

Minutes Tilgate Forum 7.30pm Thursday 31st March 2022

1. Welcome, apologies from Laurence Taylor, Steve Welch, Jean Parsons, Tim Barnes, Jean Elmer, Mr and Mrs Hull.
1. Minutes of 3rd February: correction to news from Tilgate Park should say the zoo licence was renewed. It is not starting a new licence.
Minutes passed.
2. Notices: the Forum has a new Treasurer, Alison Barnes.
: the trees presented to Nick by the Forum have been planted in the Peace Garden
: a daytime meeting for Tuesday 26th April is planned at 10.15am [Note: this is now CANCELLED. See Future Dates at end.]
3. **“Stand up for Trees”** An illustrated talk from Professor Alan Aylward of The Woodland Trust
Prof. Aylward describes himself as a physicist by background, but he joined the Woodland Trust to support their work. He told us that:
 - The U.K. has only 13% tree cover which compares unfavourably with other countries. Reasons for this include the extensive use of timber to build ships, and the iron industry’s use of wood for smelting.
 - Ancient woodland is a tiny fraction of what was there, and is irreplaceable (ancient defined as existing in maps from 1600 AD)
 - Woodland faces many threats including climate change, and diseases such as Dutch elm disease and ash dieback.
 - Hedgerows were ripped out by farmers to enlarge fields, but a law was passed in 1983 to stop that. Field borders and hedges provide valuable habitat for flowers and wildlife.
 - The Woodland Trust was founded in 1972, and it started buying small woods and planting trees. It now owns 1200 woods, and is supported by large companies such as Sainsburys.
 - The Trust provides tree packs to schools and community groups free. It provides assistance for landowners who plant trees.
 - It is important for woods to have open areas, for fungi, for fallen trees to rot – so it needs some untidiness.
 - Breaking woods up into sections destroys runs for wildlife, and so those connections should be considered too. Bridging between woods makes them more viable for wildlife – but it takes 30 to 50 years.
 - National planning law protects Ancient woodland (the National Planning Policy Framework) so developments like Center Parc [at Oldhouse Warren] shouldn’t be allowed.
 - Pine wood plantations grow fast, straight timber for commercial purposes, but are bad for woodland floor and wildlife. Removing pines can help revive woodland, and allow the wood to restore itself.
 - Deer are a problem. There are 4 times more than we can support, with no natural predators.
 - The Woodland Trust is planting ash trees to find disease-resistant species.
 - Schoolchildren have been involved in planting seeds in bottles and looking after them until big enough to plant – and they love doing that.
 - Ancient, veteran and notable trees which are special to local folk can be protected if you tell the Woodland Trust.
 - Remembrance woods have been planted to widen participation. For example, Victory Wood near Whitstable has trees planted to represent the configuration of

ships at the Battle of Trafalgar. Also Langley Vale Wood at Epsom, and Jutland Wood to remember World War One.

- Government policy is to increase tree cover to 17%.
- For more information, see www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

5. *(Henry Smith M.P. was not available.)*

4. Ron Spraget had a warning for residents after he was targeted by clever scammers who phoned him, claiming to be Virgin helping their customers improve their services. They took £500. (Fortunately the bank stepped in to help.)

5. Outstanding questions: replacing toilets on Tilgate Parade and the old boat outside the former Men's Shed. Cllr. Crow said the answers were not known. A resident asked if there was a legal requirement for councils to replace toilets. The question about the former Men's Shed building development: Cllr. Crow said there may be delays caused by the "Water neutrality" requirement for developments.

6. Councillors' updates:

Cllr. Duncan Crow:

- the white lines in the Parade car park are now listed for re-painting.
- the Household Waste site is going onto summer opening times. The booking system has been largely supported, and has changed the mindset in usage.
- information about support for Ukraine refugees seeking accommodation can be found on the West Sussex website <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk>

A discussion followed about flooding at the edge of Tilgate Park, where a section is taped off. Sabrina Gant mentioned a leak. Also a question about water running from the Park across Salisbury Road into Worcester Road.

A complaint was made about the state of pavements in Hereford Close, on behalf of a disabled resident.

Cllr. Maureen Mwagale:

- the Friends of Tilgate Park is re-starting, and needs support.

7. Tilgate Park Update from Sabrina Gant:

- the Park is working with Woodland Trust to remove invasive species (Christian would give us a more horticultural report, but he was not here this time.)
- trees are being taken down with good reason i.e. dead, dying, damaged or dangerous.
- new wildflower beds are in the Walled Garden
- 8 kid goats are due to be born soon
- a busy Easter is being prepared for in the Park
- the zoo is cheaper than other zoos, there is a season ticket planned, and of course the Park itself is free to enter.
- the dog consultation has ended
- there is no Dragonboat race again this year (this is St. Catherine's decision), but there is Race for Life and Bark in the Park again.
- in answer to a question, there may be a concert in the Park next year, but the investment for putting on big events is risky.
- residents complained about Park visitors parking in residential roads.

8. Raffle was held, and prizes won.

Future Dates:

Tuesday 26th April 10.15am Coffee morning [CANCELLED]

NOW Wednesday 11th May 10.15am Coffee morning: Outreach Playworkers from the Play service + Swap Shop - bring books, jigsaws, DVDs. At Holy Trinity Church lounge, Titmus Drive.

Thursday 26th May 7.30 Forum: Katy Bourne, Police and Crime Commissioner

Thursday 21st July 7.30 Forum

Volunteer gardening Wednesdays at 10 (Heather Garden), Saturdays at 10 (Peace Garden)

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