



**Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Community Forum Meeting Minutes  
Monday 11 July 2022**

**Present**

Phil Marsh	Chair & Resident, Marefield
Helen Elderfield	Resident, Marefield
Hazel Bell	Resident, Sibson
Sarah Chaplin	Resident, Marefield
Paul Norman	Woodley and Earley Lions Club & Resident, Aldbourne Avenue
Jean Hackett	Community Orchard & Resident, Beech Lane
Colin Mair	MERA & Resident, Lakeside
Andrew Mickleburgh	ETC Representative & Resident, The Delph
Zara O'Dell	WBC Community Engagement Officer
Tim Marsh	Chairman of ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association (Via Zoom)
Simon Botham	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Thames Valley Police
Karen Collins	Thames Valley Police & Resident, Pavenham Close

**Apologies**

Ian Jobson	Laurel Park Football Club & Resident, Trusthorpe Close
Linden Morgan	Resident Elm Road
David Hare	Town & Borough Councillor & Resident
Mike Smith	Councillor, Earley Town Council
Molli Cleaver	Community Relations Manager, University of Reading

**NB:** These minutes are a record of what happened in the meeting, what was said, what was discussed, and what action would be taken where appropriate. Some items remain ongoing from meeting to meeting so they can be monitored at every meeting. Please be advised that no laptops will be allowed to be used in the Council Chamber and mobile phones will only be allowed to be used by the Police in emergencies.

## Points from the Agenda:

### 1. Apologies for absence:

Before starting the meeting, Park Warden Clive Buckland addressed the attendees. Details of the issues he raised will be passed to the relevant partner agencies. Phil welcomed the attendees to the meeting. The apologies are listed above.

### 2. Minutes from previous Meeting 9 May 2022:

The minutes were reviewed and proposed for approval by Andrew Mickleburgh and seconded by Paul Norman.

### 3. Matters arising:

Maiden Place ASB. This item will be discussed in agenda item 4.

### 4. Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team: Police Priorities

#### a) Road Safety & Speeding

If you have any roads or areas you would like to nominate for a session, please add them into the comments box on the NAG's website <https://earleynag.org/entries/general/community-speedwatch-uk>

#### b) Burglary

2 x Business – Pepper Lane and Shinfield Road

3 x Residential Burglaries – Ratby Close, Whiteknights Road and Wychwood Crescent

#### c) Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

4 reports of ASB – Finch Road, Gelder Close, Bradmore Way and Highfields.

Simon advised that ASB issues in Maiden Place tend to increase during the school holidays. The neighbourhood teams will continue to target ASB hotspots as a priority in their patrol plans, working with local businesses and the ASB Team at WBC. The ASB Team will respond immediately - if they are available - to ASB incidents, including weekends/out-of-hours. The ASB Team can be contacted at: [asb@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:asb@wokingham.gov.uk) There is no need to call because the ASB officers will receive emails while they are on duty. Andrew mentioned he and David had met with Steve, the Maiden Place caretaker, PCSO Elena and members of the ASB Team to discuss the issues at Maiden Place. They visited shops and residents on site and received suggestions for improvement such as cutting back some of the vegetation to make the youth shelter more visible. CPE are making regular visits and issuing fines for parking on the double yellow lines near the car park.

1 arson had been reported but was determined to have been an accident upon investigation.

8 reports of Criminal Damage – Mill Lane, Chalfont Way, Wokingham Road, Bridport Close, Phillips Close, Ramsbury Drive, Faygate Way and Measham Way

1 reported robbery at Mill Lane

3 x Thefts from Vehicles – Crawford Close, Ramsbury Drive and Wychwood Crescent.

3 x Thefts of Vehicle – Shinfield Road, Measham Way and Maiden Place

4 x Thefts of Pedal Cycles – Shinfield Road x 2, Station Road and Mill Lane

Some of the councillors kindly promoted Thames Valley Alerts locally following a Burglary Prevention Event held in Woodley on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May.

The Asylum Hotel is being run by the Home Office and a lot of partnership work is being undertaken by the neighbourhood teams. Andrew mentioned he has seen some negative posts regarding the hotel on local social media pages and asked the members to report any issues they observe.

