

FROM THE TOWN HALL

Crime overshadows pub opening hours and mobile phone masts.

By Jan Leigh, Simon Roberts and Richard Swansea. Councillors for Southfields Ward.

Pub opening hours and mobile phone masts seemed to be the issues at the front of people's minds over recent months. But even these important issues have become overshadowed by that of violent street crime, following the dreadful attack by a gang of youths on Grant Nock in Granville Road in late July.

We warmly welcome the Metropolitan Police's move to improve their presence on the streets of our community through the recently launched Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative, and we fully support their efforts to make Southfields both look and feel safe. But it does concern us that because Southfields has a lower level of crime than other wards in Wandsworth, it may be some time before it is assigned a full Safer Neighbourhood officer team.

Favourable crime statistics are all very well but they mean nothing to individual victims of serious violence such as Mr Nock and his three companions. We are sure the Police understand this, and we will give them every encouragement to crack down on all those who make the lives of people in our neighbourhood a misery.

Much of this sort of behaviour now seems to go hand in hand with late-night drinking, which is evidently why the prospect of extended pub opening hours is of such great concern to many of our residents.

It looks as though JD Wetherspoon, which owns the Grid Inn in Replingham Road, took the hint from the 200-plus letters of objection from nearby residents that it would have been in for a stormy ride if it had gone ahead with its application to serve drinks until 1 a.m. at weekends and 12.30 during the week. And at the Pig and Whistle in Merton Road, Young's scaled back its application into line with its existing hours after 60 residents objected to its original application for later times for last orders.

This surely goes to show that those who take the

trouble to write in can make the system work to their benefit. Those who have written to the Council in response to the application for later opening hours by the Grid Inn's neighbour, the Old Garage, watch this space!

Vodafone has finally applied to Merton Council for planning permission for a telecoms mast just opposite the Revelstoke Road Health Centre, as we have been expecting for most of this year. We have previously encouraged residents to write with their views to Wandsworth's Borough Planner, who will respond on their behalf to Merton Council, and we must now leave the decision in the latter's hands.

However, we hope we can have much more influence over an application for a very similar mast and equipment cabinet right in the heart of Southfields, at the southern corner of Replingham Road and Wimbledon Park Road. The Council has sent consultation letters to almost 200 homes and businesses nearest the site, but even if you did not receive a letter you may still feel entitled to make your view known if you regularly walk past the site on your way to the shops or the station.

You should write to the Borough Planner, Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street SW18 2PU or e-mail him on boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk, quoting the planning application's reference number: 2005/3212W. And whatever your view on the health risks of mobile phone masts, please remember that the Council cannot legally refuse planning permission on actual or even perceived public health grounds, as long as the equipment complies with certain recognised standards. However, it can refuse on other grounds such as street clutter, lack of visual amenity, and obstruction of the public footway.

jleigh@wandsworth.gov.uk
simonroberts@wandsworth.gov.uk
swansea@wandsworth.gov.uk

SGRA committee...

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Deputy Chair:

Mark Page

Secretary:

Gill Watmough

Treasurer:

Carol Gray

Street Representatives.

Astonville Street

Maurice at 478 Merton Road

Brookwood Road vacant

Clonmore Street

Nick Steiner at 116

Elborough Street

Mike Caswell at 96

Elsenham Street

Eddie Lewis at 4 Lavenham Road

Engadine Street

Jack & Doreen Gray at 33

Hanford Close vacant

Heythorp Street

Neil Robson at 119

Lavenham Road

Mark Davie at 155 Clonmore Street

Merton Road vacant

Replingham Road vacant

Revelstoke Road

Chris Wright at 190

Trentham Street

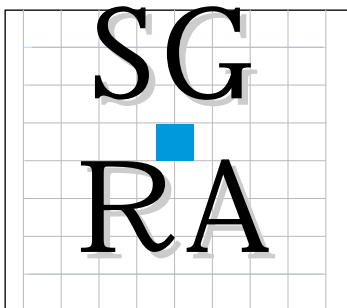
Mark Page at 133

Dates for your Diary...

Tuesday 20th December

"Christmas carol singing"

From 5-30 pm the SGRA choir will be singing Christmas Carols outside Southfields Underground Station. We will be collecting money for Putney Home so please give generously.



