



# Craven Vale Community Association

## Minutes of Open Meeting

March 11<sup>th</sup> 2015, 7.00 pm at The Vale Community Centre, 17a Hadlow Close

**Present:** Committee: Grant Scott (Chairman), Alan Cooke (Secretary), Betty Field, Clive Taplin, Nick Wood; Residents: Amy Carlyle, R. Duguar, Rosemary Johnson, Ewe Knebloch, Roy Pennington, I. Robertson, J. Ross, Maree Walker; Others: Keely McDonald (Trainee Resident Involvement Officer), Amy Allison (Trust for Developing Communities), PCSO Carol Manton, Ruth Sennett, Fabien Baxter (TDC), Laura Williams (TDC)

1. **Apologies:** Bill Duff, Geoff Wilcock, Cllr Gill Mitchell, Cllr Warren Morgan, Cllr Stephanie Powell, PCSO Laura Hall
2. **Minutes of meeting January 14<sup>th</sup> 2015.** These were agreed unanimously.
3. **Matters Arising.**
  - a) *Reported problems with structure of 38 Bute Street.* Keely reported that major repair works were to be made.
  - c) *Bus Consultation.* Ruth believed that a consultation on the No 2 and 22 routes to Woodingdean would be announced on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Association would do its best to advertise this to the Craven Vale area when it is announced.
4. **Correspondence.**
  - a) *Constitution.* Keely needs to ensure that the Craven Vale Community Association constitution meets the guidelines issued by the Council.
  - b) *HMOs.* Cllr Geoffrey Bowden wrote to ask if there were any houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the area, which would need to be licensed.
  - c) *Financial Advice.* A leaflet had been received offering advice and support to Council residents and leaseholders offering advice to those in financial difficulties.
5. **Finance.** The finances remain healthy.
6. **Carers and the Carers Centre.** Daniel Eichner gave a brief presentation on the work of the Carers Centre in Bedford Place, in particular its 'Carers Reablement Process', which aims to help carers learn practical skills such as cookery, or creative skills such as music by linking them with volunteers for a short ten-week period. Currently there are only some 20 volunteers, and more are sought to offer this low-level support. There are an estimated 25,000 carers in the city, for whom isolation is a major problem. It was agreed to advertise this service wherever possible.

7. **Housing Land Car Parks.** Benjamin Tedder, of the Housing Department's Car Parks and Garages team, came to update the meeting on the plans for the two car parks on Housing Department land – in Parham Close and Hadlow Close. The Council has agreed that Housing can now fully manage these two car parks – that is, organise the areas into specified parking places, allocate them to local residents, charge them for sole use of the spaces, and penalise those who park without a permit. On the assumption that demand will exceed supply, priority will be given to those with blue badges, followed by Council tenants and leaseholders. Charges would be a maximum of £120 a year, compared to £90 in Baker's Bottom. It was acknowledged that the 'sole use' ruling would mean that many spaces were likely to remain empty for much of the day.

There is as yet no timescale for introduction, nor a decision as to whether it will apply to all car parking spaces in Hadlow Close, or only on that half that is on Housing land.

The garage sites in Southwater Close were not discussed, except to say that they should not be used as commercial garages or for any other business.

8. **Craven Vale Roads and Verges.** Following much concern from residents and Councillors about the state of the verges in Craven Vale, and particularly Queensway, Alan had been in touch with Stuart Wilson, Highway Maintenance Manager, and Martin Heath, Road Safety Team Manager.

Each had sent very comprehensive replies, and these will be attached to those minutes circulated by e-mail. The meeting wished to record their thanks for these detailed responses.

The main problems were considered to be:

- the poor state of the verges due to vehicles parking on them and using them to pass other vehicles
- inconsiderate parking
- the increased difficulty for residents in finding parking places following the extension of a car parking zone to Baker's Bottom
- vehicles unwilling to give way to oncoming traffic

Cllr Mitchell had already instigated action to improve the dangerous verge at the very top of Queensway, following severe gouging. Stuart Wilson advised that the Council would shortly repair that piece of verge and put in place a number of wooden bollards. However, it was not in the remit of the Council to improve unsightly verges unless they were considered to be dangerous. It was noted that it was now illegal to park on the verge on the east side of Queensway and several parking violation tickets had already been issued.

The problems of parking for contractors' vehicles and short-term visitors, as well as congestion during rush hours when traffic often backed up, remained unsolved. However, it was generally agreed that the residents did not want to see Queensway become a one-way road, or to have bunds placed on the verges as this would prohibit vehicles from using the verges to pass when essential.

It was noted that, following representations, double yellow lines had now been painted at the turning area for Tilgate Close, and at the entry to Southwater Close, which had eased traffic problems at those points.

Regarding car parking, a straw poll taken of those present at the meeting showed a general wish to have another consultation to determine whether or not to have controlled parking throughout the rest of the Estate. The Committee would discuss this at their next meeting.

Martin Heath had agreed to look at the possibility of additional road signs to smooth traffic flow on Queensway and was prepared to listen to suggestions. However, with an average of only one collision a year, the Council could not justify any significant engineering.

9. **Estate Development Budget.** The East Brighton Housing Panel would be meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> to vote on the six applications by Craven Vale for EDB funds. Three EDB awards for 2014/15 had still to be actioned – a bench at the top of Hadlow Close, a feasibility study of a potential play area by Parham Close, and a grant to pay for materials for Community Payback. A decision was also awaited on a Quick Bid for a replacement notice board at the top of Hadlow Close.

#### 10. Updates

a) *The Vale Community Centre.* Redecoration of the Centre had now been completed, as well as the laying of new carpet and linoleum.

b) *The Friends of Craven Wood.* The next working session will be between 10am and 1pm on Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> followed by an Annual General Meeting – all were welcome.

#### 7. Any Other Business

a) *Grassed Areas.* The bank opposite 2-12 Queensway had not been mown for almost a year. Apparently the grass-cutting team said that the new trees planted at the foot of the bank had made the mowing of this area more difficult and dangerous. Grant said that he would consider re-locating the saplings.

b) *Problem Tenants.* One had now moved out of Hadlow Close while another had been referred to tenancy enforcement with a notice seeking possession.

c) *Re-painting of Step Edges.* Keely reported that Community Payback are now ready to undertake this work but needed to know if the materials are available. Alan would contact Steve Berry.

d) *PCSO Report.* Carol advised that the announcement of 1,000 fewer police staff in Sussex would undoubtedly affect the frequency of visits to Craven Vale by Laura and herself, but that they would be maintaining their responsibility for the area, and could as always be contacted if needed.

e) *Asset Management.* Responding to an earlier request, Keely announced that the Council has no plans for any major works on council properties in Craven Vale.

f) *Rental Payment Options.* Keely outlined the various ways that tenants can pay their rents, following the closure of the Oxford Street office – the Lavender Street office remains open.

#### 8. Dates of Next Meetings

a) Committee Meeting, 7 pm April 8<sup>th</sup>

b) General Meeting, 7 pm May 13<sup>th</sup>

Please note for your diaries that this year's AGM will be on Wednesday July 8<sup>th</sup>

The meeting closed at 8:40 pm.