

OPRA Minutes 23 October 2017

Elizabeth Sparks (Councillor for Charmandean) and Louise Murphy (Councillor for Offington Park) both present at the OPRA AGM

Agenda

1. OPRA Treasury Report (Val Ellis)
2. Election of Officers
3. Offington Avenue: TRO - Speed-watch and Verges
4. Parking at Broadwater Green (Louise Murphy)
5. Street Reps and Street Roundup
6. A27
7. Social Events
8. AOB

1. OPRA Treasury Report (Val Ellis)

Val presented the Treasury Report for the year to 8/09/17. OPRA has a surplus of £971.00 if added to last years total.

ACTION: Members would appreciate a copy of the accounts to be available for members to review (on the OPRA website).

2. Election of Officers (Martyn Hinchcliffe)

- Mitchell Parfitt & Belinda Cox standing down as Social Secretary and Membership Secretary
- Martyn Hinchcliffe proposed as OPRA Chairperson - AGREED
- Val Ellis proposed as new Membership Secretary and continuing as Treasurer - AGREED
- Paul Cox proposed as Communications Officer (including OPRA website) - AGREED

OPRA is in need of new committee members, please contact Paul or Martyn if interested in joining.

3. Offington Avenue: Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) - Speed-watch and Verges

Questionnaire issued to residents about Offington Avenue covering speeding, parking and verges. With help of West Sussex County Council (WSCC) we put forward a TRO to cover issues around dangerous parking at the Broadwater end of Offington Avenue, extending the existing yellow lines up to Gorse Avenue. Also at the T-Junction of Offington Drive and Offington Avenue - there will be double yellow lines around this junction, thereby enabling no visual obstruction at this junction.

Elizabeth Sparks asked to provide her approval to the proposals - obviously this was granted. The last word is that the residents need to approve the double-yellow lines outside their properties - this again was granted so should be scheduled to begin works in the next 3 months.

David our Speed Watch coordinator. When monitored, speeding in Offington Avenue wasn't an issue. We asked for Speed Watch to monitor speeding in Offington Avenue (with mobile speed guns) for a 1.5 to 2 hour period. During this time they monitored vehicles that travelled at 34 mph or above. About 75 vehicles travelling along the road, and only identified a few as offenders, although some were travelling as fast as 44 mph. Parked cars were acting as chicanes which naturally slow down the traffic. However this makes it difficult to be seen as Speed Watch Officers. A Speed Watch was undertaken in the last few days. No-parking signs were displayed to stop the chicanes, to enable the Speed-watch Offices to correctly operate the exercise, during which there were 200 passing vehicles, with 35 found to be speeding during the session.

In the last 8 months, 8 sessions have been set up but 5 have been cancelled - one was too foggy. We will continue to review this issue with further speed-watch exercises.

DN: The high VIS jackets, if they see you, they slow down.

Answer: The radar guns have a long range and operatives can see people slowing down, but they might still register as offending before they see the speed watch area.

Verges: on the Questionnaire, verges was the biggest problem with damage caused by parking on the verges. If people want to look after their verges, we as residents need to make sure that we park sensibly in the first place and any workmen/visitors to our properties should be asked not to park on the verges

4. Parking at Broadwater Green - Louise Murphy

People welcome the cricket, car boot sales, Broadwater carnival, etc. But unwelcome parking is not good. Louise and Paul Baker met with WSCC and Worthing Borough Council (WBC). A trial in the summer was enacted on Fire Station Open Day, unfortunately this resulted in a gridlock situation and Elizabeth had to call the police to resolve this issue.

There are several options:

Option 1: do nothing

Option 2: whenever an event is held on the Green, there is an events team at WBC, perhaps they should come up with a traffic management plan. For example, they planned for attendees at the Carnival and Fire Open day to use Worthing College car park. Unfortunately, people chose to drive round and around to find an empty space on the Green.

Option 3: All events should go through planning consultation - this could mean that residents have an opportunity to object to the plans

Option 4: Action protection marker costs £170 per residence and can deter unwanted parking across people's driveways, but is not legally enforceable

Plans have been submitted to demolish the Cricket Club and rebuild for both the Cricket Club and Broadwater Association as a 2-story building. There is a suggestion to insert mesh into the ground to stop parked cars from tearing up the grass on Broadwater Green.

Questions: What is the law exactly? What extra have people paid to hold the event? What legal standpoint do event organisers have around people's parking behaviour? What authority do event managers have to influence good parking behaviours?

Answers: The council have no power and also it is not a crime, so the Police will not get involved. This situation is difficult and that's why we are exploring options, including use of the Broadwater Methodist Church car park.

DN: Problem is not that people are parking, but that they park on both sides. Can we not have Police bollards saying "No Waiting". The main problems are on car boot sales days, not the Fair or the Fire Station Open Day. This should be charged to the event organisers if there is indeed a charge. A police officer said that an emergency service vehicle will drive through parked cars and bash them out of the way. Suggestion to ask about bollards (traffic cones). Louise will take this up with the authorities/NSL.

If you had a 1 hour restriction on commercial vehicles and camper vans, this could solve the problem [of undesirable vehicles parking around Broadwater Green]. Always the same answer - as long as these vehicles are taxed and insured, they are legally entitled to park there (for 28 days?) See Goring seafront where there are **No Camper Van** signs. The reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30 mph is a dis-benefit of parking camper vans and commercial vehicles. Not sure who owns the vehicles - could be residents living opposite Broadwater Green...?

Do people live in these camper vans? Louise sat on the Green - she knocked on the door of one vehicle, no-one home. A number of council officers have also been round from the Gypsy and Traveller Team. Inside the dirty van is a workshop. Nobody living there when checks made.