Simon advised there are still some County Lines concerns in the area. There is a dedicated team who specialises in this area and there is also a partnership working with the Metropolitan Police.

**5 Speedwatch discuss the offer of a meeting with PC Lee Turnham in September to discuss setting up local Speedwatch volunteer teams (ACER have offered to loan a speed radar unit)**

Phil advised he put this item on the agenda and then discovered that the NAG's Constitution does not allow it to facilitate meetings due to a lack of public liability insurance. Phil advised he could hold a Zoom meeting as there are no public liability issues with them. Tim Marsh clarified that ACER as a resident's association does not run or organise any Speedwatch groups. There is a group in this area called the Bulmershe and Whitegates Speedwatch group which ACER have publicised and some of their members have joined. Andrew suggested the NAG ask ETC to get involved with facilitating a Speedwatch group. Andrew will provide an update and brief with the NAG in September.

**6 Current Traffic and Car Parking issues at Laurel Park on Weekends – Councillor Pauline Jorgensen to provide an update on the proposals discussed at the meeting in March. (Councillor Jorgensen was unable to attend and is no longer head of the Highways committee following council elections)**

**An abridged version of the below information was submitted to WBC on 19<sup>th</sup> July.**

**Ongoing Second Car Park off Rushey Way**

Andrew reported that on 26.02.22 – a letter was published stating that Laurel Park was no longer considered suitable for a 3G pitch. This effectively stopped the proposals for any other car parks.

**Main Recreation Park Barrier @ Laurel Park Pavilion**

Phil advised he wanted to cover the locking of the barrier at the Laurel Park car park under this item and obtain views from Andrew, Simon and the residents to obtain a consolidated view.

Andrew advised he would be interested in hearing views from the residents and the police as well as WBC.

Hazel commented that the volunteers had opened and locked the barriers for 15 years and now feel they are being held to ransom because if they don't lock them, they will remain open overnight and residents will suffer.

Phil advised that when it was left open around fifteen years ago, the road leading into the car park was used as a speedway during late night and early morning hours. Cars were travelling more than the 30mph maximum limit, leaving skid marks from braking heavily when reaching Rushey Way. There were youths congregating on scooters in the car park late at night. Also, cars sitting at the rear of the car park appear to be engaging in the exchange of goods. Phil said he felt that if Wokingham Borough Council is going to make a major change to the locking of the barriers (as they now own the problem), they need to hold a residents' consultation in that area as it will have an impact on the residents' wellbeing and safety. WBC need to consider it from a safety point of view as many residents will struggle to join the road from their drives due to limited visibility (hedges) and the potential speeds of cars coming down the road after dusk.

Simon advised the point he would look at is that it had been locked for 15 years for a reason. Hazel and Helen commented that PC Julie Susel and the neighbourhood team were called out on numerous evenings when it was left unlocked. Simon commented that it would be a place people would want to congregate and is also an area tucked away where people could commit crimes. Andrew suggested that CCTV be proposed for the Pavilion. Helen mentioned that people often gather outside her house to play music and sing late on Thursday nights, and she does not want to confront them. Phil encouraged reporting these incidents to the Council's ASB team on [asb@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:asb@wokingham.gov.uk) and they will attend if they have the capacity. Phil advised that WBC Sports and Leisure stated they do not have anything in their budget to pay for the barrier to be locked and unlocked and he expressed concern that this could be a false economy, as the potential costs to the community of leaving the barrier open could exceed the cost of paying someone to open and close it. Recommendation: WBC should take a holistic approach and look at the bigger picture. Consider having an open meeting with the residents, Police and Football clubs.

Andrew thanked the volunteers for their 15 years of service, which was very much appreciated.

Andrew advised the council will need to check how often people are being locked in, how much revenue is being raised from unlocking fees, and where it goes. Andrew said that in May of 2020 ETC made a submission to WBC for speed reductions in 19 different localities and the whole of Marefield was included. Andrew thought it would be helpful if the Police could formally express their concerns to the Council over the proposal to leave the Laurel Park barrier open for an eight-week trial period and for the NAG to formally write to WBC expressing their

concerns. Phil said this issue will be in the minutes and he will formally write to the head of the Council, Clive Jones, asking him to distribute it to the necessary people.