SGRA Annual General Meeting.

The following is a brief synopsis of the SGRA AGM which took place on 24th May 2005.

The AGM was well attended by residents. Speakers included Elizabeth Howlett (Member for Merton and Wandsworth, GLA), Justine Greening (Member of Parliament for Putney), Sgt Frank Brennan and PC Stephen Rogers (Wandsworth Police), and John Tweddle (Principle Parks Manager, London Borough of Merton), as well as Councillors Richard Vivian and Jan Leigh, and the points they made are briefly covered below:

Elizabeth Howlett

Mrs Howlett had a long standing association with Wandsworth, as Mayor in 1998/99 and a Councillor since 1986 for Parkside/West Hill. She was elected to the GLA in 2000 as a constituency member representing half a million constituents. As a GLA member, she scrutinises the work of the Mayor of London. On the current congestion charge, she had a particularly large caseload in helping residents to resolve problems with the operation of penalty charge notices. The service on the Wimbledon branch of the District Line remains poor and the shorter trains now only operate on the Wimbledon branch causing further over-crowding.

Justine Greening MP

Since her election of Parliament on 5th May, Miss Greening would continue to campaign to increase the number of police officers in Wandsworth, to reinforce the need for urgent improvements on the Wimbledon branch of the District Line, and bring pressure to bear to reduce aircraft noise. She promised to look into a complaint by a resident about the noise from helicopters operating from Battersea Heliport flying low over the Grid late at night.

Sgt Frank Brennan and PC Stephen Rogers

By March 2008 all areas in Wandsworth would have a full complement of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, currently only eight full teams had been established (consisting of a Sargeant, two Police Officers and three Community Support Officers). It was unlikely that Southfields would be seen as a priority area as crime rates were relatively low. However a Community Support Officer would be working alongside PC Rogers as from 27th June 2005. There was much that residents could themselves do to reduce crime, much of which is opportunistic, eg by locking windows and doors and not leaving anything visible in their motor vehicles. There would be some cross-borough policing vis-à-vis with the London Borough of Merton and Wimbledon Park. Graffiti remained a problem in the Park.

John Tweddle

Merton has 67 parks/open spaces. They promote green waste recycling and no pesticides or herbicides are used in their parks. With regard to Wimbledon Park specifically, new gates are to be installed to make the park more secure. Merton has been working with the Wimbledon Park Heritage Group to plant thorny bushes round the perimeter fences instead of razor wire. There will be sailing, canoeing and kayaking courses during the summer months. The athletics stadium is about to be refurbished. There is now only one bowling green, the other one has been created into a dog free area for children. The children's paddling pool will be open and fully supervised duration the summer months – a substantial donation from a resident has helped fund the shortfall. The Lottery bid has stalled because of a lack of matched funding - they are now looking at making the scheme smaller with just the dredging of the lake.

In answer to questions from residents, Merton Council is aware that the rubbish bins, etc at the Revelstoke Road entrance to the park are

overflowing and the recycling bins are also a problem. The dog bins are also often full so cannot be used, but all these matters are in the process of being sorted. Merton Council wishes to encourage cycling as much as possible, but pedestrians do have right of way on pathways – the Bye-Laws on cycling are currently being reviewed. There is no funding available for a dual path. Problems are caused by a small minority.

Councillors : Jan Leigh and Richard Vivian

As noted in the SGRA newsletter, the repaving of Clonmore Street will be completed by the end of May. The four CCTV cameras are due to be installed in Replingham Road and Wimbledon Park Road in early June. The Garage had obtained a licence to have live music on their premises, this would take place on Friday and Saturday evenings, but conditions had been attached to the licence. The Grid Inn has recently applied to have tables/drinking outside until 9pm in Replingham and Heythorp Street, although the proposal had yet to be considered by the Council.

Residents complained about the loss of trees on the Grid. The Councillors noted that the soil has to rest before a new tree could be planted. There is a replacement list for trees, and the Council intends to plant cherry trees as replacements. Very young trees do not seem to last long and so planting more mature trees is preferable. Regrettably, the much-valued garden waste recycling project had been withdrawn from the Grid, the service had been very expensive to operate. The recycling contract comes up for renewal in three years time, and hopefully reinstating the garden waste project could be considered then.

