

## **SGRA MINUTES OF MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2007**  
**AT 7PM IN THE VICTORY PUBLIC HOUSE**

### **Welcome**

Jerry welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a happy New Year. Jerry thanked Gordon for convening the meeting in January 2007.

### **Apologies**

Dave Roberts, Pat McDonald, Siobhan O'Brien, Caroline Simpson, Brian Moore

### **People Present**

Jerry Ruddick, Irene Matthewson, Sonia Bradley, Sheila Park, Paul & Hazel Spicer, Gordon Robinson, Colin Walmsley, Philip Cunningham – Vicar of St. Nicholas' Church.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held in December 2006 were agreed to be a true record.

### **Update on Action Points from Previous Meeting**

#### **Ridgewood Crescent**

Collin to contact Dave regarding concerns about the state of the roads and pavements in Ridgewood Crescent.

#### **Action Point – Collin**

#### **Hunters Court**

Concerns about the road breaking up around drain areas were brought up at the last Ward Committee Meeting. Pat is to show Dave Roberts where the problems are.

#### **Action Point – Pat**

### **Feedback from Meetings Attended**

#### **Ward Committee Meeting**

Jerry informed the meeting that a large grant has just been awarded to one of the Allotments within the Ward. Colin felt that our area should also apply for a grant to improve the local allotments. It was noted that the council do not pay for skips to take rubbish away; this is something that the residents of the allotments pay for themselves.

#### **Jesmond Dene**

The sum of a 2 million pounds grant from the government is going to be used to rebuild Pet's Corner. Some trees are also going to be cut and resited.

The properties within Jesmond Dene, which are owned by the Council, are to be sold.

### Residents Associations

Jerry informed the meeting that local Residents Associations are being given a much higher profile at the Ward Committee Meetings.

### Park/Field

The meeting expressed concerns about the amount of young persons hanging around the park area, some drinking and in general not making the area very pleasant.

It was noted that there is a Youth Officer who has access to grants to provide appropriate play facilities. However, it was felt that this has been poorly supported in this respect.

### South Gosforth Metro Station – Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

Unfortunately Jerry was unable to make our views known at the last Ward Committee meeting. Philip echoed the SGRA concerns that a more appropriate crossing needs to be put in place as this is a very busy road, the current pelican crossing is inadequate – especially for the older person or people with mobility issues.

Gordon also raised the point that it was very awkward for people trying to cross the road with suitcases etc – it is noted that there is a high level of mature students living in the area who frequently use the metro with large amounts of luggage.

It was also felt that it would be more appropriate for the Lollipop person to use an appropriate crossing instead of being stood on the corner.

It was felt that this issue needs to be pursued over the coming months.

### **Action Point:**

#### Format of Ward Committee Meetings

Jerry suggested feedback that the Council keep any presentations to a minimum unless it was very complicated.

He has also asked that the Residents Associations be given a specific slot within the meeting to raise any issues.

### Area Issues

#### Persimmon Homes

The fence had blown down at Xmas; initially Persimmons had viewed the site as being safe, Jerry challenged this and now a 6 foot perimeter fence has been put in place.

The meeting continue to express concerns about the poor lighting around the pathway. Gates had also blown down at New Year.

### **Mildene Land**

The Neighbourhood Response Team has now removed all of the shrubs and the area has been cleared. The SGRA are unsure of what is being put down in place of the shrubs, as the area is rather unsightly at present. **(Action Point) to be discussed.**

It was also noted that there is graffiti on the side of the Mildene building. They will need to be approached.

**Action Point:**

### **Bollards on the Green**

There continues to be concerns about cars driving across the Green from the William Street fence access. Dave had raised concerns to Jerry about there being sufficient space for wheelchair access if bollards were to be put in place. Gordon suggested putting bollards sufficiently apart to allow wheelchair access but not wide enough to allow a car through. Another suggestion made was to have removable bollards.

Jerry mentioned that he wanted to find out when the dropped kerbs were to be installed as they have been on our list for some time now.

**Action Point: Jerry**

### **Charity Commission**

Jerry pointed out that we need to get the new members registered so that the Trustees details are up and running.

