

STRUTT'S PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting
held on 20 March 2011 at S. Mary's Parish Hall, Darley Lane

1 & 2. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the following members: Jill Albiston, John and Alison Axton, Margaret and Colin Rosser, Mary Moore, Rik Evans, Pat Greatorex, Cllrs Finbar Richards and Lorraine Radford. Derek Limer was in the chair, and welcomed 48 members of the Association, Cllr Martin Repton, PCSO Matthew Clark from the Derbyshire Constabulary and Andrew Jones from Derby City Council's Traffic Management Team

3a. Strutt's Park Traffic Consultation

Andrew Jones explained that, following an Origin & Destination Study that had revealed a significant amount of through traffic in the area, and discussions with the Darley Ward Neighbourhood Board and SPRA, a household survey by questionnaire had been carried out. Separate surveys, with slightly different questions, had been carried out in Strutt's Park (629 letters) and in the Handyside Street (180 letters) areas, but both had had a section on the through traffic problem and on parking issues.

The reply rate from Strutt's Park was 29%. There was a clear majority of respondents (128 *cf* 50) who thought that through traffic was a problem and most (101 *cf* 49) wished to see physical measures introduced to prevent it. Opinions on the parking questions were more evenly divided.

The reply rate from the Handyside Street area was 20%. Again a clear majority of respondents (29 *cf* 7) thought that through traffic was a problem and most (28 *cf* 4) wished to see physical measures introduced to prevent it. In this case, with slightly different questions to suit the different situation, a clear majority of respondents (32 *cf* 4) thought that non-resident parking was a problem on their street and a similar ratio were in favour of the introduction of a residents' parking scheme. The opinion of respondents was almost evenly split on whether the restriction should be limited waiting, but a majority (28 *cf* 6) thought the restriction should be permit holders only.

The Traffic Management Team were a little disappointed at the response rates to the surveys, but the Neighbourhood Board had made these traffic issues a priority for 2012/13 and funds (£15,000) had been allocated for work. Andrew Jones then opened up the subject to discussion from the floor with the intention of taking note of the views of local residents in the formulation of a plan to improve traffic matters in the area.

- It was strongly urged from the floor that a 20 mph speed limit be introduced throughout the area, perhaps using Strutt's Park as a pilot scheme for the City in applying the new regulations for reduced speed limits.
- It was suggested that a one-way system at the top of Handyside Street would limit through traffic.
- It was suggested that daytime parking had become a problem primarily because of the excessive parking charges being levied in the city centre.
- One member felt that, as the survey response rate had been so low, the money would be better spent elsewhere, but another member asserted that the response rate was low because the survey had been poorly constructed and that had discouraged reply. Other members thought that these traffic problems had continued so long, and had been growing, that something now needed to be done, not least because of the danger, particularly at peak times, to pedestrians trying to cross the roads.
- An 'access only' arrangement for the whole area was proposed, but Andrew Jones commented that such a scheme would require a traffic order, and the legal costs would be high. He also pointed out that policing limited 'access only' areas was practicable, but to police such a large area as Strutt's Park would be virtually impossible as the police would have to be able to identify vehicles that had entered and exited the area without legitimate business in the area.
- Several people expressed concern that parking and traffic issues made access for emergency vehicles very difficult. One former emergency vehicle driver present said that poor parking (too far away from the kerb) was the major problem he had experienced.
- It was agreed generally that residents' parking was itself a major problem, especially the many households having two or more cars with road space in front of their own homes being sufficient for only one vehicle.
- Cllr Repton, whilst agreeing that 'too many cars and too little road' was part of the problem, and that 'access-only' schemes were not without their difficulties, said that he thought the 20 mph speed limit was well worth considering and that he was looking to the City Council Officers to propose engineering solutions that are feasible to inhibit rat running through the area.

