

# **GOLDSWORTH PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CIO**

## **MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING, 7.30pm on THURSDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2021 on ZOOM**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Trustees**

Irene Watson – Chair  
Celia Young – Secretary  
Tina Hartley – Treasurer  
George Binyon – Editor  
Cathy Butt – Social Secretary

#### **Support Team**

Steve Willson – Webmaster  
Bob Challoner – Project Manager NGP  
Bob Cowell – Community Matters  
Christina Candey – Advertising Manager

#### **Corporate Members**

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker – WBC  
Cllr Chitra Rana – WBC  
Cllr James Sanderson – WBC  
Cllr Colin Kemp – SCC  
Cllr Saj Hussain – SCC  
Seanne Hunter Hill – WBC  
Sylvia Lambart – GP Guides  
James Rickwood – Sea Cadets  
Roger Westcott – GP Angling Club  
Geoff McManus – WBC  
Patrick Coad – St Andrews Church

#### **Speaker**

Inspector David Bentley, Borough Commander

#### **Members**

Sarah Abbott  
Hilary Addison  
Wanda Binyon  
Gill Brookling  
Julie Cole  
John Covus  
Maryel Cowell  
Steve Davies  
Margaret Gower  
Dave Schofield  
Royer Slater  
Robert Thomson  
Grahame Walker  
Liz Wilkinson

#### **Non-members**

Jesse Boon  
Margaret & Michael Hussey  
Gary Rimay-Murani  
Susan & David Sheriff  
Sheila & Chris Wright

### **Apologies**

**Corporate Members:** Rupert Crossland – Beaufort Governors, Hilary Harris – GP Cubs, James Mackey, Lakeside Fellowship

**Members:** Pauline & Ian Eastwood, Jenny Ehlers, Mike Goodall, John & June Lock, Holger & Valerie Marsen, Katie Sherlock.

### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The Chair welcomed those present to the fourth meeting of GPCA CIO, and the third meeting on Zoom. She explained that, at the start, everyone other than the speaker would be muted but anyone could ask a question or make a comment by using the “raise your hand” key, by using “chat”, or just by waving at the camera.

As there was a guest speaker, usual items (minutes, Trustees’ reports, etc.) would be deferred until later in the meeting.

The Chair introduced the guest speaker, **Inspector Dave Bentley, the Borough Police Commander**, who would talk about community policing, and then take questions.

### **2. Inspector Dave Bentley**

Inspector Dave Bentley explained that he had taken up the role of Borough Commander in May 2020 and, with his team, focussed on neighbourhood policing. Three key elements are increasing community engagement, efficiency with resources and being in the right places

when needed. He is keen on problem solving - looking at the underlying causes – in order to identify local priorities, to have a dialogue with the community, working in partnership with local organisations and to be accountable. Woking Police already had good partnerships with Woking Council, local charities and local employers, and he is keen to involve the community in crime prevention, involving people who want to make the local community safer.

Woking Police has recently had a significant increase in resources, financed by the government and the increase in the precept on rates, and now has 2 sergeants, 8 PCs, 11 PCSO's plus specialist officers in youth engagement and antisocial behaviour (ASB), a civilian licensing officer and an office manager. Goldsworth Park is part of the central Woking division, along with Horsell and the town centre, which has 2 PC's and 4 PCSO's.

There have been successes in Woking overall: a 46% reduction in bike theft; they have built significantly on youth engagement, tackled ASB although there is more work to be done as there has been a rise during the pandemic, done well at preventing residential burglaries, increased speed enforcement capacity, and targeted licensed premises selling alcohol to young people.

The Inspector, being keen on statistics, told the meeting that, between April and December 2020, there had been a 12.2% reduction in all crime. In detail, reductions of 18% in criminal damage, 23% in residential burglaries, 13.5% in vehicle crime, 30% in vehicle crime but only a small decrease in violence. However, there had an 18% increase in drug offenses and increases in domestic violence and anti-social behaviour.

