

Homesteads Community Forum Public Meeting Notes

**2nd October 2009 at 7.30 pm Hardie Hall, Hardie Road,
Stanford-le-Hope**

www.homesteadscf.org.uk



1) Welcome and Apologies

Present:

Committee: Tony Sharp, (Chairman) (TS), Carol Sharp (CS), Sally Griggs (Treasurer) (SG), Ray Griggs (RG), Beverly Evans (BE), John Evans (JE), Nadine Gardner-Holt (NGH), Mike Farman (Secretary) (MF)

Councillors: John Everett

Thurrock Council: Andrea Winterflood

NGAGE: None present

Police: NSO Jac Dean, PCSO Christine Hope.

Public members: 14 people attended and signed the register

Apologies: Tony Benson (TB), Frances Benson (FB)

The chairman altered the order of the items on the published agenda to allow the visitors to leave following their presentations.

2) Police Report

Given by NSO Jac Dean and PCSO Christine Hope and covered the period from the 9th May to 1st October 2009

CRIME	NUMBER	REMARKS
Violent (inc public order, domestic and schoolboy fights)	8	
Assault on Police	1	
Assault no injury	1	
Arson	1	
Burglary from Dwelling	12	
Criminal Damage	11	
Drugs possession	1	
Fraud	1	
Racial Incident	1	
Theft of a Motor Vehicle	6	
Theft from a Motor Vehicle	4	
Theft of pedal cycle	3	
Vehicle interference	3	
Harassment	1	
Sexual Exposure	1	

This amounted to a total of 55 crimes compared with 76 for the period last year.

Cycles had been stolen from Corringham town centre this week and were all left unsecured. Jac recommended that all bicycles were marked with a post code. Details in the police community web site.

Following a discussion about the burglaries the police representatives advised to keep windows closed and doors locked at all times. The burglaries were not confined to a specific area of the Homesteads. Compared to this period last year they were down by 4. Some prosecutions have resulted where criminals have been caught



3) **Balstonia Park Play Equipment -- Presentation by Andrea Winterflood**

Andrea said Sylvia Yates sends her apologies for missing the last meeting. Andrea continued to give some brief details of the Government Playbuilder scheme.

Thurrock Council has been awarded £1.2m to spend over the next 3 years in improving play facilities for the 8 to 13 year olds. The local forums have identified and nominated 25 spaces across the borough where the money should be spent. Between £45K and £50K will be spent in the Homesteads Balstonia Park.

She said the existing play equipment was coming to the end of its useful life. It is proposed to replace the log frame with a structure that has a lot of platforms with steps, ladders and a slide. A conceptual plan was passed around to those present and can be seen on the Homesteads forums website. All the new equipment will be within the fenced area with an additional Basket ball hoop/frame outside. The football frame will remain in its location.

Contractors were due to start on Monday 5th October with an expectation to have the bulk of the work completed by Half term on the 23rd October.

The chairman said a small football type frame is required for the younger children, well away from the large frame and the older children. Andrea agreed. He also expressed concern about damage to the new equipment by others. Andrea said the new equipment was mainly steel construction with all nuts and bolts on the structures securely locked. It had been used elsewhere successfully.

To promote the Playbuilder scheme, Andrea suggested the Rainbow logo of the Playbuilder scheme be reproduced in tulips in the park grass. Daffodil bulbs could also complement the planting in the park. Some residents showed concern that these would be ripped up and suggested a more appropriate place would be the roundabout near to the Homesteads Hall. This was accepted.

The suggestion that play equipment could be located in the 'Boyce Road area' was discussed. In principle this is possible but will need planning permission and resident approval before it could be considered.

No land is available at the Milton Road end of the Homesteads for any form of play equipment. The treasurer commented that no play equipment was available at either end of the Homesteads area.

Councillor Everett said he was familiar with the 'Wicksteed' brand of play equipment and was this type being used. Andrea said the supplier was Hags with the equipment designed and made in Sweden. It is considered strong and almost indestructible. A discussion about the arson attacks on play equipment in the area followed with Andrea concluding arson was a major issue in Thurrock.

The chairman thanked Andrea for the presentation.

1. **Chairs Report**

The Chairman said he has no news to report since the last meeting. However the park fencing and netting projects would continue.

He reminded residents about the Children's Christmas party on the 13th December 2009.

4) **Treasurers Report**

The treasurer said that the accounts for the Party in the Park event were now complete. A statement was given to all those present. The total cost of this year's event was £3247.48

Our bank balance stands at £3099.44. Future commitments this year are the Lock up rental at £255 and £500 for the Children's Christmas party. £250 is also available for administration purposes.

The treasurer estimated that approximately £1000 was not currently allocated.

The treasurer has asked the council why our 'Top up' insurance had increased from £50 to £255 this year. The insurer is Zurich. The treasurer has not been given a definitive formal answer why the cost increased. It is believed that the £225 is very close to a figure obtained by dividing the total cost of the council's forum insurance by the number of forums. 'It's our share' is the accepted explanation!!

5) **Approval of notes of previous Public Meeting**

The notes of the previous public meeting were approved.



6) Matters arising from previous Public Meeting

None

7) Any Other Business

a. Councillor John Everett

He said it had been a turbulent year for Thurrock Council with the Chief Executive leaving. The position is being held temporarily by an excellent officer while the administration is trying to recruit a permanent replacement.

The Council is striving to raise its status from level 2. (Scale 0 to 4). It is predicted the council will move to level 3 soon. This had the advantage that more grants would be available from Central Government.

In addition the Finance Director is leaving and the Education Director has left.

Councillor Everett felt the Council was however making progress.

b. Branksome Avenue speeding

Councillor Everett asked if any resident had any comments on the measures added to Branksome Avenue. (Illuminated speed signs) None were made but some felt the illuminated signs had an effect in reducing speeding and were therefore a success.

PCSO Christine Hope said a survey last year over a 2-3 month period issued only 3 speeding tickets and this survey included Southend Road.

A resident felt Motor Cycles presented the biggest problem. Christine said people's perception of speed is not generally as bad as it actually is. She concluded that double yellow line markings were to be added to the junctions in to Branksome Avenue to prevent parking on corners.

8) Next Public meeting

To be arranged at Hardie Hall, Hardie Road, Stanford-le-Hope

The meeting closed at 8:30pm

