



BRICKHILL COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

**Quarterly Meeting held on Wednesday 1 May 2013
At Brickhill Baptist Church**

33 people attended

INTRODUCTIONS: Dean Crofts introduced himself as the new Chairman of the Safety Forum and welcomed everyone to this meeting. He thanked Brian Matthews for the work he did as the last Chairman and then introduced the following – Emma Daglees (Safer Communities Officer BBC), Laurie Hearn (Healthwatch), Jamie Hall (Community Ranger), Councillors Wendy Rider and Mark Fitzpatrick, PcSo Rowland Gilbey and Rosie Harpur (Victims & Partnership Adviser – PCC).

MINUTES and MATTERS ARISING: These had been circulated, where possible, by Email and were accepted with no matters arising.

APOLOGIES: These had been received from Councillor Charles Royden who was attending another meeting.

GUEST SPEAKER – HEALTHWATCH BEDFORD: Laurie Hearn introduced himself and said that Healthwatch was launched on 1 April 2013, commissioned by the Borough Council. He distributed leaflets and said that Healthwatch is here to (1) help everyone to shape the planning of health and social care and services and (2) to help everyone access and make choices about care thus serving the community and enabling all members of the community to benefit which also strengthens the collective voice of patients and public. He asked for questions; first question concerned the lack of surgery provision in Brickhill and how this can be followed up – Laurie asked for actual statistics to enable Healthwatch to proceed. The Chairman thanked Laurie for his talk.

POLICE REPORT: PcSO Rowland Gilbey read out figures which would appear to show that crime in Brickhill was virtually negligible; however there was considerable discussion followed by criticism of these figures; instances were given where there had been no Police presence and suggesting that the public has very little faith in the Police and consequently do not feel it is worth reporting small incidents. It was requested that these concerns be fed back to the Police Authority. A query was raised about the mini-motorbikes which were causing nuisance (and danger) in the area.

COMMUNITY RANGER SERVICE: Jamie Hall reported as follows with figures for the last 3 months – Abandoned vehicles (1), Broken Street Lights reported (19), Dog Fouling complaints (1), Fly Tipping reports (28 with one enforcement activity), General Litter complaints (6), Parking enforcement (there had been 3 and a quarter hours enforcement

resulting in 17 visits and 30 tickets issued), Pot Holes reported and repaired (9). Reports of damaged street furniture (4). There were various questions from the floor on associated problems and what the public can do – Jamie’s main advice was REPORT IT using Environmental Health and Environments Crime numbers (01234 227257 and 01234 267422).

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS’ REPORT: Wendy Rider reported that the Council is urging people to refuse to get involved with Cold Callers. (Here the Chairman interrupted by saying that the Citizen’s Advice Borough was recommending the use of leaflets and flyers on doors and gave the website from which these can be accessed.) Wendy continued by saying that tree planting has taken place with approval of home owners where appropriate. The no verge parking zone is in place and is being monitored and there are requests for extensions in various roads in Brickhill. Bollards are to be erected at the edge of the paved area in front of TESCO’s. Ward funds have been used to purchase the real time bus information display at the bus stop in Brickhill Drive and it is hoped to provide another unit at the bus stop near Severn Way/Waveney Avenue junction. New parking restrictions have now been installed for Kestrel Road, Hawk Drive, Tyne Crescent and Falcon Avenue. There have been problems with blocked drains at Brickhill Drive shops and also ongoing problems with Stour Way and serious flooding but once the owner of the blocked drains and culvert responsible can be identified it is hoped this will be rectified. Speeding continues to be a problem across the ward but the Council now has mobile wireless average speed cameras. A 20 mph limit in Tyne Crescent is now almost a reality (after 5 years’ campaigning); there have been some complaints but it has been proved that by reducing speed from 30 mph to 20 mph only adds 90 seconds to the journey. (Only last night there had been a bad accident in Tyne Crescent involving a young boy.) Junction of Windrush and Severn Way has been resurfaced and the Council has accepted our request for repairs to Clyde Crescent and Falcon Avenue. There are many more roads needing attention but at the moment no funds to cover the work. The Pot Hole Squad has been increased by 2 additional squad teams in an attempt to improve the roads in the Borough. The problem of litter is being taken seriously and recently someone received a fine of £70 for dropping litter in Tyne Crescent; fly tipping is also being cleared.

BRICKHILL PARISH COUNCIL: Mark Fitzpatrick reported that the Parish Council is funding the purchase of a defibrillator which will be based at St Mark’s Church; volunteers will be trained in its use. A small play area for younger children has been provided on Waveney Green and some areas on the Green are being prepared for wild flower planting. There are some allotments available for rent. The next Parish Newsletter will be issued shortly – Mark asked that everyone takes advantage of the Community Governance Review (there is a card for residents to complete to give support to the inclusion of Woodlands Park within the Brickhill parish boundary).

BRICKHILL SPEED WATCH: Martyn reported that we have only 5 volunteers and to be effective we need 2 teams of 3 and also the commitment of volunteers to devote 2 hours to each speed watch event. He asked that anybody wishing to have a speed watch in their area to contact him.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: The Chairman commented on the increase in reports of anti-social behaviour. The new Police Commissioner (Olly Martin) met Mark Fitzpatrick and Dean when he gave his action plan for the county police force – there are 3 priorities

PROTECTION (holding Police to account with improved response); PARTNERSHIP (to strengthen links, improve communication/confidence); PREVENTION (reporting back to victims, with IOM, tagging, street watch). Mr Martin wants to create a stronger link between Police and Public within communities; he wants to ensure that a Police presence is always provided at Safety Forums with a minimum of 30 attendees. He wants PcSOs to become Community Support Officers and be back in the community but at present budget constraints make this impossible (a reduction of 19m has been imposed). However his plan is to fill the gap with volunteers – Special Constables and Police Cadets (Bedfordshire has Police Cadets). The Chairman thanked Martyn for his work as co-ordinator of the Speed Watch Scheme; speed checks in the area in the last 3 months have resulted in 7 drivers being reported and 15 cautioned. The Chairman repeated his advice concerning displaying leaflets and flyers to discourage cold calling ; he also gave website to get information on scams. There are 39 streets covered by Neighbourhood Watch – volunteers welcome to cover others.

OPEN FORUM: A question was asked concerning what tax if any can be raised by the Police Commissioner - this would be very unwelcome and would result in an increase in the Community Tax.

MAIN PRIORITIES: The Parish Council to support the installation of speed warning monitors in Brickhill Drive (cost unknown).

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: **THURSDAY 25 JULY 2013** – venue to be decided.