In Goldsworth Park, comparing 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 with the same period ending 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021, there had been an 8.7% increase in incidents – not all crimes but occasions when the Police had attended. Within this, there had been decreases of 25% in theft, 45% in criminal damage, 38% in vehicle crime, 34% in residential burglaries and a small decrease in domestic incidents.

Inspector Bentley said that an important aspect of future plans is to tackle drugs in the community as they lead to so many other problems for health and social care as well as crime. Another is to provide support for those who have experienced trauma in their lives before they get to a crisis, especially where children are involved. They will continue to apply ASB legislation where appropriate. He is keen to listen to the community and to keep them informed of what the Police are doing. When the Covid threat is reduced, they will be much more visible on the ground.

### **Questions and comments to Inspector Bentley**

**GB** What is the policy of Woking Police towards enforcing Covid precautions in Goldsworth Park ward?

**DB** Our policy is quite clear throughout of Woking.  
Engage with those who disregard the government restrictions,  
Explain the restrictions,  
Encourage people to keep to the restrictions,  
Enforce with penalty notices as a last resort.

**GB** There is a problem with lack of social distancing and overcrowding around the lake path and in the children's playgrounds, particularly at weekends.

**DB** Covid Marshalls are employed by WBC and will be sent to areas where there have been reports. Woking police meet with Woking Council and other agencies weekly, and they will all be notified of the problem to make sure that resources are deployed.

**GM** said that Covid Marshalls have been to Goldsworth Park numerous times, and that the police do also attend.

**DS** Expressed concern with the Covid risk of joggers, breathing heavily, around the lake path, where there is not much space to avoid them. Could there be a separate jogging path or area?

**DB** This is a question for the Council to answer.

- GM** Will look into this and get back but cannot promise anything.
- DB** The answer may be that a “personal responsibility and consideration for others” message needs to be broadcast.
- HA** Commented how some people ignored the virus and gave the example of someone moving her husband’s trolley in Waitrose rather than waiting for him to move on.
- SD** Was also concerned about overcrowding on the lake path where family groups would not make way for others.
- IW** There is a problem with electric scooters around the lake path and other footpaths in Goldsworth Park. Can anything be done about them?
- DB** Police use Engage – Explain – Enforce and can seize e-scooters as their use on public roads and footpaths is illegal.
- IW** referred to the disparity between the way e-scooters and e-bikes are viewed. No bikes, e or otherwise, have to be insured and inspected even though they can cause damage and injury but, in the trials, e-scooters have to be. However, this is a matter for Parliament and legislation.
- DB** said that this was an issue of education and e-scooter users should understand the consequences and dangers.
- A-MB** There has been a spate of garages break-ins. What can be done to deter this?
- DB** There has been an increase in break-ins to garages and to garden sheds – this is counted as residential burglary. The Police have been talking to householders about security. There is a device called a “garage defender” that can be screwed into the ground in front of the garage door to prevent it being raised; this is effective but expensive.
- JS** Is anti-social behaviour an increasing problem in Goldsworth Park?
- DB** There has been an increase in ASB during the lockdowns - and it is not always young people. ASB should be reported to the Police as there is a designated resource who compiles intelligence which helps to target action. The Police will not always be able to attend immediately as deployment is based on threat, risk and harm.
- CR** Asked about the partnership meetings which DB had mentioned
- DB** Responded that there were 3 main groups; Community Harm and Risk Management (CHARM) which involves WBC Community Safety and SCC Social Services; Joint Action Group which involved the Fire Service, Environmental Health and Community Safety; and PPYP (Prioritising/Prevention for Young People) which involved schools, SCC Inclusion Teams and Community Safety.
- CR** Also raised the issue of speeding in Littlewick Road and Lockfield Drive.
- DB** Was not aware of particular issues in these roads but would look into it.
- IW** Referred to the Community Speedwatch Scheme which had been proposed by **SH** but which had been delayed by Covid. SH will provide information for the next issue of Goldsworth News.
- SH** Raised the issue of drugs use in the car park by the Lodge and round the lake where there are plenty of places to hide. He asked if there could be patrols from time to time.
- DB** Reiterated that reducing drug-use in Woking as a whole is a priority and said that he would arrange for more patrols.