A resident complained that the paving slabs in Trentham Street are in poor condition, but this had not yet been reported to the Council. It was pointed out that residents should complete report cards to inform the Council of any necessary repairs. The report cards system was not infallible, but if a repair is not made once reported, then the Councillors would be happy to help.

Chairman's Report

Mike Caswell circulated a short note of the work done by the officers and Committee on behalf of the SGRA, everyone worked hard on behalf of residents. The SGRA's website was proving popular and would soon be expanded and improved.

In the last year, amongst other matters, the SGRA had been involved in the following activities: Both The Garage and The Grid Inn had been visited by the Committee - both pubs were keen to work with residents. For the last 15 years, the SGRA had raised funds by carol singing for the Putney Home, Trinity Hospice and St George's Appeal Fund. Our efforts last Christmas raised over £300 for St George's Hospital Appeal Fund. The SGRA gave a donation of £200 to the Church and was sorry to note that Bertrand Olivier would be leaving the Parish this summer. St Barnabas Church currently provided their facilities free of charge for SGRA activities. The SGRA also gave £200 towards the cost of supervising the children's paddling pool in Wimbledon Park. Although just outside the jurisdiction of Wandsworth Council and outside our patch, the SGRA had expressed strong reservations at the proposal by Vodafone to erect a mast at the junction with Revelstoke Road and Merton Road.

Treasurer's Report

The SGRA was in a healthy position, but residents' donations remained the SGRA's main source of income.

FRONT GARDEN COMPETITION WINNERS

Who needs Ground Force, when here on the Grid we have so many magnificent front gardens. The standard, again this year, was excellent and congratulations to the following winning gardens: Best traditional garden was won by 156 Engadine Street, best modern garden was won by 131 Trentham Street, best container garden was won by 44 Lavenham Road and best single container was won by 114 Heythorp Street.

Thank you very much to **Carol Gray** and **Connie Bish** for organising and judging the competition and thank you to **The Kew Gardener** and **SGRA** for contributing the prizes. Each winner receives a voucher to spend at our local garden centre - The Kew Gardener on Merton Road.

We are the champions

Congratulations to Clonmore Street who won the first Grid softball tournament on Saturday 23rd July at Wimbledon Park. Six teams with over 70 players from the Grid competed all afternoon with Clonmore Street defeating Trentham Street in the final. The afternoon's tournament was followed by a barbecue in the evening at St Barnabas' church hall where approximately

100 competitors and spectators exchanged excuses for being caught out and exaggerations of home runs. A very big thank you to David Crowther for organising a magnificent event, thanks also to the SGRA for financing the tournament and barbecue and thank you to all the volunteers both at the tournament and at the barbecue. Thanks also to our new MP Justine Greening for

participating and presenting the trophy and also to Councillors Jan Leigh and Richard Vivian for attending. As one couple, who recently moved on to the Grid, put it - "What a positive community spirit there is on the Grid, we didn't realise London could be so friendly". The success of the day will no doubt make this tournament an annual event.

Thank You

Thanks to the **All England Lawn Tennis Club** and **Southfields Underground Station** for their usual magnificent display of flowers and hanging baskets during the Wimbledon fortnight, of which most are still blooming.

Anyone for tennis?

The Gardens Lawn Tennis Club was established by local residents and has been in existence for over 100 years. To many it has been a well kept secret and to many it still is! However this summer over 60 children aged between 5 and 8 years from the grid have been enjoying mini tennis with the Gardens' new coach, Keith Brogan (LTA Licensed Coach). Following the success of the summer programme an autumn programme of coaching is now available for juniors from 5 to 16 years of age. This also extends to adults ranging from those who have never tried tennis before, those who are just rusty to the more advanced competitive player.

If you are an adult who wants to get fit or learn tennis, autumn/winter is an excellent starting time. Group lessons cost from as little as £6 a session, membership is available and people are encouraged to join in with the autumn/winter social festivities offered by the tennis club.

