

GOLDSWORTH PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CIO

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING, 7.30pm on WEDNESDAY, 19th JANUARY 2022 on ZOOM

Attendees

Trustees & Postholders

Irene Watson	Chair
Celia Young	Secretary
Tina Hartley	Treasurer
George Binyon	Editor, Goldsworth News
Bob Challoner (BCh)	Project Manager NGP
Bob Cowell (BCo)	Community Officer
Christina Candey	Advertising Manager

Corporate Members

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker	WBC
Cllr James Sanderson	WBC
Cllr Chitra Rana	WBC
Cllr Sajid Hussain	SCC
Seanne Hunter-Hill	Neighbourhood Officer
Patrick Coad	St Andrews Church
Michael Griffiths	Goldsworth Care

Speaker

Sue Wales, Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Resident Members

Sarah Abbott
Hilary Addison
Wanda Binyon
Gill Brookling
Martin & Wendy Clark
Maryel Cowell
Steve Davies
Jenny Ehlers
Sue Johnson
James Mackey
Ann & Gordon Moss
Julie Newsam
Royer Slater
Robert Thomson
Steve Wilson

Apologies

Jonathan Lord MP
Cllr Lance Spencer WBC
Hilary Harris GP Cubs
Sylvia Lambart GP Guides
Roger Westcott Angling Club
Pauline & Ian Eastwood
Holger & Valerie Marsen

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the GPCA General Meeting, on Zoom again due to the prevalence of the Omicron variant. As before, everyone will be muted at the start of the meeting, but they would be able to ask questions and make comments by using the "raise your hand" button, sending a note through "chat" or just waving at the camera.

As there is a guest speaker, the usual items such as apologies, minutes of the last meeting and Trustees reports will be deferred until later.

The Chair then introduced SUE WALES, Head of Strategic Transformation at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. She is here to tell us about a new project being developed by the NW Surrey Alliance – called TRIBE.

Sue Wales

Sue explained that her job is in the outward-facing part of the Trust in NW Surrey, working with the "Alliance" of statutory bodies, hospitals, local councils, GPs, the voluntary sector and community groups, trying to improve the health and well-being of the population of NW Surrey. TRIBE is the name of a platform or an app which can be run on a smartphone, iPad, tablet or laptop. The aim of TRIBE is to help local communities to better connect with each other. She explained that they can decide what to put on the app – it could be volunteers offering services or details of activities in the area such as sports centres, churches, etc. It is available to everyone and is simple to use so people could ask for help, offer services or search for events. It would also signpost activities and connect to other platforms. In Woking, the app is being piloted in Goldsworth Park and Sheerwater.

At the moment, they are looking for volunteers to work with the technical team in scoping what would be appropriate to have on the platform and how it would work.

Anyone wishing to join the scoping group will be asked to meet with the technical team for an hour, fortnightly, by Zoom (for now) and face-to-face, at a later date. Volunteers will be shown how the app works and have the opportunity to “play” with it at their leisure, to make suggestions for improvements, for example, other languages, bigger buttons, clearer writing. They are looking at ways to make the app more relevant to the local communities and to encourage groups and organisations to use it. They are also looking at how to advertise the app to every single household in the Goldsworth Park area.

In the following discussion:

IW: sought clarification that, at this stage, they are not looking for actual volunteers to offer help to anyone but for volunteers to help design the app, trial the app and to make sure that it works.

SW: confirmed that it is to refine and trial the app, to make it easy to use for as wide a group of the population as possible.

IW: wondered how it will reach the whole population if it is an app on a smartphone. Many people who would benefit from the app don't have the facilities. Is there any way in which the use of the app can be broadened to make it accessible for people who don't have those facilities?

SW: explained that they are looking at people who could become local “champions”, such as Social Prescribers or local community development workers who could work with people and teach them how to use the app. In some areas, there are “tech angels” who help people to use the app.

IW: pointed out that, in organisations like Goldsworth Care, volunteers are police-checked. Will everyone who registers for the app be monitored in that way, to make sure that everyone is safe?