Commander Bentley then asked what residents’ top 3 priorities for policing in Woking were. The response was:

1. Garage burglaries
2. Antisocial Behaviour
3. Drugs

with a further comment that higher police visibility might have a preventative effect.

He then asked how residents would like the police to communicate with them. The response was:

1. Meetings
2. Goldsworth News
3. Social Media – Facebook & Twitter – @wokingbeat

**IW** commented that there used to be a police presence at regular GPCA meetings and **DB** said he would like to see this again. He had written two articles for the Woking Magazine and would be happy to write articles with a Goldsworth Park focus for Goldsworth News. **DC** suggested that a quarterly statistical summary would be useful. **GB** will contact **DB** to arrange this. **SW** said that the GPCA had a website with a section on policing which was very out of date now. **DB** said he would be happy to update it with details and pictures of the team. **CK** referred to the fact that, in the past, PCSOs would attend events in their “patch” so residents would get to know them. It was hoped that this would be case again when events are permitted again. **DB** will send through a map of the area with the names of the PCs and PCSOs allocated to each.

**DB** requested that the Police become a Corporate Member of the GPCA CIO with PCSO Dino Gomez as representative.

### 3. Introductions

**Seanne Hunter Hill**, the new WBC Neighbourhood officer, who started in November 2020 in place of Hannah Rees. [seanne.hunterhill@woking.gov.uk](mailto:seanne.hunterhill@woking.gov.uk)

**Bob Challoner**, who has joined the GPCA team to lead on Natural Goldsworth Park, taking over from Gerry Smeesters.

**BC** said that Gerry had left a good foundation to build on and he would be taking this forward into firm plans and a timetable for the future of North Meadow and the adjoining woodland. He had gathered a small team including **CY**, **RW** and **LW** who were present plus another resident who was not. They will be looking at what they have learned about North Meadow and the woodland, their biology and eco-systems, as a basis for proposals for the future. [projects@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk](mailto:projects@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk)

**Bob Cowell**, who has joined the GPCA team, and will be focussing on issues raised by the residents, such as planning, speeding, etc., problems with shared areas, helping them to find where to go for a solution. [community@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk](mailto:community@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk)

### 4 Community Matters

The Chair asked if there were any questions for the GPCA as distinct from the Police.

**CB** asked why the children’s playground is still open, when the outdoor “gym” had been closed.

**GM** WBC is following national Covid guidelines, and the locking-down of playgrounds has not been requested.

The Chair asked if **A-MB** would update the meeting on the CIL Money. A-MB explained that the GPCA consulted residents on behalf of the Ward Councillors, and the most popular idea within the funds available was picnic tables close to the lake, more benches on North Meadow and round the sports pitches, and more rubbish/recycling bins. This had been approved by the Joint Committee for Woking, and Cllr Barker has authorised the purchases.

The Chair asked if **CK** had any news about Lakers. **CK** said that the conversation regarding what will happen to Lakers following the fire is still ongoing. The suggestion is for care-leavers’ accommodation, which is sorely needed in Surrey, above community space which would be managed by a Church or voluntary group. He has asked for a meeting about progress and hopes to report soon.

The Chair provided information on another initiative involving young people. Woking Cycle Club is seeking to upgrade the BMX track near the children’s playground, with a course that

is suitable for young people aged 3 to 17, with 50% funding from Cycle England. They are seeking other funding from WBC and Your Fund, Surrey.

Alongside this, the GPCA is considering suggesting that a new skateboard park should be constructed between the children's playground and the BMX track. **IW** will promote this on Your Fund, Surrey.

**CK** is involved with the BMX Track and will discuss the skateboard park idea with **IW**. **DB** said there was a Design-Out Crime Officer who could help with such projects.

