

STRUTT'S PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting
held on 4 April 2017 at S. Mary's Parish Centre, Darley Lane

1. Welcome

Belinda Elliott-Dawes was in the chair, and welcomed 28 members of the Association, Chris. Mulligan (Severn Trent) and Cllr Jack Stanton. PCSO Sophie Charles joined us during item 9.

2. Sewer Odours

Belinda Elliott-Dawes introduced Chris. Mulligan and invited him to give an update on Severn Trent's investigation into the recurring problem of odours arising from the sewers in Arthur Street (at the Margaret Street junction, and in North Street. Chris. Mulligan began by apologising that the repeated reports of unpleasant odours had gone on for so long with little progress being made. This was partly down to turnover of the Severn Trent staff responsible, and it was a problem that required a continuity in investigation to locate the actual seat of the problem. Since he had assumed responsibility they have carried out a series of investigations and tests, and these are pointing very much to the seat of the problem being the pumping station in Poplar Row, Darley Abbey. This is a fairly fundamental problem and will require a significant level of financial investment to resolve, but, if the evidence is conclusive, funding will be sought. In the meantime the sewers have been flushed, which reduces the problem at least temporarily, and other palliative measures are being investigated, such as the fitting of carbon filters to the two sewer vent pipes in the area, and, a relatively novel technique, the fitting of a carbon filter in the manhole when the main odour problem emanates. Hydrogen Sulphide is the malodorous element giving rise to the complaints.

Chris. Mulligan undertook to keep in contact with the SPRA, via Rosa Drohomirecka, and said that any future concerns should be reported to him through SPRA, and he promised to take them seriously. In response to a question about blocked street gullies, Chris. Mulligan said that these were the responsibility of Derby City Council, who should be contacted (through Streetpride in the first instance and then, if not resolved, Cllr Stanton said the complaint should be referred to the Ward Councillors) in case of problems. He said that where the gully drains discharged into the Severn Trent sewers, they were fitted with a cap that should prevent odours being distributed along the streets, but sometimes these were left open by mistake. This may be the cause of the problem in North Street.

Chris. Mulligan said that, though not the cause of the odours in Arthur Street, members of the public could help keep the sewers flowing sweetly by not flushing away babies' nappies or wet wipes (even those that claimed to be 'flushable'). Such items should be wrapped up securely and disposed of in the domestic refuse. Similarly fats, oils and grease should be intercepted, bagged up and disposed of as domestic refuse and not be allowed to enter the sewers, which are not able to cope with large quantities of such material.

Although much of Severn Trent's street works are in response to emergencies, planned work in the streets will be notified wherever possible to local residents so that they can make arrangements to park cars *etc* elsewhere.

Belinda Elliott-Dawes thanked Mr Mulligan for his work on this problem, and for his attendance at the meeting.

3. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the following members: John and Alison Axton, Brenda Watson, Richard Hughes, John Hogarth, Anna Zimand, Pat Greator, Matthew Scarborough and Cllrs Martin Repton and Lisa Eldret and Rebecca Hudson (Derby City Council Neighbourhood Manager).

4. Minutes of the 5 April 2016 AGM

These minutes, copies of which were generally available at the meeting, were noted and approved.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

Jude King thanked the meeting for the good wishes expressed in the minutes and was pleased to report that she was now feeling much better.

6. Chairman's Report

Belinda Elliott-Dawes delivered her report as follows:

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen, and welcome to the Annual General meeting of the Strutt's Park Residents' Association.

It has been another busy year for the committee and my thanks go to the members for hosting meetings in their homes, thus reducing costs and providing a convivial meeting for members and visitors.

Our committee has remained stable for yet another year. Our Secretary is Clive Lemmon who does sterling work, not only recording and co-ordinating our meetings, but is also a hard worker for St. Matthews Church in Darley Abbey, and for various other societies. Our treasurer is Matthew Scarborough, who manfully juggles his job, his family and our accounts. Bob Knight is our representative on the Darley Ward Neighbourhood Board and is on the Transport and Planning Sub-Group. His diligence is very much appreciated. Joan Dutton keeps up our Website and is a very keen supporter, particularly over the Belper Road Traffic initiative. Brenda Watson is another excellent supporter of the committee, and even though she has had a very difficult year, she is now back and eager to play a part. Rosa Drohomirecka is our latest, and very hard working and diligent committee member. She has many contacts and always puts us right on various aspects of our work. Peter Yates of Strutt's Hairdressing Salon is a non-committee member who still pays for our website, for which we are very grateful.

We are very happy to see Jude King, an ex-committee member who has been unwell. She is shortly moving out of our area and her happy face will be missed!

My name is Belinda Elliott-Dawes, and I am currently Chair of the Association. I am very keen to play a part in keeping Strutt's Park a safe, clean and respectable place to live.

The committee has met six times since last year's AGM.