Question: Why can't the Worthing High School open their car park like they do for the football as they do for the football? Match Days at woodside road. Neighbourhood watch policing this.

5. Street Reps and Street Roundup

Martyn: Street Reps - Hall Close - thanks to all of the street reps. OPRA Street Reps are unique in Worthing and a useful and powerful tool, as the local contact for residents. We have around 1000 households in Offington Park and only around 10% are OPRA members. Without our Street Reps we would find it very difficult to deliver flyers, etc. If you are interested in becoming a Street Rep, please get in touch with Martyn.

DN: Need to get the message out about the role of the Street Reps and who they are, where they live, etc. Martyn would like to have a lead for the street reps and would welcome someone volunteering to help.

Neighbourhood Watch: Bi-monthly meeting at Thomas a Becket. Changing role of Police Community Support Officers and Neighbourhood Watch (chair Terry Rickard). See Chairman's update. Number of PCSOs has increased but more Neighbourhood Watch street co-ordinators are needed - if anyone is interested contact, Martyn or Terry.

Hall Close: There appears to be a lot of young people congregating on the green space during the day, evening and night. This can be problematic during the evening and later at night. Older residents are concerned and anxious about leaving their houses. Littering, criminal damage and the suspicion of drug taking. Bad mouthing local residents. On bikes, chasing youngsters. 12 bikes obstructing pavements. Damage to garden furniture and pot plants thrown onto cars. Youths have no respect for the residents. Has got worse. Started out with 2-3 lads, now around 12 youngsters, mostly lads, drinking and doing drugs. Every day, lunchtime and evenings. Residents have contacted the police. Martyn has also contacted the police through their website. It is very important that we report any anti social behaviour, etc. Problems haven't gone away, but residents are hopeful that the bad weather and colder temperatures will keep them away. Threat that one of the youths will retaliate if residents ask them to move on. One resident has phoned the police twice, but no-one has ever visited these residents to take a statement. What can the council do?

This is the first that Elizabeth has heard of the issues in Hall Close. Elizabeth will provide details of the antisocial behaviour to the council. Martyn will also raise the issue with the Offington Forum.

New forum called NextDoor - areas like ours can be represented.

DN: Two young ex-offenders recently came to the door in Offington Drive, the homeowner felt very pressured to buy from them. Louise encouraged people to get a **No Cold Calling** sign for the door. Martyn will look into this.

6. A27

Martyn referred to the A27 & Worthing Alliance (note distributed when people arrived). Martyn also sits on the A27 stakeholders meeting (there is a statement on this is on the website). The A27 upgrade questionnaire was really successful due to the work of the Street Reps. This was sent to Highways England. Martyn believes that we are likely to be the only residents association who provide feedback on all of the A27 options with a 50% response rate to the questionnaire.

The recent proposal is just one option - widely opposed by residents in Worthing and Lancing

Our MPs (Peter Bottomry and Tim Loughton) recently met with Chris Grayling (Secretary of State for Transport) - as publicised in Worthing Herald. They have appealed for extra funding for *Grade Separation* at major junctions (flyover/underpass). Chris Grayling formally replied that the funding could only be funded from RIS 2 but there will be competition for this funding from other developments. The options that residents seemed to like the most, is not in the feasibility study. Chambers of Commerce and MPs favour Grade Separation. Residents want a bypass. Martyn has actually got a costing from Highways England at around £340-510m. Cost benefit ratio needs to be greater than 1. This is currently 0.3, therefore does not stack up. Not clear how the benefits costing was arrived at. Not sure what specific bypass plan these costs are referring to.

DN: This is really interesting and matters to us, but not to people "down town" NIMBY - Worthing town centre residents don't seem concerned and/or are unaware.

New Monks Farm development has been opposed by local residents with comments like: IKEA will provide low skilled jobs, we need high skilled jobs; and Infrastructure will not cope.

Lamp post replacements are taking place along the A27 in Lancing A27, from Nov to Feb 2018.

Residents in Arundel voted in favour of the A27 bypass. Goodwood Estate opposed.

7. Social Events

OPRA needs a new social secretary. A great way to spend a Saturday morning is walking around Broadwater cemetery where they have some . Get in touch with Offington resident Debra Hillman to find out more, or to volunteer to help maintain the gardens.

All ideas for social events are welcome. We are also looking to join up with the newly formed Charmandean Residents Association.

8. AOB

Paul reminded neighbours about the OPRA website: Launched last year - fairly regularly updated <https://www.offingtonpark.org>. The OPRA website shares letters issued to the Worthing Herald and links to the A27 action group; the LoveWestSussex mobile phone app (which is very good); links to the West Sussex Police website, and other very interesting information about keeping safe and stopping cold callers, etc. Advertising for any social events will also be on this site. If there are any planned major events, we will do a leaflet drop too.

Louise Murphy: Flats in Poulter's Lane - planning application corner of Gorse Avenue. Property overgrown and unkempt. The planning application proposes to build 9 flats with 8 parking spaces on the site of this former family home. Residents are concerned that the plan is not in keeping with the local community or townscape. The original decision has been deferred to allow consultation with local residents. No residents living in Gorse Avenue were against the plot being developed, but not in the style proposed in the planning application. At the planning committee on 4/10/17, planning consent was refused unanimously, but the developer was encouraged to resubmit the plans, to be more in keeping with the area . They also have the right to appeal. Demand for housing is far outstripping supply and the only way to accommodate this is to increase housing density. Comparative areas in Findon Valley - bungalows are being converted into 4/5 bedroom family homes. In Charmandean, plots for one house are being split into two. Worthing is growing as a population from around 100,000 in 2011/12 to around 130-140,000 now, based on the number of Council Tax receipts. The Local Plan is currently being formulated in association with Communities and Local Government.