SW: explained that, if an organisation, like Goldsworth Care, which requires its volunteers to be DBS checked registers with TRIBE, it is offering “safe” services but individuals would not have had such checks. For example, many communities set up informal “mutual aid” networks during lockdown which set limits on their activities and had rules such as no money changing hands or entering houses, as they could not do checks. Part of the scoping exercise would be to consider what checks, if any, users might like to see for individual volunteers and in what situations.

IW: asked the meeting if there anyone present who would be interested in taking part in the design of the app? There was a short discussion about the role of organisations such as Goldsworth Care and how they would fit.

SW: explained further that the idea is to help people be better connected and provide easier access to what is out there - but not to replace what is already in place. Users would just put in their postcode/local area/street and then search for what they wanted, e.g. football clubs for teenagers, and the app would display what is available – provided the local groups had signed up. It would be good to have volunteers from such groups involved in the scoping exercise to ensure that the arrangements are appropriate.

TRIBE has been commissioned and will be managed by the NW Surrey Alliance. They will be checking that organisations that register are suitable and safe to use.

GBr, MC, MG and SW expressed interest in being involved with the trial and the Chair said she would pass their contact details on.

MG: commented that volunteers and clients with Goldsworth Care run the spectrum of IT skills from nil to excellent but most are unable or unwilling to use smartphones/apps. Most of their business is done by phone. He was alarmed at how “techy” the database method seems to be.

SW: explained that this is an opportunity to make a potentially “techy” tool easily useable.

IW: suggested that one or two of the volunteers at Goldsworth Care could become “champions” to help other people use the app.

SA: said that it sounds like a really good idea and asked who the target audience is.

SW: confirmed that it was for everybody. Part of the scoping exercise would be to identify what information people would like access to locally.

SA: said she would be interested in participating as she sometimes found that it is not straightforward to find out what is going on in the area.

SW: thanked those who had volunteered and asked that her contact details should be passed on to anyone who asked about TRIBE.

IW: thanked SW and invited her to stay on for the rest of the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the last General Meeting of GPCA CIO on 21st July 2021, and the AGM on 20th October 2021 had been circulated. Both sets of Minutes were agreed.

Apologies for today’s Meeting will be recorded in the Minutes.

3. Community Matters

3.1 Goldsworth Park Centre

Cllr A-MB: reminded the meeting of the “surgery” held by Cllr A-MB, JS and LS live on Facebook at 10.00am on the first Saturday of each month. It can be accessed later so that residents can hear about what is going on locally and with the Council

The Shopping Centre Car Park will be resurfaced shortly. This had been agreed as part of the arrangement when the Council bought the shopping Centre. The Managing Agents, Curchods, will notify when it is going to be done. They will be resurfacing the car park and the access road, so it may be a bit inconvenient for a while.

HA asked if all the recently-added “disability spaces” would remain after resurfacing as the GPCA had worked hard to get them put in. Cllr A-MB will do all she can to make sure the spaces remain.

CC asked if the footpaths around the centre and the dropped curbs would also be repaired as some are in a bad way. Cllr A-MB said that a few people have raised this, particularly the steep footpath outside the Hospice, but she did not think this was part of the plan at present.

The Chair asked when the slide in the play area would be repaired - it has been boarded-up for 7 or 8 months now. Cllr A-MB said that, apparently, they are waiting for a part.

3.2 Lakers

Cllr A-MB tendered apologies from Cllr Lance Spencer (SCC) who had asked her to raise the issue of Lakers. The buildings have been demolished and the site cleared but there are no definite plans for it yet. SCC is seeking the views of the community about what to do with the site. The Chair summarised what the GPCA had been told by Cllr Colin Kemp - that the ground floor would likely be community space to be run by charity/voluntary organisations providing activities for young people, and that there had been talks with various organisations that were interested in running it. The upper floors would be accommodation for care-leavers. She had the impression that, in general, the community thought that this was a good idea. Cllr A-MB asked that any ideas for the site should be relayed to SCC via the SCC Councillors – Lance Spencer (Goldsworth East & Horsell and Saj Hussain (Goldsworth West & Knaphill).

3.3 Yellow Lines

MG asked if any progress been made following the recent consultation concerning double-yellow lines in Sythwood. Cllr A-MB said that there are some new yellow lines near the Salvation Army building. Cllr SH said that the consultation document about new double yellow lines should be out shortly.