- One member raised the issue of traffic exiting Edward Street onto King Street and was advised to contact Andrew Jones with this specific issue. The traffic signal phasing at the Five Lamps junction is set to minimise congestion and queues, but can be adjusted to suit altering circumstances.
- The question of on-pavement parking was raised. Andrew Jones said that any incidences of damage to the pavement should be reported to Streetpride by telephoning 0333 200 6981
- The provision of speed humps, both to reduce speed and deter through traffic was suggested, but Derek Limer pointed out that such schemes when introduced, with apparent local consent, in other areas of the city, had had to be removed, at considerable expense, very soon after installation, because of the public outcry.
- Other suggestions, such as mini-roundabouts or 'Give-way' on all roads at intersections, were made, though it was noted that none were without difficulties.
- It was asked if speed monitoring could be introduced on Belper Road. Clive Lemmon said that the temporary installation of a Speed Indicating Device was planned for Belper Road soon and, in addition to warning speeding drivers to slow down, would also gather data on the speed of traffic.
- The North Parade/Darley Grove junction was identified as an area of particular concern. The City Council has recently reconstructed the footpath pavement at this important entrance to the parks (after extended SPRA agitation), only to see vehicles parking on the new footpath and forcing pedestrians into the roadway. It was suggested that this junction be subject to parking restriction by double yellow lining. Andrew Jones said that would require consultation and a traffic order, but Cllr Repton insisted that he was already demanding early action be taken.
- The problem of encountering cars coming the other way in the narrow streets lined with parked cars on both sides was raised, with a plea for consideration of a one-way system. Derek Limer said that SPRA had put a lot of effort four years or so ago into soliciting the views of all residents in the Otter Street/Margaret Street/Arthur Street/Kingston Street rectangle on the introduction of a one-way system, only to find the views very mixed and nowhere close to the 90% in favour that the City Council were looking for.

Andrew Jones was asked to take the views expressed away with him for further consideration and was asked to ensure that local residents and the SPRA be kept informed of the Traffic Management Team's emerging proposals for controlling through traffic and improving parking in the area. He was thanked warmly for attending the meeting.

3b. Recent burglaries in Strutt's Park

In view of the recent spate of burglaries in the area (notably in Arthur Street and Belper Road), Derek Limer invited PCSO Matthew Clark to comment. He explained that in most of the recent cases access had been from one back garden to another with entry to the house or shed being forced, not relying on insecure doors or windows. The items taken had been of an easily saleable sort, such as power tools and electrical goods. The police have responded by increasing evening patrols and use of police cadets to increase police visibility in the evenings. An arrest has been made and the number of incidents has reduced. It was commented that tools thought to have been used in burglaries had been found in Chevin Road and had been handed in to the police.

One victim of a recent burglary remarked that it had taken 2½ hours from the emergency telephone call for the police to arrive. Matthew Clark, whilst not able to comment on any particular incident, said that all calls were prioritised when they were made but admitted that, at very busy times, the response time was inevitably longer. Another victim found that the back gate to his property had been tried again in the days following the original burglary. Matthew Clark said that security of garden boundaries could be improved by the planting of thorny barriers and the use of trellis.

Matthew Clark said that non-emergency matters could be reported by telephoning 101, but that emergencies should be reported by telephoning 999. The Allestree Police Office is not manned continuously.

Derek Limer urged that entrances to rear gardens be kept locked when not in use and said that all residents should look out for the security of one another's property. He thanked Matthew Clark for addressing the meeting and responding to the questions.

4. Minutes of the 12 April 2011 AGM

These minutes were noted and approved.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

None.

6. Chairman's Report

Derek Limer reported that the committee had met six times since the 2011 AGM and he thanked members of the committee for making their homes available for meetings. As requested at a previous AGM, committee meeting minutes are now regularly published on the SPRA website and sent out electronically to members who have supplied their E-mail addresses, but he went on to highlight some of the principal events of the year.

The installation of new street lighting in the area was one notable feature of the year. The SPRA had, along with colleagues in the Little Chester Residents' Association (LRCA), pressed the City Council repeatedly for consultation and made representation to local councillors and through the Neighbourhood Board, but no consultation had taken place. Whilst we were generally pleased with the heritage style lighting provided in some streets, it seemed strange that others had received modern standard lighting.

