



**Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Community Forum Meeting Minutes  
Monday 10th July 2023**

**Present**

Phil Marsh	Chair & Resident, Marefield
Tim Marsh	Chairman of ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association
Colin Mair	MERA & Resident, Lakeside
Mike Smith	WBC Councillor, Maiden Erlegh
Melanie De Jong	ETC Representative
Ian Jobson	Laurel Park Football Club & Resident Trusthorpe Road
Linden Morgan	Resident, Elm Road
Helen Elderfield	Resident, Marefield
Sarah Chaplin	Resident, Marefield
Hazel Bell	Resident, Sibson
Karen Collins	Thames Valley Police

**Apologies**

Molli Cleaver	Community Relations Manager, University of Reading
Simon Botham	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Thames Valley Police
Toni D'Amaro	Neighbourhood Officer, Thames Valley Police
Elena Ispas	Police Community Support Officer, Thames Valley Police
Uzma Saeed	Wokingham/Bracknell IAG
Tahir Maher	Earley Town Councillor

**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 to the meeting and expressed his thanks to Andrew Mickleburgh for his support, help and attendance at the Earley NAG. He welcomed Councillors Mike Smith and Melanie De Jong and who will represent WBC and ETC. The apologies are listed above.

### 2. Minutes from previous Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023:

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

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

Phil advised AOB was returning to the agenda after a temporary absence and asked the attendees if they had any issues to raise. Lyndon raised the issue of green matters / overgrown paths. Phil advised they would discuss this after agenda item 7a)

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

Karen gave apologies for the policing team who were unable to attend this meeting due to resourcing.

#### a) Burglary

1 x Business Burglary – Shinfield Road

2 x Residential Burglaries – Mawbray Close and Silver Brook Close

#### b) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

6 reports of ASB – Andrews Road/Lakeside junction, footpath between Rushey Way/Cutbush Lane, Camborne Close, Station Road, Felixstowe Close and Lakeside

5 reports of Criminal Damage – Bythorn Close, Red House Close, Toseland Way, Silverdale Road and Adwell Drive

4 x Thefts of Motor Vehicles – Doddington Close, Ebborn Square, Silverdale Road and Paddick Drive.

Of the above reports, one was a Lease Hire company reporting a client had not returned their vehicle, one is a moped, one is an electric bike and one vehicle had been lent to a friend who did not return it.

However, there is still a national trend in the theft of high value keyless vehicles.

3 x Thefts of Pedal Cycles – Robinson Court, Silverdale Road and Wickham Road

#### c) County Lines issues

There is a dedicated Tasking Team who use 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>

### 5. Speedwatch (Lower Earley Scheme) -- (Phil)

Phil advised the PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) had commissioned some surveys to ascertain the public's priorities on speed and reckless driving. The NAG still requires 6 volunteers to join their Speedwatch scheme. Please let Phil know if you are able to support this important initiative.

### 6. Vehicles Parked too close to junctions, from Squirrels Way, Sevenoaks Road and Radnor Road residents. The Highway Code specifies not closer than 10 metres. If a resident sees a parked car closer than 10 metres, what should they do? Updates on inconsiderate parking - (Colin – MERA)

Colin advised they are still waiting for a response from their national association on this issue.

### 7. Laurel Park: a) Saturday traffic and car parking challenges in roads adjacent to Laurel Park – Tim (ACER) who chaired the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June to sum up.

Tim Marsh thanked everyone involved in the Zoom Meeting and provided the following summary:

The meeting was held with the aim to find a way forward to resolve traffic issues in the area around Laurel Park on Saturdays during the football season and to reach a consensus on the best ways forward to present to WBC. Prior to the meeting, the NAG Chair had circulated a summary of the issues that had been reported and discussed at NAG meetings for many months. This summary was amended before the meeting to include feedback from interested parties.

There were eleven potential options tabled at the meeting. Many thanks to all the thoughtful and constructive suggestions which were made. All the options were explained to the meeting using a Power Point presentation. Three of the options turned out to be unavailable on Saturdays, so had to be dropped. The rest of the options were discussed in four separate groups, Residents, Councillors, Football Clubs, and the Police. Following discussions, representatives from each group reported back to the meeting.

The Councillors sought to reduce dependency on car transport, and were not keen to expand car parking provision. Councillors also stated that there was a borough - wide review of sports provision ongoing by the Council and that any final decision by the NAG sub-committee should be deferred until after that review was completed.

The Football clubs pointed out that teams came from a very wide catchment area well outside Wokingham and Reading and cars were the only feasible form of transport for many visiting players. The clubs undertook to encourage local players to reduce car dependency e.g. bicycles and public or shared transport. The current pavilion was in a poor state of repair and did not meet the current demand.