In April last year the working party for the reduction and speed control of traffic using the Belper Road as a rat-run met for the last time on April 27th. The work on the new speed humps was delayed due to other emergency road repairs elsewhere, but they were finally built in September 2016. The new dropped kerbs were done earlier in the year. The Traffic Department installed a monitoring system for a short while after completion of the road humps and the results were encouraging. The new humps have reduced traffic flow, speed and noise. We are very grateful for the support we received from SPRA members and local councillors with the delivery of questionnaires and the collecting and collating of replies. Also the enthusiastic involvement of local residents.

The committee's ensuing relationship with the Ward Councillors and the Ward Neighbourhood continues after the Belper Road project and they have attended our meetings as regularly as they can. Martin Repton, Jack Stanton and Rebecca Hudson are now familiar faces and their input has helped us greatly with issues such as local business parking.

Currently SPRA is addressing various reported problems in the area, such as bins left on streets and parking on pavements. The latter being a very difficult area to address due to the narrow nature of the streets and the fact that almost every household has at least one car, plus through traffic, local or otherwise. We did discuss parking last year, but decided that Belper Road traffic was a project we could tackle and we did.

Rosa Drohomirecka has played a key part in liaising with Severn Trent over the problem of sewer smells in Arthur Street. Thank you to Chris Mulligan from Severn Trent for attending this evening.

Brown bins are a contentious issue in our area, and we hope that the charge may be lifted one day. Meanwhile it is possible to share the cost and use of the bin with a friendly neighbour.

We supported the ward councillors' objection to the proposed waste incineration plant planned for Alfreton Road, not because it would be in our area, but because smoke and airborne waste and smells could be blown our way.

There have been a few planning applications that our members have told us about and we have forwarded their comments and objections to Derby City Council.

There have been some issues of anti-social behaviour in our area; all have been reported to the police. Also car break-ins have seen a disturbing upturn. These have often been encouraged by the drivers leaving valuable items on view in their parked cars.

The annual newsletter went out in November. Hopefully those of you who received it found it interesting and informative. There was a report on the Belper Road project, a piece on the Strutt family in Scotland, and a report on the wonderful mosaic unveiled in the Hydrangea Garden in Darley Park in July. The ceremony was well attended and reported on Radio Derby by Andy Potter. Very sadly Andy died recently and is a great loss to Derby. He was a local lad who loved Derby and promoted it whenever he could, he is sadly missed. The newsletter might not seem much, but it is a great effort of team work on our part. From writing the reports and articles to the printing and distribution. I hope it is appreciated.

We are very happy to see Alison Grimwood of Friends of Darley Open Spaces here this evening. I hope we can encourage everyone to visit the Hydrangea Garden and see the Mosaic, it is well worth the effort.

We shall be having a break shortly for refreshments and, immediately you have got your drinks, I hope you will take the opportunity to ask questions of the representatives from the Police and Derby City Council. If you do not wish to ask personally, please use the forms we have provided and I shall raise the issues for you.

The cost of joining the Strutt's Park Residents' Association is £2 per household per year. Your money provides for printing costs and occasional donations to projects such as the information boards for the park and the defibrillator at the Rowing Club.

Once again, thank you very much for coming out this evening and for your continued support of the association. We hope to continue to represent you to the best of our ability.

7. Treasurer's Report

The Annual Accounts had been provided by Matthew Scarborough, the Treasurer, and these were duly approved, Clive Lemmon having mentioned the principal items in them, notably that the balance had gone from £465.30 at the start of the year to £219.57 at the end of the year.

8. Election of Committee and Officers

Nominations, in proper form, had been received for Clive Lemmon as Secretary, Matthew Scarborough as Treasurer and Brenda Watson, Belinda Elliott-Dawes, Bob Knight, Joan Dutton and Rosa Dhromirecka as committee members, and these were duly elected for the forthcoming year.

9. Any other business

The future of S. Alkmund's Green was raised, and the need to keep it clear of dangerous rubbish (such as broken glass) if children were to play on it in safety. Cllr Jack Stanton said that the area is designated as a 'Village Green', is, for historical reasons, the responsibility of the City Council's Education Department and, because of the limits on funding, the City Council's Park's Department is not able to take over responsibility for maintenance. There is the possibility of using Section 106 money to make some improvements to the green and the Neighbourhood Board are seeking the cooperation of local residents in deciding what should be done with the area. Because of the constraints on funding, the City Council will be looking for local resident support to help with maintenance and upkeep of whatever is done with the green. The local Councillors hope to set up a working party to take on the next stage of the work and will involve the SPRA and other interested parties in this.