Derek Limer said that he and Clive Lemmon had been invited to meet Hilary Nelmes of the City Council to discuss plans for the new riverside paths in the Duke Street, North Parade, Handyside Bridge area and that discussion had included areas of planting and the provision of extra heritage style lighting to the footpaths and the remaking and improvement of the footpath pavement to the east of Darley Grove up to the turning to the rowing clubs, a part of the improvement to the entrance to the parks for which SPRA has been pressing for some time. All this work has now been completed and Derek Limer encouraged members who had not seen it to take a look at the improvements.

In December 2011 we had the sad news of the death of Kathy Wilhelm, formerly a very active member of the SPRA committee and, up until her death the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and police liaison representative. She had worked tirelessly for the local community and will be much missed. We send our condolences and sympathy to her husband, Peter. Kathy's death leaves a vacancy for the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and Derek Limer was pleased to report that SPRA committee member Wendy Churchill is currently looking into what would be involved with a view to taking on the rôle.

At the last AGM Tony Briggs and Brian Salt of the Derby Empty Homes Team came to speak to us about the several empty houses in our area. Since then there has been positive progress on every case discussed, except no 40, West Avenue, the one property already in City Council ownership!

Members of the committee have represented SPRA at the meetings of other local voluntary organisations, including the River Street Community Group (interested in the future of S. Alkmund's Green) and the Friends of Darley Open Spaces (who are promoting the local parks). We have maintained a good relationship with LRCA, our neighbours across the river. One current issue is the One City Our River project, concerning flood risk alleviation.

Other issues brought to SPRA's attention during the year have included the smell of the drains in North Street/Arthur Street (Severn Trent Water have now sealed the inspection covers), residents making changes to houses without planning permission and plans to demolish and redevelop a house in Belper Road. A newsletter was produced half way through the year to keep members informed of progress.

Derek Limer went on to thank all the committee members for their work during the year, especially to Rik Evans, who has been the SPRA Treasurer during the year but who, having now secured employment in London, is no longer able to act in that capacity. He also extended congratulations to committee member Belinda Elliott, who is to be married in April.

The next big events in the area will be the Olympic Torch reception in Darley Park on Friday 29 June and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert, also in the park, beginning at 8.00 pm on Saturday 30 June. A leaflet concerning the torch events had been distributed at the meeting. Jude King pointed out that the next Neighbourhood Forum meeting offered an opportunity for residents to find out the local parking and traffic implications of these two events.

In the Queen's Diamond Jubilee speech in Westminster Hall she had thanked people, on behalf of the nation, who worked to support their local communities and Derek Limer joined his thanks with hers to the people of the SPRA.

Clive Lemmon then thanked Derek Limer for all that he had contributed to the work of the SPRA over the past year, a view endorsed by the applause of the meeting.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Annual Accounts had been circulated and these were duly noted. Derek Limer (in Rik Evans' absence) pointed out that, with the help of committee members and their friends, cheaper methods of printing had enabled a sharp reduction in the costs of printing notices and the newsletter.

8. Election of Committee and Officers

Nominations had been received for Clive Lemmon as Secretary, Matthew Scarborough (new) as Treasurer and Brenda Watson (new), Jude King, Belinda Elliott, Wendy Churchill, Ian Thom, Bob Knight and Derek Limer as committee members. As the constitution limits the number of ordinary elected committee members to six, but places no limit on the number of members who may be co-opted onto the committee, it was agreed by the meeting that all these first eight be elected and that Derek Limer be immediately co-opted onto to the committee for the coming year.

9. Any Other Business

Clive Lemmon had recently received details of a City Council proposal to erect four heritage style finger posts to mark Belper Road, Milford Street, Arthur Street and the S. Mary's bridge across S. Alkmund's Way as the preferred cycle route from Duffield Road to the city centre, encouraging cyclists to avoid the Five Lamps junction. The meeting was broadly in favour of these proposals and **Clive Lemmon** will reply to that effect.

Derek Limer then invited members to raise, informally, any further matters of concern whilst consuming the light refreshments.

The meeting closed at about 9.30 pm.