

GOLDSWORTH PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CIO

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING 7.30pm on Wednesday, 20th July 2022 in the Dianthus Building Lower Deck

Attendees

Trustees & Postholders

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

Corporate Members

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker	WBC
Cllr James Sanderson	WBC
Cllr Sajid Hussain	SCC
Seanne Hunter-Hill	Neighbourhood Officer
Gary Rima-Muranyi	Dianthus Trading
Roger Westcott	GP Angling Club
Hilary Harris	GP Scouts
Patrick Coad	St Andrews Church
Rev Scott Smith	St Andrews Church

Guests

Peter Kirby	Radio Sailing Woking
Richard Sadler	GP Angling Club
Sharon Lawrence	Resident
Jane Smith	Resident
Sheila & Chris Wright	Residents

Resident Members

Hilary & Michael Addison
Wanda Binyon
Gill Brookling
Martin & Wendy Clark
John Covus
Maryel Cowell
Ian Eastwood
Peter Eggleton
Jenny Ehlers
Pamela Marshall
Ann & Gordon Moss
Liz Wilkinson
Steve Willson

Apologies

Cllr Lance Spencer	SCC
Cllr Stephen Oades	WBC
Sandie Bolger	SCC Youth Team
PC Iona King	Surrey Police
Fran Siwicka	Waitrose
Sarah Abbott	
Sue Johnson	
Holger & Valerie Marsen	
Robin & Carol McNeilage-Thomson	
Julie Newsam	
Roy Slater	

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for any confusion over the location of the meeting. She asked everyone who wanted to speak to raise their hand and to state their name clearly for the record.

There were a few apologies which will be recorded in the minutes.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 20th April 2022 had been circulated and were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising would be dealt with under the usual headings.

3. Questions from the floor

As usual, questions from the floor come first but this would not prevent anyone from raising questions later.

- 3.1** BCh raised the issue of e-scooters which are a menace on footpaths and roads, going too fast, often with two youngsters on board, with no regard for others. The use of e-scooters is illegal except on private land or in one of the designated trial areas. There have been over 1,300 accidents involving e-scooters resulting in death or serious injuries but it was

established that there had been none in GwP so far. RS, a Police Officer, explained that policing such matters was a matter of priorities and resources, and that incidents of the highest harm and greatest risk would be dealt with first. Police patrols around the lake have been stepped up as a result of a Section 35 Dispersal Order to deal with a number of issues and officers will deal with the illegal use of e-scooters if in a position to deal with it.

3.2 The Chair moved on to other issues that had led to the increase in Police patrols.

- a) LW reported that there had been three fires in the woods in the last week, all started by children under 10.
- b) There had been a number of reports of people swimming in the lake which, while not illegal, was unwise. RW reported that he had spoken to a group of 35 + youngsters who were swimming or thinking about swimming in the lake and explained the hazards, e.g. leptospirosis, pollution, etc. They went away quietly and it seems to have had an effect as there have been no more reports of swimmers. WBC has put up notices and the local schools have been told about the situation. BCh mentioned that the life belts were barely visible in the bushes around the lake; RW said that and GPAC working party would be taking remedial action at the weekend.

GB said he was aware of the Section 35 Dispersal Order which was now in force. He had called 101 when probably the same youths were throwing sticks at the geese on the Point. After a delay in getting through, the Police turned up quite quickly and spoke to the youths, saying that if there were any more complaints, they would be taken home to their parents. GR-M reported that a group of teenagers had been harassing people in the Community Hall. He spoke to them and then called 101. RS explained that, where a group appeared to be harassing others and causing distress, the ring-leaders would be targeted by Officers acting on the Dispersal Order, not the whole group.

The prompt response from the Police to the 101 calls was welcomed.