This discussion led on to an enlarged discussion concerning keeping the area clear of rubbish. Cllr Stanton said that the City Council, so severely strapped for cash, would be looking for more support from local communities to keep their areas tidy. While significant areas of fly tipping or dog fouling should still be reported to the City Council through Streetpride, help with litter picking is something that they would be looking to stimulate. There had been a *Big Spring Clean* in some areas of the City, and it is hoped that this could be rolled out locally as an on-going activity. The help of the SPRA in identifying volunteers and carrying out such work would be sought.

Derek Limer said that his report to Streetpride about overflowing litter bins had resulted in swift emptying, and Cllr Stanton again said to report problems to Streetpride in the first instance and then to follow matters up with the Ward Councillors if no action was taken.

The increasing problem of dog fouling in North Parade was raised. Cllr Stanton undertook to see if a dog excrement bag dispenser might be put up in North Parade as an inducement to dog owners to dispose of such material properly.

Richard Butler was thanked for his maintenance work on the planted bed at the Five Lamps junction.

One member commented that the City Council relied too much on members of the public reporting problems on-line. Cllr Stanton said that problems could be reported by telephone, but that the City Council's resources were very severely stretched.

Cllr Stanton went on to say that funds for street cleaning had been cut back very severely, though the current budget did allow for a slight increase. It was pointed out that other city centre wards (such as Arboretum and Normanton) had larger budgets for street cleaning than did Darley and Cllr Stanton said that there ought to be a degree of equity between wards.

Derek Limer raised the matter of the bank between Park View House and the former Great Northern Railway where the vegetation had been cut back, but was now growing again and threatening to become an eyesore alongside this well used route to the parks. Cllr Stanton offered to pursue the matter.

Belinda Elliott-Dawes commented on the depredated state of the area opposite the Bridge Chapel. The trees there had been felled to accommodate the archaeological dig in advance of the *Our City, Our River* flood defence works. Cllr Stanton said he would update the SPRA committee on the plans for restoration.

Taking advantage of the presence of PCSO Sophie Charles, Belinda Elliott-Dawes invited members to raise police-related matters.

The nuisance nature of aggressive selling at the door was raised. PCSO Charles's advice was quite clear, that people should not buy from such sellers and so give encouragement to them to call again.

The question of the selling and use of banned drugs in the area was raised. PCSO Charles said that the police were actively engaged in taking measures to discourage this activity. Any sightings of discarded needles should be reported to Streetpride.

Vandalism to cars was mentioned and PCSO Charles emphasised once again that drivers could help reduce the risk by ensuring they lock their vehicles when leaving them unattended, and by removing valuable items from them.

Refreshments

At 8.30 pm the meeting broke to take refreshment, provided by the SPRA committee, and then re-convened for:

Informal discussion

Alison Grimwood was invited to report on the work of FoDOS. She began by saying that they had identified sources of funding to make it possible to put up 'welcome boards' at all ten entrances to Darley Open Spaces. This would build upon that already installed, with SPRA participation, at the Darley Grove entrance. A new standard format had been agreed, and the existing board will be brought into line with the new standard. It is hoped that all the boards will be in place in time for the Green Flag Award in May.

The All User Path along the west bank of the River Derwent will go out to a second round of consultation shortly. The construction will be funded using money from the *Our City, Our River* project.

There is a plan to introduce a pond close to the Barn in Darley Abbey.

FoDOS are in discussion with the University of Derby to engage the interest of some of their members in preparing plans for improvements at the Darley Abbey end of the Open Spaces.

Volunteer help in the Hydrangea Collection and the Butterfly Garden is being used. Work is in hand to map the hydrangea collection, and more varieties are still being sought to enhance the collection.

Alison Grimwood went on to list the dates of forthcoming events, and these will be publicised in due course.

Rosa Drohomirecka asked what could be done to improve the failing surface of Darley Grove on the slope up from the Derwent Park intersection. Individual reports to Streetpide were not effective and Alison Grimwood advocated a more concerted approach. Cllr Stanton took note of the issue.

The question of the future of the Darley Park Concerts was raised. Cllr Stanton said that they could be reinstated only if a way of raising funds could be devised. Making it a ticketed event would require the fencing off of the area, which would both add to the costs and also reduce the scale of the event. It might be more feasible to charge for parking. All these issues fall under the responsibility of Cllr Lisa Eldret as the relevant Council Cabinet Member.

The large trees that had fallen in the park following recent storms have now been cleared.

Following the monitoring of traffic on Belper Road, it was asked if something could be done on Arthur Street where, it was suspected, some displacement of the speeding problem had taken place. Cllr Stanton said he would investigate.

Cllr Stanton commented that the lights on the S. Alkmund's Way footbridge had now been replaced and were working well. The lighting was both attractive and improved safety. The funding for the replacement included 15 years of maintenance.

He went on to say that there is progress with the problem of bins on streets, and he said that the closer working with the SPRA committee was proving productive. He hoped that, with SPRA help, it would be possible to identify volunteers to help with some tidying up in the area.

Closure

Belinda Elliott-Dawes closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.