, to let our voices be heard on this subject.
- Latest news – several Forum members are interested in joining a sub-group from the Forum to collate/update info and views on parking in Tilgate.

If anyone else is interested, please email tilgateforum@gmail.com