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Parklands Ward FOCUS

Serving Brunton Park, Grange Estate,
Great Park, Halls Estate, Melton Park,
Great North Road & Whitebridge Park
For 40 Years
Edited by CLLR DAVID DOWN
Winter 2015

A TALE OF TWO PITCHES

Plans for the future of council-owned playing fields off **Broadway West** and **Kingston Park Road** illustrates two starkly different attitudes to community involvement.

Residents were dismayed by proposals by Red House Farm Football Club to erect high fences around their pitches, effectively stopping access to the open space that has been used by the community for generations. After protests the club said it would withdraw the plans and consult with local people and councillors on alternatives. But the club has now submitted only slightly modified plans and pre-empted any discussions.

Meanwhile, proposals from Gosforth Sports Association are proceeding with a local resident being invited onto the committee drawing up their plans. This will ensure that local people's views are considered, including the interests of dog walkers.

Cllr David Down said, "With funding tight, the Council needs to find innovative ways for local groups to take over the management of assets like this, but on behalf of the whole community."



Red House Farm FC (left) - want to fence off public open space
Gosforth Sports Association (right) - working with local residents
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"The not-for-profit proposal by Gosforth Sports Association to manage the open space for cricket and rugby whilst respecting local needs has a lot of merit.

"By their actions, Red House Farm Football Club have shown they are interested only in themselves and we are opposing their new planning application.

"As Councillors we will work with groups, who propose to provide facilities, not just for themselves, but also to expand the reach of their sports to more young people and maintain access to open space for other users."



High Street Concerns Ignored

Residents at the Gosforth Town Meeting about High Street traffic plans did not support any of the proposals. So, Gosforth's Lib Dem councillors took a motion to City Council asking for a rethink and consultations to be reopened. This was turned down by Labour councillors.

Cllr David Down said "We asked that the proposals be looked at again so that businesses as well as residents don't lose out. But Labour councillors made it clear that they don't believe that consultation means listening."

Traffic Chaos Response

The new traffic lights at Regent Centre have led to long queues, many complaints and some near misses with pedestrians. **Cllr Pauline Allen** is still sending complaints to the Council, with comments that the roundabout was safer and allowed traffic to flow better. We think residents will find the Council's response illuminating:

"There is no fixed legal requirement to [review the situation]; however we will keep an eye on things. We are in a fortunate position that the Gosforth corridor is monitored by our UTM system through ANPR cameras so that we can look at current speed and flow characteristics between Broadway and the Town Moor. We will also keep an eye on the KSI data (killed seriously injured) alongside the traffic data but we expect the KSI's to drop. The works have to be considered as a whole; picking individual junctions in isolation is pretty pointless as some junctions on the corridor will not perform as well as others but the overall performance improves as it was designed as a corridor."

Liberal Democrat Action All Year Round

Melton Park Care Home - Plan Refused

The saga of the ever increasing Care Home has, we hope, come to an end with the Planning Committee's recent refusal to grant an increase from 67 to 70 beds. In 2010 permission was granted for a Home with 42 beds, then in 2011 this increased to 54, and last year it reached 67.

Cllrs Down, Allen and Ashby all submitted objections to the plans, along with many people living nearby, and were pleased that the Planning Department agreed that this was creeping over-development. We hope that the applicants do not appeal, for the sake of local residents and the people who will live in the care home.

Parking Restrictions in Halls Estate

A drop-in session was held recently at GEMS so that residents and parents could look at the plans for parking restrictions around the schools in the Halls Estate. These restrictions are in response to local residents' concerns about inconsiderate parking as well as parents' fears for children's safety. More in the next edition of FOCUS.

Northumbrian Water - Brunton Park

As residents are aware work is continuing on the flooding alleviation work and **Cllr Robin Ashby** is dealing with any problems that arise on the site. You can also check the dedicated, regularly updated website at:

www.bruntonparkfloodalleviation.co.uk

Post Office opens on Salters Road

The Post Office in the Loco store in Salters Road is now open; this replaces the Post Office on Gosforth High Street. The owner of Loco is currently looking at disabled access, parking and bus patterns.

Cllr Pauline Allen said, "Local people should note that counter services are also available at the Grange Park Post Office at 67 Great North Road, and the Brunton Park Post Office at 31 Princes Road. Both have parking outside and buses stop close by."

CONTACTING THE PARKLANDS FOCUS TEAM

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Surgeries :

Gosforth High Street - 1st Saturday of month 10 - 11 am

Gosforth Library - 1st Saturday of month 11:30 - 12 noon

Brunton Park Community Centre - 3rd Wed of month 6:30 - 7

Gosforth eFOCUS Snippets

ULTRA FAST BROADBAND TRIAL FOR GOSFORTH

An article on plans for a new ultra fast broadband service covering parts of Gosforth appeared in The Journal recently, read it at:

<http://tinyurl.com/mvvs99>

BIG BROTHER OR USEFUL TOOL?

CCTV images can help journey planning. Still images from the region's traffic management cameras are now available in a "video wall" format at:

<http://www.netrafficcams.co.uk>

Images update every 1-15 minutes and can be filtered by district across Tyne and Wear. A number of the cameras cover the Gosforth area (see their page 4 onwards).

ENVIROCALL

If you have a complaint about your bin not being emptied or wish to report rubbish that has been dumped you can contact the City Council's Envirocall service.

Reports can be made by phone on 0191 278 7878, or by email: envirocall@newcastle.gov.uk, or by textphone on 0191 211 4944.

Cllr Robin Ashby who is visiting the call centre to see how it operates, said "Keep a note of your reference number as you will need it if you contact the department to check on progress."

...AND FINALLY....

John, Lord Shipley, spoke in debate on the Local Government Finance Settlement in the House of Lords - you can read his full speech here:

<http://tinyurl.com/l2mm4fw>

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