Andrew advised an additional way of raising concerns and bringing them to the attention of the whole Council is to ask a question or a series of questions at a full council or executive meeting. He said he felt a coordinated approach through the NAG would be the best course of action. Jean asked whether any bye-laws covered parking overnight in the car park and felt the signs advising of subsequent fines should be larger.

#### **7 Neighbourhood Watch – Making contact**

This item was postponed until the September meeting.

#### **8 Orchard – anti-social behaviour update**

Jean advised not much ASB had occurred. One name tag disappeared from a tree and had been replaced.

#### **9 Fireworks – update Woodley and Earley Lions**

Phil advised he had met the new Lions Chairman Mike Kennedy at the LPFC Fun Day and invited the Chairman to September's meeting.

#### **10 AOB**

Update from Molli Cleaver, Community Relations Manager University of Reading:

- Please save the date for the Community Forum - Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September, 6-8 on Whiteknights Campus (exact location TBC). Everyone is invited and it will be an opportunity to raise any questions, meet University staff and share your feedback on the latest proposals regarding community resourcing at the University.
- The Moving Out campaign supporting students to move out of their houses responsibly was held throughout June. We held a series of door-knocking sessions, covering 26 streets and approx. 1,500 houses where we delivered packs of information to students.
- I have been meeting with some of the Earley Councillors to discuss how we can work together and if there are any issues they would like to raise. This has been positive and is just the beginning to building better relationships with the community.
- A new PCSO has recently started that has been designated to work with the University - this will mean we will be able to take a more proactive approach regarding ASB issues and safety. Most issues occur in Park and Redlands Ward within the Reading Borough, but if you have any related problems, please email [community@reading.ac.uk](mailto:community@reading.ac.uk).
- Top tip for Summer - as we head into the summer holidays, our campus remains open for the public to come and use. My favourite places that I would encourage you to visit would be the Harris Garden and Park House, a pub on campus with lovely outdoor seating surrounded by green space. If you want to know where these are just search for Whiteknights Campus map. Parking is free after 5 on a weekday, and free on the weekends. There is a pay and display in Car Park 1A.
- If you have any questions, feedback, or issues you'd like to raise please email [community@reading.ac.uk](mailto:community@reading.ac.uk) and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

No further items of AOB were reported.

The meeting closed at 8:39 pm.

1009B	<p><b>NAG website</b> is up &amp; running. Constitution has been posted along with our terms of reference. In addition the mission statement of the NAG has been inserted. <a href="http://www.earleynag.org">www.earleynag.org</a></p>	<p>Message posted on the Earley Residents' Forum – 964 members of Forum</p>	<p>All minutes are now available for viewing online.</p>
0909C	<p><b>Date, Time &amp; Location of next meeting:</b> Meetings will be held bi-monthly on a Monday at 7.30 – 9.00 pm at the Earley Town Council Offices.</p> <p>The following dates have been booked.</p> <p>12th September 2022 14th November 2022</p>	<p>Please note the new meetings dates, times and location</p> <p>Agenda issued a week before the meeting if you would like to add a discussion point please email to <a href="mailto:chairperson@earleynag.org">chairperson@earleynag.org</a></p>	<p>NB: It is imperative that if you are concerned about an issue ie litter or pot holes etc please call Wokingham Borough Council on 0118 9746000 where they will be happy to help. If you are suspicious or a crime is being committed call <b>101</b> (01865 841148), if it is an emergency dial <b>999</b>. If in doubt report it.</p>
1704A	<p><b>Reading University Community Events</b> Events will be advised in due course. The University are very welcoming and it is a good opportunity to look around the University and ask any questions or raise concerns with senior staff i.e. parking</p>	<p>Molli Cleaver - Community Relations Manager</p>	<p>The NAG continues to welcome the support of the University of Reading and would be pleased to see students litter picking around the boundary of the University.</p>
0310F	<p>If any members have problems with rubbish or fly tipping, potholes etc, there is a page on the WBC website entitled Roadworks and outdoor maintenance:</p> <p><a href="https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/">https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/</a></p> <p>Use this to report the problem or see if already reported.</p>	<p>This service is highly effective and efficient and should be used at every opportunity.</p>	