



**Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Community Forum Meeting Minutes
Monday 11th March 2024**

Present

Phil Marsh	Chair & Resident, Marefield
Tim Marsh	Chairman of ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association
Colin Mair	MERA & Resident, Lakeside
David Hare	WBC Councillor
Caroline Smith	WBC/ETC Councillor
Moses Iyengunmwena	ETC Councillor
Linden Morgan	Resident, Elm Lane
Hazel Bell	Resident, Sibson
Sarah Chaplin	Resident, Marefield
Debbie Preedy	WBC, ASB Team
Dianne Smith	WBC, ASB Team
Jerry Carbon	WBC, ASB Team
Simon Botham	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Thames Valley Police
Toni D'Amaro	Neighbourhood Officer, Thames Valley Police
Rose Kayani	Resident, Ramsbury Drive (arrived after start)
Karen Collins	Neighbourhood Administrator, Thames Valley Police

Apologies

Helen King	Resident, Marefield
Mike Smith	ETC Councillor
Melanie D'Jong	ETC Councillor
Molli Cleaver	Community Relations Manager, University of Reading
Elena Ispas	Police Community Support Officer, Thames Valley Police

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 as ongoing from meeting to meeting so that 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:

Phil welcomed the attendees. The apologies are listed above.

2. Minutes from previous Meeting on 15th January 2024:

The minutes were proposed for approval by Colin Mair and seconded by Tim Marsh.

3. Matters arising: AOB (proposals for consideration from attendees).

Phil invited nominations for the Chair of the NAG to be received by the 1st of May via contactus@earleynag.org in line with the constitution.

Eastcourt Avenue parking obstruction was proposed for consideration under AOB, see section 8.

4. Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team: Police Priorities: a) Burglary; b) Anti-social behaviour; c) County Lines issues; and d) Road Safety / Speeding

Simon provided an update on the crimes reported from 16th January to 11th March 2024.

a) Burglary

6 x Residential Burglaries – Betchworth Avenue, Finch Road, Mawbray Close, Eriswell Close, Measham Way and Repton Road. One was a distraction burglary, but no patterns have been identified at this time.

b) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

7 reports of ASB – Pond Head Lane, Chilcombe Way, The Delph x 2, Dennose Close, Joel Close and Ramsbury Drive. There have been a number of reported incidents of children kicking front doors. Doorbell footage is being reviewed to try and identify the offenders. There was also an incident where a delivery driver left a bottle of urine outside an address, and complaints were received regarding a loud party.

1 report of Criminal Damage in Durand Close, which was domestic-related.

3 x Shopliftings – Maiden Place x 2 and Chalfont Way. Simon advised the PCC has brought in Op Retail to help tackle and address shoplifting.

5 x Thefts from Motor Vehicles – Faygate Way, Felixstowe Close, Betchworth Avenue, Markby Way and Wokingham Road. Many of the reports relate to the theft of number plates. A local officer has been investigating incidents since December to identify whether the stolen plates are being used in criminal activities. Only two incidents of use have been identified so far.

3 x Thefts of Pedal Cycles – Silverdale Road x 2 and Pepper Lane.

There were no reported thefts of Motor Vehicles.

c) County Lines issues

There is a dedicated Tasking Team who uses covert and overt tactics to disrupt county drug lines. Their main focus is on protecting vulnerable victims from exploitation.

d) 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>

Simon advised the neighbourhood teams have been holding tool and bike marking events in order to help identify tools and bicycles that are being stolen and then recovered.

A Have Your Say event is being held at Maiden Place tomorrow from 11am to 2pm.

Phil will forward a copy of footage he has of a confrontational rude man knocking on doors in his area claiming to be a milkman (post meeting update: footage not available due to time past)

5. Presentation by Mr. Peter Cutts (Community Safety Officer) “to provide an overview of how WBC deals with ASB” [10-15 minutes for the presentation plus 5 minutes for questions]

Prior to the meeting, a list of advanced questions and the answers received from the council was circulated to NAG members. A table showing the percentage change in the top five noise complaints received by WBC in 2021, 2022 and 2023 was also included in the circulation.

The Community Safety Partnership agrees the Borough's response to crime and anti-social behaviour. It sets priorities to ensure partners are working together to create a safe place to live, work and visit. Debbie and Dianne, officers from the Community Safety Team, explained their roles and gave a presentation on how to report ASB and the tools and powers they have to deal with it. They also explained the signs of exploitation and what makes someone more likely to become a victim of exploitation.

The ASB Enforcement Team deal with antisocial issues, including fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and noise nuisance. Jerry from the enforcement team provided an overview of what they do and the approaches they take depending on the issues they are asked to deal with. When a complaint comes in a member of the team will look at it, investigate it and provide guidance when necessary. If the complaint is of a criminal nature, they will refer it to the police, if it's more of a civil issue, they can signpost to relevant agencies for help. Phil provided an example of ASB in his area where a number of dogs are being housed in a dwelling and their barking is causing noise nuisance. Jerry advised the team will respond to reports of offensive graffiti. Phil thanked Jerry for attending and answering questions from the members.

