

paxcroft mead community forum

Chairman's Report 2011

The Forum has now been running for 18 months and this is its second Annual General Meeting. Membership has remained stable at around 200 members with some moving away and others joining.

Committee meetings were held in July, September and November of 2010, and February and April of this year, with members working on separate projects as time allowed.

Two members have resigned during the year, Warren Lee and John Hatherill' and Ken Hart will be stepping down tonight. We thank them for all their hard work on behalf of the Forum.

We have co-opted a new member, Gordon Rees, who has already made a good contribution to our work. We therefore have enough committee members to continue, but we are on the look-out for one or two new recruits.

The Forum is a member of the Trowbridge Neighbourhoods Partnerships, an umbrella organisation for Trowbridge residents associations.

At the recent Town Gathering last month, representatives of the Forum were presented with a Civic Certificate for Service to the Community over the past year. This is the second such certificate we have received.

Day to day concerns

Key issues this year in day to day concerns have been:

- Problems with the recycling facility at Hackett Place
- Difficulties with transport from the estate to Clarendon School
- Ongoing concerns about landscape maintenance and litter

The recycling facility

Persistence has paid off. The footprint of the facility has been enlarged, so there are now five bins each for plastics and cardboard. New notices have been put up with contact numbers for reporting problems.

There is still occasional fly tipping, and we would urge you to report any instances you see.

Vicki White the council officer is planning to come to the next coffee morning in July, to explain the new arrangements for kerbside recycling, which will begin later in the year.

The recycling centre will then become redundant.

Transport from the estate to Clarendon School

The new regime at Clarendon school means that prompt attendance is mandatory, which has caused problems for children from Paxcroft Mead.

The bus service is mistimed and erratic, and also there is no direct bus service to the school.

Following complaints to First, the service is now more reliable and in addition, Faresaver have agreed to route their X34 service via Leapgate from 6th June, meaning that it will drop children at Clarendon school at approximately 8.25am.

The continuance of this service will depend on how many children use it, so we have asked the school to advertise it to their pupils and parents.

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Landscape maintenance and litter

There are always on-going concerns about these matters.

A particular concern has been the choking of Paxcroft Brook with overgrowing vegetation. We are trying a new approach by asking the Community Payback Scheme if they can clear it for us.

Local Development

The key issue in the area of local development has been the submission of the first applications for full planning permission for the Land South of Green Lane.

This development will eventually provide 650 dwellings and include the extension of Leapgate across Green Lane to the West Ashton Road. At present there have been about five applications comprising housing developments nearest to Green Lane.

When the first of these applications was submitted in March, we were dismayed to see the response of the Town Council, specifying that access for site traffic to the development should be via Leapgate.

It seems that councillors were responding to concerns from Green Lane residents that access to the site would be via Green Lane.

Some of you may remember that a forerunner of the Community Forum, Paxcroft Action Lobby, conducted a sustained campaign in 2004 to protect the interests of Paxcroft Mead residents in the face of the planned extension to Leapgate.

One of the key outline planning conditions that PAL had instigated was the stipulation that access to the site for construction traffic should be solely via West Ashton Road. Even when sufficient housing is occupied to require the link to Leapgate to be opened, Leapgate will still be closed to site traffic.

We lost no time in highlighting these planning restrictions to the Town Council Development Committee and are pleased to report that the matter was promptly settled. Councillor Andrew Bryant copied us in on his e-mail to Wiltshire Council's Planning Department, correcting the Town Council's response to an insistence that the Outline Planning conditions were adhered to.

We will be monitoring this development closely to ensure that the developers follow the Outline Planning conditions, especially in respect to Leapgate.

Forum initiated projects: Paxcroft Mead Action Park

This project is being headed up by Adrian Ingham.

Those of you who attended last year's AGM will remember the lively discussion about the project, culminating in the proposal to hold some kind of on-line debate.

The committee decided that a debate format would tend to polarise the community, which is contrary to our aims. We fixed on an on-line consultation based on a frequently asked questions format and we launched the consultation at the first Forum Coffee Morning in October 2010.

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Attendance at the coffee morning was encouraging, although response to the consultation was low-key, with remarkably few members feeling the need to send in their comments. Most of the responses we did receive were in support of the project, with a 70/30 split in favour. The most pressing concern expressed was that the BMX track would tend to increase anti-social behaviour. The committee decided to go on with the project while also looking into the matter of anti-social behaviour.

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