JS said that the Bike Project on Lakeview will be revived later in the year, Covid permitting. **DB** offered free bike-marking.

## **5. Officers' Reports**

### **5.1 Chair's Report**

Membership of GPCA CIO stands at 92 Individual Members and 27 Corporate Members. **BC** designed a useful membership register, using Excel, which is easy to use. Membership of the Facebook Group is doing well, standing at just over 900.

Obviously, due to Covid, things have been quiet since the AGM, but there was an Autumn Litter Pick, the GPCA was represented at the Remembrance Sunday Service outside the Health Centre, and the Christmas Tree went up in the shopping centre courtyard but, sadly, without the carol singing.

### **5.2 Treasurer's Report**

Things have been very quiet on the financial front, too, with nothing new to report.

### **5.3 Editor – Goldsworth News**

The Summer and Autumns edition of Goldsworth News went out on-line, owing to Covid restrictions, but the Winter edition was back in print. The March edition will be on-line again, but hopefully by Summer it will be print again. **GB** thanked **IW, RW, RS and KW** (vicar of St Andrew's Church) for their regular items for Goldsworth News. He is seeking people to join the Editorial Team and new contributors would be welcome.

All members of GPCA will be e-mailed the magazine, and anyone wishing to become a member should contact **IW**. It will also be available on the website.

### **5.4 Natural Goldsworth Park**

Thames Water have finished the new Woodland Path and will continue with further work in the woodland area as part of their 5 year plan. **BC** is in conversation with Thames Water and said that they had a positive approach to engaging with the community about helping with selective clearance of the laurel, etc., and were seeking ideas for improvements. **TW** is also seeking a conversation with WBC to ensure a joined-up approach to the management of the woodland belonging to WBC. **IW** will request 2 rustic signposts to indicate the Woodland Path.

**RW** said that, over the next few weeks, the Angling Club will be replacing rotting posts on some of the platforms and some around The Point. They will also repair the fencing around the wildlife area. They will build a compound for the wood chippings which are used to top dress the platforms. The chippings will be moved into the compound and the rubble will be removed.

### **5.5 Social Secretary's Report**

**CB** reported that a "picture trail" around the lake, North Meadow and recreation ground which children and families could follow in a socially distanced way was being planned, possibly for Easter, but this will depend on Covid restrictions.

**AM-B** suggested an on-line Quiz Night. **CB** will ask on the Facebook Group for numbers who would be interested in such an event.

## **6. Any Other Business**

- 6.1 IW** advised of two Zoom meetings on 22 and 29 January arranged by Horsell Prepared to which all are invited on the topic of how Woking has been affected by Woking and where it goes from here. The speakers are from Woking Chamber of Commerce Cllr Beryl Hunwicks, Mayor of Woking. All Woking residents are invited to “join” the meetings and Zoom details can be found on Horsell Wire.
- 6.2 SH** advised us that the new pedestrian bridge over Lockfield Drive had been completed on time, and the road is now open.
- 6.3 GM** reminded us to let **SHH** know of any “jobs” that should be being done by WBC on Goldsworth Park.
- 6.4 RS** has noticed a lot of rubbish along the footpath and hedges up to the canal and asked if SERCO still picks up litter along the footpaths. **A-MB** said that they should. **RS** suggested that the GPCA could do another litter pick. **IW** responded that this was difficult in the current Covid “lock down” but there would be another litter-pick as soon as possible. Meanwhile, if individuals would like to litter pick in their family group, the GPCA has litter-pickers and hi-viz jackets that are available to borrow from **IW**. They would have to take the litter home and dispose of it in their bins.
- 6.5 SHH** reported that there will be a mobile Covid-testing unit in the car park by the recreation ground on 1,2,3,9,10 and 11 February. Also, Goldwater Lodge will be used as a lateral flow testing facility for people who cannot work from home. All tests will be by appointment only.

**IW** thanked everyone for attending, particularly **DB** for his time and interesting talk.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 21.55.

Date of next General Meeting: 21 April 2021.