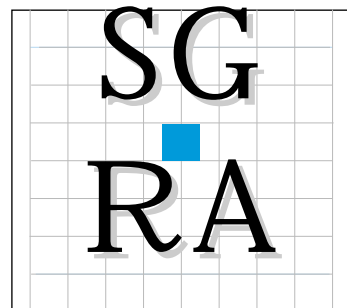
The club offers dance classes, pilates and a members' bar too. You are most welcome to come down and try the club out. For further information contact Keith, head coach, 07905 769230 or Gardens Lawn Tennis Club, 343 Wimbledon Park Road Southfields SW19 6NS, Tel 020 8788 3807, www.gardenstennis-sw19.co.uk.

PARTY WALLS

The SGRA are aware that with the number of loft conversions and side extensions being constructed in the Grid the potential for disagreements between neighbours over the party wall agreement increases. We plan to discuss this with WBC and others to see if we can add helpful guidance to our existing note. If any resident wishes to comment on this subject please contact Nick Steiner, 116 Clonmore St, Southfields, London SW18 5HB. Tel - 020 8874 0977.

Crime on the Grid

from the Editor



The following are the crime figures, kindly supplied by PC Stephen Rogers, for the period 30th March 2005 to 26th July 2005.

- Astonville Street** - Theft from motor vehicle (3), Theft of motor vehicle (1), Burglary (2).
- Brookwood Road** - Burglary (2), Theft from motor vehicle (3), Criminal damage to motor vehicle (1).
- Clonmore Street** - Theft (1) .
- Elborough Street** - Criminal damage (1), Theft from motor vehicle (1).
- Elsenham Street** - Theft from motor vehicle (1), Robbery (2), Criminal damage to motor vehicle (1), Theft of motor vehicle (2), Theft (2).
- Engadine Street** - Criminal damage (1), Criminal damage to motor vehicle (1).
- Hanford Close** - Criminal damage (2), Theft (1).
- Heythorp Street** - Criminal damage (1), Burglary (3), Theft (1), Theft of motor vehicle (2).
- Lavenham Road** - Burglary (1), Criminal damage (1), Shoplifting (1), Drugs possession (1).
- Replingham Road** - Burglary (3), Criminal damage to motor vehicle (1), Theft (11), Criminal damage (8), Assault (2), Theft from motor vehicle (1), ABH (2).
- Revelstoke Road** - Burglary (2), Theft from motor vehicle (3).
- Trentham Street** - Burglary (1), Criminal damage to motor vehicle (1), Criminal damage (1).

We have been asked by PC Stephen Rogers and Sergeant Frank Brennan to remind Grid residents of ways to combat crime. There has been a lot of car crime lately, so car owners are reminded not to leave any possessions on view in their cars. Many burglaries, during the warmer months, are committed via open windows, so please make sure all windows are kept locked and closed if you are not in the room. There has also been a spate of bicycle thefts where they have been left unlocked behind a hedge in the front garden. If you have to leave your bike in the front garden, please lock it securely.

The police also asked us to encourage residents to report all crime and when doing so always ask for a CAD number which will help to monitor subsequent progress reports relating to the particular crime.

QUIET PLEASE

At its latest meeting the SGRA, with contributions from The Southfields Triangle Residents' Association and our local councillors, discussed the problem of excessive noise. It was agreed that if the noise is coming from a tenanted property, then it might prove beneficial to contact the letting agents for that property. If noise persists then the Environmental Health Team should be contacted on **020 8871 7869**.

Here are some additional telephone numbers and e-mail addresses that you may find useful:

Abandoned cars	020 8871 6709	abandonedvehicles@wandsworth.gov.uk
Fly tipping	020 8871 8558	flytipping@wandsworth.gov.uk
Graffiti	020 8871 7049	graffiti@wandsworth.gov.uk
Pavement defects	020 8871 8710	highways@wandsworth.gov.uk
Road defects	020 8871 6708	highways@wandsworth.gov.uk
Street lights	020 8871 6718	highways@wandsworth.gov.uk

If any Grid resident wishes to report damage regarding pavements, road, street lights etc a **"Care for your street action card"** must be completed. These cards can be obtained from the library or from Wandsworth Borough Council Technical Services Department.

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