There was some discussion about where youngsters could be dispersed to as there were few if any youth facilities in GwP. GRM said that, with support from the authorities, he could lay on some activities during the summer. Cllr SH spoke about the consultation exercise undertaken by SCC a year or so ago about the future of youth services. The Chair pointed out that there had been no consultation in GwP as the Lakers building had burned down and, rather than arranging a meeting in one of the other community buildings, GwP residents were expected to go the Knaphill meeting where, according to Cllr A-MB, there was no consultation, just a talk about youth provision in Knaphill. HH said that, even when Lakers was operating, there was still a lot of anti-social behaviour often aimed at the Scouts and Guides.

3.3 JC raised the issue of speeding along the main distributor roads in GwP, particularly Bampton Way, with cars and motorcycles doing up to 50mph. There had been discussion about Community Speed Watch before the pandemic but nothing has happened since. RS suggested contacting the Safer Camera Partnership which could monitor speeds on the roads in question. SL said that widening the refuge in Bampton Way to make it safer for people to wait in the centre had made it more dangerous to wait on the pavement to cross.

3.4 JE asked why there were no benches on the south side of the lake for people to rest while walking round the lake. The Chair explained that this matter had been discussed before and the main reason was that the land on the lake side of the path slopes away from the path too steeply to be able to site a bench and the land on the other side of the path is privately owned by the owners of the houses in Bitterne Drive and Armadale Road, so the Council cannot site benches there, even if there was space for them. She had identified a possible location for a bench on the lake side of the path fairly close to the Dianthus Building but the residents objected, being concerned about possible noise from youngsters congregating there in the evenings. It has always been the policy not to put benches close to houses for this reason but it is interesting to note that residents in Willowmead Close agreed to a memorial bench on the lake side of the path close to a couple of houses on the

understanding that it would be moved if there was disturbance. There was no trouble for over a year but then, late one evening last week, a group of youngsters hung out there using Nitrous Oxide. While they were quite quiet, the noise of filling a balloon from the canister disturbed a resident living close by. They moved off without any fuss when asked to do so. It is not illegal to use Nitrous Oxide (just unwise) but it is illegal to sell it for other than medical and catering purposes.

JE then asked whether there could be a bench or two on the footpath along the back of the field by Claydon Road. She wondered if there is any reason for this, or if it has not been considered previously. The Chair responded that there had been consultation last year when the Council had some Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money to spend on improvements for the area but this path was not mentioned. The Council put in three picnic tables and a few benches where they had been requested on the path round the football pitches and one on the path across the Meadow towards Squires. Cllr SH and Cllr A-MB said that there was a little CIL money left. BCh said he would not be keen on more benches as they are litter magnets and putting litter bins nearby does not always work.

- 3.5** JN (not present) had commented on the popularity of the new BMX track but said that the footpaths around the lake and recreation ground had been turned into race-tracks by some of the users keen to get there. SL concurred and said that many cyclists had no consideration for pedestrians.
- 3.6** R & C McN-T (not present), residents of Armadale Road, are concerned about vehicles that park right up against the footpath from the lake. They have seen children running and cycling from the path straight out into the road from behind the parked vehicles and feel it needs some sort of parking restriction to avoid a very serious accident. The Chair thought that this situation did not meet the yellow lines criteria but that railings at the edge of the pavement such as the one at the end of the footpath from Hamble Close to Denton Way might be appropriate. Cllr SH said he would ask the Safety Officer to look at the situation. GB and BCo, who both live in Armadale Road, did not feel that there was a problem. GB commented that the parking situation was exacerbated by anglers parking there. RW said that the Club constantly reminded anglers not to park in residential roads but to use car park in Wishbone Way.

4. Community Matters

4.1 Lake lighting

The Chair asked Cllr A-MB about progress on replacing the old lights with LEDs. Cllr A-MB noted that a few more lights have recently failed and were being replaced with LEDs. Lights will be replaced as they fail but a wholesale replacement is not in the budget. GB asked if officers had managed to identify any external funding as it would only cost c £10,000 but so far, no grant funding had been identified.

