

WIMBLEDON COMMUNITY FORUM
15 JUNE 2022

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Paul Kohler (in the Chair),

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held at the Arts Space in Wimbledon Library and chaired by Councillor Paul Kohler. 15 residents and 6 councillors attended with 38 additional views on YouTube. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would work.

Cllr Kohler thanked James Holmes for his work chairing the community forum.

2 LOCAL POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY (Agenda Item 2)

Sgt James Peppitt gave an update on local policing and community safety issues. Sgt Peppitt is covering the Wimbledon Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) as Marcia Heritage is currently acting Inspector for the area.

James said his priorities include rebuilding trust in the police as there seems to be a drop shown in recent surveys. As a result it is important for officers to be seen out and about and to tackle key local crimes. The local SNTs have changed to match the new ward boundaries but the Police IT system is yet to catch up so is still working on the old ward boundaries.

There is a plan for policing the town centre during the Wimbledon tennis fortnight, including the use of special constables. In addition to combat anti-social behaviour in the evenings there will be additional patrols in the evening and into the night on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays over the summer. A number of 6-month probationers have joined the local teams to provide additional capacity.

Merton has overtaken Sutton as the third safest borough in London behind Richmond and Kingston. There have been a number of issues with dangerous dogs, and several warrants have been issued with further investigations underway.

A resident asked if the Mayor of London's commission on policing cannabis will change impact on operations. Sgt Peppitt explained that for low level offences there is already a system of Community Resolution, which acts as a warning and officers can also refer to diversion activities like Catch 22 and the Youth Offending Team.

A resident asked Sgt Peppitt why there had been a drop in public confidence in the police. James said that there have been some concerns about visibility and how easy it is to contact the local SNT. As part of the response officers will be going round a different street each week to introduce themselves to residents. James has not seen the detailed results of the surveys so is not sure what other factors have been identified. Results from the surveys are available from the [MOPAC website](#).

Residents can access police contact details on the [Met Police website](#) or you can email the ward teams:

Abbey Ward – SWMailbox-.SNTAbbey@met.police.uk

Hillside Ward – Hillside@met.police.uk

Wimbledon Town Centre & Dundonald Ward – Dundonald@met.police.uk

The Wandle Ward mailbox is currently being created, for now residents can email Trinity@met.police.uk.

Cllr Kohler reminded the meeting that each ward has a Panel and residents can get involved by contacting their local SNT.

A resident asked how many officers are in each SNT. James said it is usually two officers and one PCSO per ward, with a Sergeant covering three or four wards. A resident suggested advertising on community noticeboards, and James said he was looking into these options, and knew they needed to utilise more channels to reach residents.

A resident asked about the impact of the uncertain future of Wimbledon police station on confidence in the police locally. James said this has certainly been raised locally by residents but would need to check if the surveys had picked up on this.

Cllr Stringer said that the Met Police are still reviewing their estate strategy, and this has been pushed back until later in the year. Currently there are more officers using Wimbledon station which is good news for its potential future.

A resident asked if crime is going up or down post Covid. James said that some crimes have increased as a result of people being out again whilst others have come down. There has been a decrease in burglary compared to three months ago, but an increase in robbery over same time period. The teams look at trends and then plan accordingly. There is a Burglary and Robbery Team in CID that also look at trends and inform the SNT work. As a result, it is still really important for residents to report crimes.

A resident asked about enforcement on the use of E-scooters. James said there is an official rental scheme being piloted in other boroughs, but many users do not know

that they need a license and insurance for privately owned vehicles, so officers do a lot of education. The Safer Transport Teams do a lot of operations, including fining and seizing scooters, and whilst SNT will deal with them it is not usually a priority. The Police are currently waiting on a government review of the law.

A resident asked about the impact of economic trends on crime as the cost-of-living crisis escalates, and James said it was possible it would have impact, but he was not sure exactly what. A resident asked about the theft of catalytic convertors, James said this is a difficult crime to enforce given the speed with which it can be done. There is an ongoing race with car design to prevent theft and the methods criminals use. SNTs check with local scrap metal merchants to make sure they are not trading in catalytic convertors. James would encourage residents to call if they see anything suspicious.

A resident asked about enforcing speed limits, especially in 20 MPH zones. James said residents can raise problem roads with your local SNT and they can work with the Safer Transport Team. Training is required to use speed guns correctly, but the police can support Community Speed Watch, with residents using them as a deterrent. It also helps residents understand what excessive speed looks like. To enforce 20MPH some form of traffic calming is helpful.