The residents stated that their preference was for a new entrance to Laurel Park from Rushey Way, and preferred the one-way circular road around the perimeter with parking as proposed by the football clubs, but using an embedded mesh roadway to retain the grass, however they were against the new pavilion location also proposed as part of the football club's scheme, primarily due to its relocation and consequent loss of greenery.

The Police said that they would report back after the meeting on any issues arising from the meeting's preferred solutions.

Although no *formal* consensus was reached at the meeting, both football clubs and residents preferred a solution based on a new perimeter road with parking inside Laurel Park. Constructive suggestions were made at the meeting, including making a presentation to WBC to make them aware of the FA organisation of the junior level clubs and consequent travel requirements.

As chair of that meeting, I propose the way forward as follows:

- a. The clubs to encourage local players to reduce dependency on cars in order to reduce congestion on local roads as far as possible.
- b. A meeting with WBC to explain the need to accommodate an increase in traffic movement in their plans, due to visiting players caused by the FA's club structure
- c. The preferred solution of Residents and Football Clubs for perimeter parking in Laurel park to be developed further in two phases,
  - i. First Phase, a separate entrance with perimeter road parking and embedded mesh on the roadway to preserve the grass.
  - ii. Second Phase to replace the worn and outdated pavilion without reducing the tree count/ wooded area, or increasing the noise nuisance to residents.
- d. As Earley NAG does not have decision making powers on this issue, it is recommended that WBC continues the conversation with all stakeholders including, but not limited to, the Football Clubs and Residents who live in streets adjacent to Laurel Park.

Karen advised she had spoken to Sgt Simon Botham around the above proposals and there were currently no identified policing concerns.

## **8 Street lighting – follow up on last meeting's actions.**

Lyndon advised overgrowth is masking street lighting around the area, with hedges near the Thames Water Reservoir particularly bad. General overgrowth is also having a knock on effect from Durand Road to the spur of Elm Lane with all in darkness. Mike advised the land around the reservoir belongs to Thames Water and can be reported on the WBC system along with any other street lights which are obscured. Mike reported that WBC did not indulge in no mow May and was not able to cut to schedule in March due to heavy rain. He confirmed the current contract does not include the picking up of cuttings. Lyndon commented that a recent bulletin advising they are cutting back on this service is of concern. Mike advised the public can attend Executive Meetings to put their concerns to the Council. Would the NAG like to ask WBC any questions? Phil suggested a small team from

the NAG could attend a meeting or give a presentation with questions to the Executive committee. Mike will ask if it is possible to make a presentation before the next Borough and Parish Council Meeting. Also, Colin expressed his concerns that clippings were fouling drains, potentially leading to flooding & black ice.

**Lyndon (Lead) and Phil will work on a green matters group to present a question at an Executive Committee Meeting.**

**9 Online fault reporting system challenges. Errors in faults marked resolved when not repaired.**

Lyndon advised he had reported a faulty beacon on the roundabout at the junction of Chalfont Way and Chalfont Close, but the online fault reporting system says there is no fault. Mike advised ETC are responsible for 69 lights and WBC highways are responsible for the rest of them. **Mike asked for the information around the faulty beacon to be forwarded to him and Phil advised he will send it to him. Lyndon will take a photo of the crossing on Wilderness Road and forward it to Phil.**

Mike advised a new website is going live at the end of the month.

**10 Neighbourhood Watch – Local Schemes -- (Paul/Phil)**

Phil advised he will be contacting Paul to assist him with a list of Co-ordinators to invite to the next NAG meeting to discuss any issues they may have in their areas.

**11 University of Reading – community update – (Molli)**

The University is now closed for the summer break.

**12 Fireworks – Laurel Park FC Youths Sports Foundation (Charity # 1183357) - Ian**

Ian confirmed the Lions Club will no longer run the fireworks event as they do not have the capacity or membership numbers to do so and they will be working with LPFC YSF on this year's event. Laurel Park FC Youths Sports Foundation (LPFC YSF) are looking to make this a community event and are inviting other local organisations to get involved.

Phil offered to deliver letters to Marefield, Sibson, Owston and Barkby (141 Homes) four weeks prior to the event and suggested offering a feedback number or email box for residents. Phil also suggested publishing requests for volunteers in such letters.

**Sgt Simon Botham to be contacted for TVP feedback on road closures.**

The meeting closed at 8:38pm.

1009B	<b>NAG website</b> is up & 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>	Facebook Page link for posts: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG">https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG</a>	All minutes are now available for viewing online.
0909C	<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.  The following dates have been booked. 4th September 2023 13th November 2023	Please note the meetings dates, times and location  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>	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

			<p>been committed call <b>101</b> or report online.</p> <p>In an emergency or if a crime is in progress, dial <b>999</b>.</p> <p>If in doubt report it.</p>
1704A	<p><b>Reading University Community Events</b></p> <p>Events will be advised in due course.</p> <p>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><a href="mailto:community@reading.ac.uk">community@reading.ac.uk</a></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>	