Trustees: -

Sonia Bradley (Secretary)  
Irene Matthewson  
Paul & Hazel Spicer  
Sheila Park  
Ruth Hughes

Once the appropriate documentation has been completed then the minutes of the meetings can be submitted online to the Charity Commission's website.

Jerry expressed that he would like the paperwork to be completed before the end of the financial year if possible.

**Action Point: Sonia/Jerry**

### **William Street Flats**

It was noted that holes have been appearing in the roof of the flats. However, reports had been received that tiles were flying off and landing on cars and the pavement. This made the issue a high priority that had to be resolved quickly. Scaffolding appeared on 15<sup>th</sup> of January and the holes were repaired.

Residents of the William Street Flats have requested that they are included in the recycling run. They do not currently have recycling boxes. Jerry will bring this up at the next Ward Committee Meeting.

**Action Point:**

## **AOB**

### **Traffic Issues in the Area**

#### **South Gosforth Club**

Gordon raised concerns that there has been a car parked on the footpath, it is making pedestrian access difficult, especially people with pushchairs. Gordon will raise this with the Traffic Department.

**Action Point: Gordon**

#### **Field Street Parking**

It is also noted that the congestion at the top of Field Street continues to be a problem. It is very difficult to exit this junction and see oncoming traffic due to the amount of cars parked up. It has been suggested that double yellow lines be put around this area.

**Action Point: Gordon/Jerry**

#### **Traffic Lights at Hunters Road exit.**

Collin informed the meeting that he has been asked to raise the issue of having traffic lights installed at the bottom of Hunters Road. The meeting noted that this issue has been brought up before; however, the problem of exiting this street at all times during the day remains an issue.

**Action Point:**

#### **The Victory**

Jerry pointed out that there are problems with cars driving straight through red lights on the crossing outside the Victory Pub, this also happens frequently on Station Road. There needs to be a camera put in place.

**Action Point: Jerry**

#### **Percy Street/Station Road Junction - Yellow Box**

Yellow box at exit to this junction needs to be repainted.

**Action Point: Jerry/Gordon**

#### **Traffic Problems**

It was noted that several streets in the area i.e. Ridgewood Gardens and Field Street have had problems with traffic knocking off wing mirrors on cars as they drive through.

### **Fence to Car Park outside of Healthlands Gym**

Gordon pointed out that the fence is broken again. Irene suggested that a small wall be built or put kerb stones in front of the fence to protect the fence.

#### **Action Point:**

#### **St Nicholas Parish Church**

Jerry had met Philip Cunningham at the last Ward Committee Meeting and invited him along to the SGRA meeting.

Phillip, is also the area Dean for Newcastle, he feels that the Church has an important part in the community. The Church also has facilities that can be used by the whole community. He feels that we should be working together with the same goals i.e. traffic problems, crossings etc.

Phillip is happy for the SGRA to use Church leaflets to publicise any ideas or inform people of any upcoming events/meetings.

### **Alleyway - Backyard to Indian Takeaway**

Concerns were expressed at the state of the area to the back of the Indian Takeaway.

#### **Action Point:**

#### **Car Break-ins / Theft**

The meeting were made aware that two cars on Gosforth Terrace were broken into over the weekend. People were encouraged to be vigilant and report any concerns. Jerry also mentioned that there had been vehicles damaged on Ridgewood Gardens at New Year.

Phillip also informed the meeting that approximately 2 weeks ago some items were stolen from the back of the church. He felt that it was an opportunist crime and felt that it would probably make a difference if a Police presence was more noticeable.

#### **Police Presence**

It was noted that it was very rare to see a Police presence on foot around the area. We have a Community Policeperson; however, their presence is not very noticeable.

Jerry will bring this up at the next Ward Committee Meeting.

#### **Action Point: Jerry**

#### **Church Walls**

Phillip informed the meeting that the Church does not receive any monies from external bodies and that they are not exempt from VAT.

He has asked people to support his petition by logging on to the government website and look for Downing Street Petitions – the petition is to ensure that VAT is free for Churches.