6 Speedwatch (Lower Earley Scheme) – Update on local advertising campaign (Phil)

Phil advised the local campaign, kindly assisted by MERA, was picked up by the Wokingham paper and within two hours, had received over 400 comments about Speedwatch. Phil has been contacted by people wanting to join the group. One of the coordinators from Wokingham has offered to help set it all up and permission has been granted to carry out speedwatch sessions on Rushey Way. Please let Phil know if you are interested in volunteering to help support this important medium to long term initiative.

7 MERA – local update

Colin advised the previously reported smoking/cigarette issues around the Silverdale Road shops have improved and they identified a couple of the vehicles parking too close to junctions and have reported them. They recently received a letter from a resident about speeding concerns and have suggested they look into joining the local Speedwatch group. The recently installed cameras at Loddon School appear to be effective. Some residents around Maiden Erlegh Lake have expressed concerns around the amount of geese droppings due to the health risk. MERA will be publishing advice in their next newsletter for residents about keeping geese off their lawns.

8 ACER – a) following up on parking and subsequent 13 & 14 Bus diversion – b) local traffic issues, speeding with damage to parked vehicles, solutions?

a) Tim advised the increased traffic restrictions around London Road have pushed the parking issues further along the road. Even with the restrictions, there are still traffic jams which appear to be caused by people trying to get in and out of the mosque's car park when there are no available spaces, and they end up blocking the road. There are still diversions when the buses cannot reach the stop and have to bypass it. Tim advised he has spoken to, and written to, two local councillors who attend the mosque and has suggested that installing a box junction there might be able to help. Phil reiterated the suggestion made at the previous NAG meeting that the mosque consider inviting residents, groups such as ACER and local councillors to broaden discussions at their complaint meetings to try and find a solution together.

b) Speeding is still an issue, and Tim provided information about this to many councillors who have been canvassing in the local area recently.

AOB item - Parking on the pavements at the top of Eastcourt Avenue close to Woodley Hill House. Residents are unable to pass by the cars and must enter the road. The police have been made aware of this issue.

9 **Laurel Park:** - a) Saturday Traffic issues are on hold until the WBC Leisure Playing Pitch Strategy is published in the Local Plan Update [LPU]. PPS has been published to councillors (source MERA). b) Residents report ongoing traffic violations; evidence was sent to WBC following issues on 27th January. Prompt action by WBC and LPFC *“As a community club we are keen to ensure that respect is maintained for our neighbours and the wider users of the area and recently we have experienced a number of problems with people parking poorly in these roads. This creates difficulty for cars entering and leaving, blocks residents driveways and footpaths. We would ask visiting teams to park at Maiden Place Community Centre (RG6 3HE) and for LPFC teams to walk or cycle to your game whenever possible.”* (Source LPFC). The Neighbourhood Police team advised residents that continued LPFC communications are key in these circumstances. Review at the meeting.

a) Saturday Traffic issues are on hold until the WBC Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is published in the Local Plan Update (LPU). Phil advised discussions are parked until the PPS is published so members can see WBC's plans for the Playing Pitches and whether such plans will resolve the current Traffic safety concerns. There still appears to be no definitive publishing date. David reiterated that in the broadest sense, **"councillors will be reviewing the recommendations" alongside the LPU. At present, a limited number of officers have seen the recommendations, and the Local Plan is not in the public arena as yet."**

b) Residents reporting ongoing traffic violations - a number of tickets were issued recently by the council's Civil Enforcement Officers and Phil expressed his thanks to them, the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the football club for their efforts to inform and encourage drivers not to cause obstructions and prevent pedestrian access.

10 Street lighting – Linden

Linden provided an update on local faulty streetlights. There is still an issue with the lighting at ASDA on the Chalfont Way side and continuing concerns over the faulty light which should illuminate the steps coming down from the road to the parking lot.

11 Neighbourhood Watch – Co-ordinators from Local Schemes to have their say -- (Paul/Phil) --

[Link to Neighbourhood Watch](#) Phil advised an extra six people have joined his local scheme.

12 University of Reading – community update – (Molli)

Apologies have been received from Molli with no further updates at this time.

13 Fireworks – Laurel Park FC Youths Sports Foundation (Charity # 1183357) – Parked until the meeting on 8th July 2024

The meeting closed at 8:54pm.

1009B	<p>NAG website is up & running. Constitution has been posted along with our terms of reference. In addition the mission statement of the NAG has been inserted. www.earleynag.org</p>	<p>Facebook Page link for posts: https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG</p>	<p>All minutes are now available for viewing online.</p>
0909C	<p>Date, Time & Location of next meeting: 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. 8 July 2024 9 September 2024 18 November 2024</p>	<p>Please note the 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 chairperson@earleynag.org</p>	<p>NB: It is imperative that if you are concerned about an Issue, i.e. 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 has already been committed call 101 or report online. In an emergency or if a crime is in progress, dial 999. If in doubt report it.</p>
1704A	<p>Reading University Community Events 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>community@reading.ac.uk</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>https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/</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>	