BCh asked whether the Surrey Bat Group had been consulted about the lights as he had been told, by the SBG, that they had not. Cllr A-MB said she thought they had and SHH said she had been in touch with them but could not recall the name of the person. She would be happy to contact them again. BCh said he would appreciate that as the SBG would probably want to speak to engineer specifying the lighting.

SL said that the new lights made the path safer as they showed up all the humps, cracks and potholes, which the yellow lights do not.

4.2 Waitrose Carpark

Patch repairs to the carpark have now been completed.

The Chair reported that she had contacted the Managing Agents about a hazard in the courtyard by the pillar box where there is a 2 inch change of level which is not marked and has been the cause of many trips and falls. She had reported it on numerous occasions

before and the most that has been done is that the “step” has been painted yellow – which soon wears off. The Managing Agents said they were commissioning a full Health and Safety Survey of the area – but there have been no signs yet.

SL said that there was also a problem with the guttering in that corner. She asked whether, as the owners of the site, WBC was responsible; this was confirmed and Cllr SH said that this was why a H&S Survey was being conducted.

4.3 Kirkland Avenue crossing

Cllr SH had met with CY and friend on site and had now asked the road engineers to report on the feasibility of a refuge but, as there had been no accidents, it would be low priority. The Chair commented that a refuge would help to reduce the speed of traffic in Kirkland Avenue, one of the roads identified as having a speeding problem.

5. Officers’ Reports

5.1 Chair’s Report

The GPCA had organised tea/coffee and cake refreshments to support the Hospice on Dragon Boat Day. The indoor and outdoor refreshment stalls had raised over £600. She thanked those people who had made cakes and who had come along to help on the day.

The GPCA had attended the “soft” opening of the BMX Track but had not been invited to the formal opening.

The GPCA had attended the service at St Andrews Church at which the new vicar, Scott Smith, had been installed and had formally welcomed him and his family to Goldsworth Park. SS was present and said “Hello”.

The Chair was pleased to announce that there was a new Editor for Goldsworth News – Barbara Davies – who was already working on the Autumn issue. The meeting welcomed her with a round of applause.

The Chair said that BC was considering becoming a Trustee as well as Editor but that 2 or 3 more Trustees are needed, particularly as BCh was stepping down as a Trustee at the AGM although he would continue as Project Manager for Natural Goldsworth Park.

6. Any Other Business

- 6.1** SL raised the matter of the woodland ride and said that it was illegal under the Equality Act, 2010 as it was not accessible for disabled people. She had made Freedom of Information requests and had found that no consideration had been given to the needs of disabled people in the planning and construction of the path. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, public sector organisations are required by law to take account of the needs of disabled people in every project and activity. She had emailed WBC and the GPCA to ask them to stop the path without success. She had contacted Thames Water and had attended a site meeting with representatives who agreed that the path was not accessible. She told the meeting that Thames Water had agreed to fund 50% of the cost of remedial work to make the path accessible and that TW had written to WBC to ask them to pay the other 50%. The Chair and Cllr A-MB wondered why WBC was being asked to pay for a path which was on TW’s land and which had been constructed by them. When asked what the cost would be, she did not know. When asked what changes she would like to see, she said it was not up to her to say. CC confirmed that she was unable to access more than a few yards in her wheelchair. LW said she would rather see trees allowed to grow back than have more work on the path and others, including SL, agreed. HH said that the woodland was a great resource for the youth organisations which used it for badge work.

- 6.2** BCo referred to the successful calendar the GPCA produced to 2022 and said that thoughts were now on the 2023 calendar. He asked what size would be preferred – A4 folded like 2022 or A3 folded. The consensus was for A4 folded. The majority of people present said

they would buy one. BCo then asked for photographs to be submitted to community@ourgoldsworthpark.org.uk saying that, while the lake was beautiful, more variety was needed. It was generally thought that activities by youth groups, sports clubs, litter picking, etc would be interesting, provided there was parental permission for images of any children involved.

