

## **Tilgate Community Forum**

### **Thursday 14th November 2019**

#### **Welcome and Apologies**

Richard Handy, Chair, welcomed everyone, and congratulated our new Tilgate Councillor Maureen Mwangale on her election. Cllr. Francis Guidera was also in attendance, as well as Henry Smith. The Chair asked that, as we are in "purdah" during the General Election campaign period, that no political parties were mentioned during the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr. Duncan Crow, John Dale, Georgina King, Lindsay Thompson and Liam Richmond. [Later apologies were received from Sue Shropshire and Sharon Ottley.]

**Matters arising:** The names of the newly-elected Forum Committee members were announced and each member stood up briefly to be seen.

The Chair said that the proposal for Christmas lights on the Parade was shelved for the time being, because it would not be appropriate to ask shopkeepers to contribute financially when they are currently facing high rent increases.

The results of the Member survey were announced: 16 surveys were returned and the answers are summarised below:

How did you hear about this meeting?

69% by email from Forum Secretary

0% from Forum Facebook page

6% from Forum webpage

38% from Forum poster, leaflet or flyer

6% from local paper

Have you recently looked at?

Forum Facebook 19%

Forum webpage 31%

Are you interested in participating in?

Picnic in the Park 19%

Game of rounders 19%

Quiz and supper evening 88%

Should we have other events?

38% yes, 6% no.

If so, what?

Bus day out, Afternoon tea dance, Afternoon events, Tea party, Summer and Xmas social

List topics you would like in future meetings:

Tilgate Parade rents, Drugs all around, Diabetes, Crawley Plan, Food waste, Local micro breweries, Park clean-up, Springboard (special needs), Trees.

Minutes of the September meeting were accepted.

#### **Guest speaker, Stuart Smith, Head of Thomas Bennett Community College**

Stuart Smith has been Head since January 2019. He was new to The Kemnal Academies Trust and new to the area, but aware of events and concerns about TBCC.

He said that Thomas Bennett is now an exciting place to work and study, and students take pride in their own success and their school.

In May this year, the Ofsted inspection noted rapid improvements and staff united in working together. Many actions had been put in place early, including improving student behaviour and staff stability. The focus of these actions was on Year 11.

GCSE results are much better this year, with 57% and 61% getting grade “4+” in Maths and English respectively. The improvement in the school’s performance has meant that Year 11 pupils became keen to join 6th form – a big difference from previous years. Also 80-90% of parents now go to Parents’ evening, and are more involved.

Numbers are now booming for Thomas Bennett. Visits to the school were opened up to reassure prospective parents. 500 prospective families were at this year’s Open evening, and a waiting list is starting for prospective students.

All the school’s achievements have been announced and publicised, in the local press, Facebook and the internet, to boost the school’s profile. Good news now provides the headlines.

SS wants students to be involved in the community, and many are interested in the world around them, and SS would encourage them to help in Tilgate Forum’s community activities.

Question: is funding part of problem?

SS has secured student numbers for this year, so funding will be better.

Question: Reputation of TBCC historically was very good.

SS said it will be again.

Question: on specialising.

It is a sports specialist college, working with the Chelsea foundation, and is now promoting this.

Question: Is Special needs support restored?

Special needs support is now fully staffed, and there is specialist autism support. Lost staff have been replaced.

### **Dianne Dodsworth, West Sussex County Council adviser on waste prevention**

Black household bins go to Biffa and are diverted from landfill. Most people think it all goes to landfill. Landfill waste doesn’t break down, because it’s too compressed and there’s no oxygen to make it biodegrade. Biffa converts household waste into recyclables and energy. Paper and plastic go to make fuel. Biffa welcomes visits!

Viridor operates 11 Household Waste Recycling sites and 8 transfer stations (for household waste to be transferred from small collection lorries to large lorries which go to Biffa.)

A lot of good recyclable material is thrown into the wrong bin.

- What can we recycle? paper, card, Tetra packs, plastic bottles and trays, glass bottles (take tops off bottles), cans etc. (However Tetra packs are expensive to make and hard to recycle.)
- Check website if not sure what’s recyclable: [recycleforwestsussex.org](http://recycleforwestsussex.org)
- Must be clean, dry and loose.
- If recycling is wet it clogs up the machinery at Ford Materials Recycling Facility. (You can visit Ford – it’s fascinating.)
- Milk bottle tops? Charities can collect these.
- What cannot be recycled? Not pyrex, not drinking glasses (they are hardened).

Think about what you buy – not everything needs to be in bags when it’s sold.

Question: What about stuff thrown which is usable?

Answer: Change of mindset needed – don’t just throw when could be used by someone.

Q. Crawley is one of worst for recycling.

A. Project is identifying problem areas and visiting them.

Note: Men's Shed next door to Community Centre uses old timber. (See also Brighton Waste House built from recycled materials at Brighton university.)

### **Nick Hagon, Tilgate Park update:**

- plenty of colour in Tilgate Park eg hydrangeas, hollies, plus evergreens eg cotoneaster. Also Rhododendron ponticum variegatum.
- Fallen leaves can be an excellent resource for garden, making excellent mulch.
- Volunteer numbers are going up in the Park – but more are needed for Saturdays.
- Ice skating rink opening up 23 November plus Magical Christmas (tickets selling well).
- 10 Year Plan survey – more help needed. Ideas wanted from residents. Conservation needs input. Play area won't last 5 years. Flowers? Things round the lake? Commercialisation is a worry but budgets are decreasing.
- Feedback please to Nick Hagon, email or talk. Nick.Hagon@crawley.gov.uk

### **Councillors' updates:**

**FG** 2000 signatures re Parade rents will go to Crawley Borough Council.

More bumps are in Tilgate Park car park to slow down cars, before hitting flaps.

**MM** – shops are big issue

New PCSO for Tilgate is in place.

**MM** younger members needed for the Forum please!

Member said that pedestrians feel they have priority crossing opposite Sainsburys and thinks this is dangerous.

**FG:** they are pedestrianising from College to Memorial Park to reduce traffic speed. (Cllr. Peter Smith knows most about this and other town centre developments.)

### **Cliff Charman, South Patch team update:**

– 2 team gangs have been leaf clearing in Tilgate.

– Mid December Pease Pottage roundabout is due to reopen (according to W. Sussex)

– Gritting is being reduced by WSCC. Flooding in drains – no runs are being cleared.

**Raffle:** drawn

### **Any other business:**

Open House collection – Ron Spraget was very grateful for all the items brought in tonight.

Don Garner: Wild flower patch in Durham Close has been prepared in conjunction with the Beavers and the South Patch team. Seeds are to be sown there in the spring. Bulb planting on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 in Chichester Close, if anyone wants to help.

### **Dates for the diary:**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February** meeting will be a Quiz supper!

Volunteers for Tilgate Park Peace Garden, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month 10.30 am (meet behind Walled Garden cafe)

Volunteers for Tilgate Park Heather Garden, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday each month 10 am (meet in Heather Garden)

### **Contacts**

<http://recycleforwestsussex.org>

10 year plan for Tilgate Park: email Nick.Hagon@crawley.gov.uk

Tilgate Forum: [www.tilgateforum.co.uk](http://www.tilgateforum.co.uk) Email: [tilgateforum@gmail.com](mailto:tilgateforum@gmail.com)