3 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 3)

A resident raised the issue of roads in Wimbledon being named after two individuals, Joseph Marryat MP and John Sawbridge-Earle-Drax MP, who owned slaves. Merton Council had passed a resolution in March 2020 in recognition of Black Lives Matter but there has been no action on names of these roads. The resident wrote to all councillors 15 months ago but said he had not received any response although Cllr Kohler as Chair said he knew of at least one councillor who had responded. Wimbledon High girls' school has renamed their sports hall as a result, whilst the Drax family still owns the sugar plantation in the Bahamas. The resident said that councillors could arrange to change the names or add a note to road signs. Another resident said that it would be interesting to share the history of road names in Wimbledon as part of heritage events.

Cllr Kohler said that CFs can submit a motion to the council and the Forum agreed to submit a motion to the next Council meeting. The motion reads:

The Wimbledon Community Forum notes that some roads in Wimbledon are named after former residents who were slave owners. The Forum calls on Merton Council to consider including historical information in the vicinity of such road signs including the fact they are named after slave owners.

Cllr Stringer said that the administration has been thinking a lot about priorities for young residents from BAME backgrounds and have been addressing the issues raised by those communities. Cllr Stringer said she would be happy to take this away and speak with colleagues.

A resident raised the issue of litter and maintenance in Dundonald Rec. The parks team have provided the following response: Our service delivery partners idverde administer the day to day running of our parks and open spaces. Where there are seasonal demands put on our facilities, idverde are required to increase their emptying frequency to address this and this is something that we will highlight to them. We appreciate the playground is well regarded by its users, again idverde inspect this facility on a weekly basis, the roundabout does have a mechanical speed restrictor in place, but we will ask idverde to visit the site and asses this particular unit, any associated works (if required) can then be scheduled.

Cllr Kohler recommended residents consider registering and using the [Fix my street app](#). A residents said that has been problem with items being closed on the app when they have not actually been dealt with. Cllr Stringer said sometimes this is due to issues on private land but the problem is being looked into.

A resident raised the issue of delivery mopeds using the Wimbledon Bridge parking bays intended as drop off spaces for the station. Cllr Kohler said this issue has been discussed at the Location Board, a multi agency council group that includes local councillors, and there was due to be an update at the next meeting on Thursday 23 June. Craig Hurring from Love Wimbledon, had also provided information that the key thing we need to happen is to ensure the delivery companies update their algorithms to ensure drivers wait at the location provided in the Hartfield Road and St George's car parks. Love Wimbledon is ready to support and promote these locations as soon as it is confirmed, and signage is available.

A resident had also asked about the License application for the new Travelodge in Hartfield Road which has applied for 24-hour License but was satisfied to learn this included a condition limiting alcohol sales to hotel residents and their bona fide guests between 11pm & 10 am daily.

A resident asked about food waste bins being accessed by foxes and asked if the bins can be made more secure. Officers will report this to the Public Spaces team. A resident said that it would help if public bins could be cleared quicker. Cllr Stringer said Merton Council has issued a [Service Improvement notice](#) to the contractor. A resident said that food waste bins in communal flats were not designed or being used properly. Cllr Kohler suggested that this could be raised with Clarion, and another resident said that Clarion are aware of these issues nationally and will be looking into the problem.

David Hall from Wimbledon Community Association gave an update on the work of the organisation. Their [Wimblecomm](#) website promotes local community spaces. There are three trustees, and two members of staff so welcome involvement from other residents. The groups are looking to create an Ambassadors scheme.

A resident raised the issue of the removal of the countdown indicator for buses on Wimbledon Bridge outside Centre Court. Officers will raise this with Transport for London.

Cllr Stringer encouraged residents to respond to the Mayor of London's [ULEZ consultation](#), which is open until 29 July 2022.

4 FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUM MEETINGS (Agenda Item 4)

Cllr Kohler asked residents what they would like to see at future meetings and how we might encourage greater attendance. Cllr Stringer said she has taken responsibility for Community Engagement and is also keen to hear residents' thoughts.

Suggestions included:

- Register for [alerts on website](#)
- Reach out to Resident Associations
- Encourage attendees to spread awareness by word of mouth
- List the meetings in local newspapers
- Use Facebook advertising

A resident commented that people don't know what community Forums are for, and Cllr Kohler said he is keen for Forums to use their powers and have a stronger role.

5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 5)

Future meetings, all at 7.15pm

Wednesday 21 September 2022 in the Arts Space at Wimbledon Library

Wednesday 30 November 2022 in the Arts Space at Wimbledon Library

Wednesday 22 March 2023 venue TBC