- 6.3** SWi asked if the Tetra Pak recycling and charity collection bins would be returned to the carpark. He had used the Tetra Pak recycling facility regularly and other people regretted the removal of the charity bins. Cllr A-MB said that the charity bins generated a lot of fly-tipped rubbish which had to be cleared and there were other bins not far away which had CCTV to catch fly-tippers. WBC was investigating whether a Tetra Pak recycling bin could be placed nearer the shops and the CCTV cameras there. GB asked why Tetra Pak could not be collected separately but at the same time as other domestic recycling like batteries and textiles. SL said that, in Surrey Health, Tetra Pak cartons were collected along with domestic recycling by the same contractor Joint Waste Solutions. Cllr A-MB said she had raised the issue with JWS in the past and would do so again.
- 6.4** BCh said that he would be having a meeting with WBC to discuss the reinstatement of the vegetation around the new BMX track. A survey showed that 40% of the plant species which had been there before construction was now gone. There were parts of the area where the ground is so compacted by heavy machinery that nothing is growing.
- 6.5** BCh referred to a Network Rail fund managed by The Tree Council which WBC and the GPCA were seeking to access to facilitate planting a series of small groups of trees with understorey planting (hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel) to segregate the recreation area from the Meadow. Provisionally, the line would run from the BMX track access ramp towards the outdoor gym equipment but this is subject to agreement between WBC and all other interested parties. The Chair thought that the line would be better going from the access ramp to the corner of the woods as this would give more space for any events which might be held. BCh said that the proposed line would incorporate more space in the recreation area than at present. Woking BC is preparing a preliminary proposal for discussion with Natural Goldsworth Park which will be circulated to GPCA Trustees for comment and will be discussed at a meeting with the Tree Council in August to agree how to take the matter forward. Ideally the plans would be agreed and funds made available in time for planting to take place between November and March. BCh stated this would be a community project hopefully involving schools and youth groups. GR-M said that the new trees would need strong protection like metal tree guards as nearly all the sapling trees planted round the Dianthus Building have been snapped off by vandals.
- 6.6** RW reminded the meeting that the swans had hatched 5 cygnets from a clutch of 6 eggs but that the number was now down to two cygnets. The first to go had been killed by a dog during the day which was why it was important for dogs to be kept on leads around the lake. The cause of the disappearance of the other two is not known as they occurred at night.
- 6.7** RW told the meeting about some strange activity around the lake. Large pieces of raw meat had been found in the lake and then a person was seen and photographed in the act. The Police were notified and an angler recovered and disposed of the raw meat. SHH said that she had written to the person in question asking for an explanation and warning them not to do it again but had not yet received a reply. RW urged everyone to report anything strange that they see to him or to the Police on 101.
- 6.8** The Chair asked if there had been any progress on the appointment of a Council Wildlife Officer; Cllr A-MB said that there had not.
- 6.9** The GPCA CIO has been invited by the Neighbourhood Watch Network to sign up to the Community Safety Charter which has been launched to tackle crimes in public spaces. It is

for organisations and individuals to sign up and, by signing up as an organisation, we can promote its aims. The GPCA would pledge to:

- **PROMOTE** - a culture that does not tolerate harmful language, antisocial behaviour and hostility toward others.
- **ENABLE** - others to identify and take an active stance to prevent harassment, antisocial behaviour and intimidation within their community.
- **REPORT** - actively encourage and support others to report harassment, antisocial behaviour and intimidation and share intelligence about these crimes with the relevant authorities.
- **SUPPORT** - those affected by harassment, antisocial behaviour and intimidation and refer victims to the appropriate support agency.

It was generally agreed that the GPCA should sign up.

6.10 The Chair reminded everyone about the Litter Pick on Saturday, 23rd.

7. Closing

In closing, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and hoped there would be such a good attendance at the next meeting which is the AGM at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 19th October 2022 and her last meeting in the Chair.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.