3.4 Councillors' Surgeries

In the interests of remaining apolitical, the Chair asked Cllr CR and Cllr SH if they held surgeries on Zoom where residents could visit and ask questions. Cllr SH said that they did not at present but they were considering doing so. The Chair asked to be informed when they were arranged so that they could be publicised on Facebook and other media.

3.5 Litter

JN raised the issue of the large quantities of litter around Goldsworth Park. Her son had been litter-picking around GP regularly for his Duke of Edinburgh's Award and she wondered if the GPCA could encourage schools to suggest that pupils do litter-picking as part of their DofE.

SH-H said that if anyone sees a build-up of litter anywhere, please let her know, and she can ask SERCO to target those areas.

BCh said that he had cause to contact SERCO recently about fly-tipping around the Meadow recently, and their response had been prompt and efficient, usually within 24 hours. Go to the WBC website and "fly-tipping".

3.6 Lighting around the lake footpath

GB said that Cllr A-MB had taken up the issue of lighting and, tomorrow, her motion to update the lighting on the lake footpath to a LED system goes before the Executive. He read out a paragraph from the agenda: "Officers have reviewed options to upgrade lighting around Goldsworth Park Lake to introduce LED lights and funding options will continue to be explored. We are awaiting a formal response from Surrey County Council in terms of future maintenance options. However, more recently, as it had proven difficult to source parts to maintain the existing lighting, two of the lights have been replaced with LED lights and we will take the opportunity to gain feedback on the effectiveness of the new lights before making further plans."

He wondered how many of those present had seen the two new lights, numbers 18 and 21, which give a bright, wide downward spread with very little upward light-pollution. The old columns have been used. He asked Cllr A-MB who this feedback should be directed to if we are going to support this move for the LED conversions. Cllr A-MB said to give feedback to SH-H.

Cllr A-MB observed that it took a long time to get repairs/replacement bulbs, resulting in long dark areas around the lake. She wondered why, when SCC were replacing all lights with LED bulbs, WBC not doing the same thing. Other options could be to find some other funding or ask SCC to take over the lake footpath lights. The Chair clarified that the lights around the lake are the responsibility of WBC, not SCC.

SH-H said that it was the Council's intention to replace the lights as they go out, with LED lights, like the new lights. However, it is not just a matter of changing the bulbs – the heads must be changed as well. With the two lights in questions, the heads were broken and had to be replaced. SH-H will be pleased to receive feedback at Seanne.HunterHill@woking.gov.uk. Cllr SH thought that there had been some suggestion that the lights should not be on all night, for the benefit of wildlife. The Chair thought that the lights should remain on at night for safety near the water provided the all new ones are focussed downwards to minimise disruption to bats and other wildlife.

BCh said that the lake is a very important foraging area for the local bat population. Whilst accepting that there is a balance to be sought here, he suggested that whoever is dealing with the lights gets in touch with the Surrey Bat Group, to get their input.

3.7 Safer road crossing in Kirkland Avenue

CY raised the case of a person with limited mobility who has to cross Kirkland Avenue in order to get a bus into Woking. They have to walk a very long way to the light-controlled crossing to cross safely and then back almost to where they started on the other side to the bus-stop. Would it be possible to have another crossing or a refuge in the middle of the road close to the bus-stops near Oakfield. There must be other people with the same problem.

Cllr SH said that this issue had not been mentioned before but it sounded like a good idea. He asked that the person in question emailed him with the details and he will work on it.

3.8 Green Waste Collection

MG asked if there was any news about green bins and when they are likely to be emptied?

Cllr A-MB thought that the next collection would be towards the end of February. It is unclear when the service will return to usual - may be April or even later - since JWS have still not recruited enough drivers. There will be a question about green waste at Monday's Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, which can be accessed by anyone via the website.

HA said that she 9 bags of green waste to go to the recycling centre; JN offered to take them for her.

4. Officers' Reports

4.1 Chair's Report

Membership stands at 110 Individual Members of whom 6 are Trustees, and 27 Corporate Members. 3 people have left as they have moved away from the area. Membership of the Facebook Group is growing and now stands at over 1200.

The GPCA has managed to do quite a lot since the AGM in spite of Covid.

The GPCA was represented at the **Remembrance Sunday Service** outside the Health Centre.