Phillip has approached the Council recently about repairs to the Church Wall. Apparently if the Church was able to find the monies to fund the repairs they would be liable for future repairs and the Council would relinquish responsibility.

### **Old Scout Hut and Land**

Phillip informed the meeting the Old Scout Hut and surrounding land was owned by the Council and the same has been sold.

### **William Street Flats – Drains**

It was noted that the drains on the end have not been cleaned and the contents are now spilling onto the street. This has been an issue that has been going on for several months now.

**AP for Jerry**

### **Steps leading down from the Green**

It was noted that these have not been cleaned since December 06

### **Tenerife Buildings**

It was noted that water continues to run down the building from drains and continues down the back of Field Street.

### **Ridgewood Gardens**

It was noted that the manhole cover has now been fixed and concreted in.

### **Neighbourhood Response Team**

Gordon plans to meet with Dave to address the following areas:-

- Paving outside of shops on Station Road
- Paving near new splash guards
- Graffiti
- Drains outside Victory Pub
- Field Street drains

The undergrowth and trees have been cut down at the bottom of Hunters Road, it was noted that this has been thinned out due to Safety in the Community and this is also happening elsewhere in the city.

Bus Stop near Church is constantly being damaged – East Gosforth Ward to bring this up at the Ward Committee Meeting

**Action Point:**

### **Bowes Court.**

A resident in Bowes Court approached the SGRA for assistance, the resident has been looking after the land in this area for a number of years. She has asked if the

council can be approached to look at putting weed killer down to keep on top of the weeds.

**Action Point:**

**The Green**

Gordon asked if the Council could be approached to look at putting in a play area for younger children. Concerns were expressed that youths in the area may use this to gather at night.

Gordon also felt that it would be appropriate to ask for extra planters to be placed along the path for the summer. **To be discussed.**

Need to get requests into the Council before the summer.

**Action Point:**

**Publicising SGRA Meetings**

Looked at several suggestions to ensure the local community are aware of our existence and dates and times of meetings:-

Phillip has offered the use of the Church notice board, they also send out a directory once a year to the local libraries etc and Philip would be happy for us to include our contacts details in the directory. Phillip is also happy for us to enter contact details and website address in the Church Magazine. Phillip can deliver some magazines to Jerry and these can be put in the local shops etc.

**Action Point:**

It was also suggested that we approach Annabel to find out who has the key so we can put details in our local Community Notice Board. We could also put a flyer on the Victory notice board.

**Action Point: Jerry/Colin**

**Gregg's**

Gordon has noticed that there has been a low noise being omitted from the building. He has been in touch with the Chief Engineer who has informed him the noise is coming from the high power diesel washer they use for the vans. The noise can be heard from around 5am and then on an off during the day. Gordon has spoken to the Council and this needs to be kept an eye on.

**Action Point: Gordon**

**General observations around the Area**

Phillip pointed out several incidents of concern recently. He feels there are increasing signs of vandalism which in itself is indicative of wider problems. He feels that, part of the problem South Gosforth is experiencing, is the fact that people throughout the area are not aware that there are several different types of communities within South Gosforth. i.e.:-

Students – no one is looking at the long-term effects of short-term residencies in the area.

Sheltered accommodation – Very little notice is taken of the needs of these individuals i.e. public transport.

Multicultural issues – Philip has noticed some incidents of racial graffiti on Haddricks Mill Road.

High Street – Shops are vacant and the area is looking generally untidy which is having a knock on affect to the surrounding areas.

Phillip felt that it was important to keep these issues raised with the Council so they can be addressed before they become bigger.

He wanted to make the meeting aware that he would be happy to raise issues/concerns at appropriate meetings.

**Action Point: Phillip**

**South Gosforth Green – Summer Event**

The possibility of having a Summer Event on the Green was raised again. The meeting is aware of the Health and Safety regulations and how restrictive these are.

It was felt that at least chairs and tables would be appropriate so people can use the area more effectively during the summer months. This will need to be discussed in more detail.

**Date and Time of next Meeting**

SGRA Meeting – 7pm in the Victory Pub on 5th March 2007

Ward Committee Meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007