The **Christmas Tree** was put up in the shopping centre courtyard for the 6th year. The Chair recorded thanks to the shops, pub, Church, Squires and Angling Club for their contributions towards the tree, and to the two men from the Angling Club who provided the muscle. SingGold, the community choir, led carol singing when the lights were turned on, aided by the Brownies and Rainbows who gave a lovely rendition of Away in a Manger.

A first this year was the **Christmas Market** organised by Hannah Bowler, who is the GPCA's Events Organiser now. It was small event - a "boutique" market - with stalls selling jewellery, gifts, Christmas door wreaths and good as new toys. Other stalls had competitions and games for children. There was entertainment from SingGold, Serious Skiffle and Open the Book acted a nativity play. Andy's Café was open serving hot drinks and cakes. There were people browsing the stalls all the time and the stall holders were happy with the event.

BCo talked about the other initiative - the **Goldsworth Park Calendar**, featuring pictures taken by residents. To date, 188 have been sold and made a profit of £373.00. There are still a few available if anyone wants one, from the dry cleaner's, the gym, and the chemist.

This year's calendar is A5 in size. If a larger (A4) calendar would be preferable, please get in touch with BCo at community@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk.

4.2 Treasurer's Report

The Chair gave the report as most of the activity related to these initiatives. Both the Christmas Market and the Calendar aimed to raise money for good causes, and the Calendar has raised £373 to-date, and the Christmas Market raised made a profit of over £130. The GPCA rounded up the total and has made donations of £250 each to Woking Hospice, Your Sanctuary and Andy's Community Café.

The Treasurer had nothing to add other than the GPCA is still "ticking along" at the moment.

4.3 Goldsworth News

Editor George Binyon has nothing to report today.

4.4 Natural Goldsworth Park

BCh reported that a new Facebook group for NGP was opened at the beginning of December and now has 108 members rising. There is also a group of experts who can advise and answer questions people may have about wildlife around the Park.

The Angling Club has donated £100 to NGP to fund an owl box, which, hopefully, will encourage another pair of tawny owls to nest in the area.

Public consultation on the BMX Track closed 6th January. IW and BCh attended a meeting on-site with Council Officers, a representative of the Woking Cycle Club and the designer/contractor. No firm design was presented at that meeting, so only general comments could be made. From an ecological point of view, the habitat on and around the track will change, unfortunately, for the worse with the increase in use and human activity. It was agreed that the situation will be reviewed when the work on the track is getting near to completion to agree a way forward with the Council. A survey had revealed there are 65 plant species in that area, and it supports 22 of the 23 butterfly species on the Meadow so it was an important contributor to site's ecology. Until more is known about the plans for the track, it is not possible to make any meaningful comment.

5. Any Other Business

- 5.1 The Chair reported that the Trustees had reviewed the idea of an application to Your Fund, Surrey for funds to build a Skatepark in the recreation ground. Concerns have been expressed about the impact of the renewed BMX Track and a Skatepark in this one small area. Added to this, there has not been the support from the community that had been hoped for and now the GPCA has learned that the Council is going to build a new Skatepark, twice the size the one proposed here, in Sheerwater alongside the multi-million pound sports centre with swimming pool and a new MUGA (multi-use games area). This negates our argument that there is no modern skatepark in the borough. Most of the Trustees would prefer funding to go into refurbishing the existing skatepark in Sythwood but this would not meet the Your Fund criteria, as it is council-owned and maintained. It was decided to wait until the BMX Track is completed and assess its impact on the area. Cllr SH reminded the meeting that Your Fund is a 5 year programme and the Chair replied that the idea is on hold, not gone entirely.
- 5.2 Cllr SH reported that a number of new bus shelters had been installed. SA asked if there were plans for lighting these new bus shelters as they are really dark and feel unsafe at night. Cllr SH said he would take this on board and make enquiries.
- 5.3 JE explained that, about a year prior to the new bus shelters being installed, the Council had installed boxes sticking out of verges and, in some cases, almost blocking the pathway. She wondered what the purpose of the boxes might be.
- 5.4 JE asked whether information about fly-tipping and who to contact could be published in social media and Goldsworth News? GB concurred.

There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and hoped that the next meeting, at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 20th April, might be held in Goldwater Lodge or the Dianthus Building.

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm.