

Willesborough Community Forum

Open Meeting – 11th February 2015

Willesborough Baptist Church – Hythe Road



The meeting was opened by Chairman of the Willesborough Community Forum, Ian Stevenson. Ian welcomed all residents attending and introduced PC Aimee Thatcher.

1. PCSO Report – Presented by Aimee Thatcher

Aimee advised that there has recently been an increase in burglaries in the area targeting local businesses particularly in the Hythe Road. The Willesborough and Kennington garage was recently broken into via the rear of the building and although nothing was stolen, considerable damage took place. Aimee asked all business owners to be aware of the current risk of burglary.

Burglaries have all been attempted from the rear of properties and Aimee suggested residence install sensor lights as a preventative measure. These can act as an effective deterrent.

Police will be leafleting the affected areas to raise awareness and Aimee asked everyone to be extra vigilant and to call 101 if they see anything suspicious.

Recently there has been a spate of number plate thefts in Windmill Close, special screws are available from the police, if residents would like these, they are available from the police and can be requested from Aimee.

There have been few reports of anti-social behaviour in recent months.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact PC Aimee Thatcher at the following email address aimee.thatcher@kent.pnn.police.uk or 58544@kent.pnn.police.uk providing details of your query and a contact telephone number.

2. Talk and Questions about William Harvey Hospital – Presented by Nicholas Wells, EKHUNFT

Nicholas has been on the board of the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust since 2001 and became the Chairman in 2007. Nicholas will be retiring from this position in April 2015.

Nicholas advised that the trust is currently responsible for three District General Hospitals, the QEQM Margate, Kent and Canterbury and the William Harvey Hospital. They also look after the community hospitals in Folkestone and Dover, the Royal Victoria and Buckland.

The Board of Directors include both Executive and Non-Executive members (Independent members who the executive members are accountable to). In addition the 26 Council Governors, 18 of whom are publicly elected include four staff members and four stake holders including members of the ambulance service and representatives from the Local Authority.

In 2008 the trust was awarded University status by Kings College London in recognition of the post and under graduate training programmes within the organisation.

In March 2009 the trust was awarded foundation status.

2010 saw the trust named Foundation Trust of the Year offering a wide variety of specialist services including renal and vascular centres and the trauma unit at the William Harvey recognised as a centre of excellence.

The 2014 Care Quality Commission report was both a shock and disappointing as the trust was found failing in a number of areas.

The priority aim for the trust is to get out of CQC special measures. An action plan has been put into place and monthly meetings are being held to give progress updates. Changes to communication culture within the organisation, actively involving staff will help to implement these changes.

Continuing increased pressure in the A and E department is occurring due to higher numbers of patients attending A and E rather than their GP surgery. And returning patients to their own homes following admission and treatment as some elderly patients with multiple health issues, including dementia are not always able to return to independent living. Special care packages are not always available and continue to be a challenge for the NHS as a whole. Currently the standard time for a GP referral is 18 weeks but this will continue to increase with the ageing population.

NHS funding continues to increase with the rate of inflation, however the demand on NHS resources continues to grow at a faster rate. The estimated funding gap will be in excess of 30 billion by 2020, this can only be solved by rethinking service delivery.

To help to alleviate nursing shortages, nurses have recently been recruited from Spain, Portugal and Italy. They are trained to a very high standard and speak excellent English. The UK is not currently training enough nursing staff to meet the demands of the NHS.

Collation of feedback from the general public who have been admitted to the William Harvey is that the overall service is good. For every 30 compliments there is only one complaint. The aim is for the trust to reduce complaints to zero.

The William Harvey is one of the biggest and busiest hospitals within the trust, with the highest demand being seen in the A and E department. The trauma unit is one of only three in Kent and the heart attack service covers stenting for the whole of Kent. A Surgical Assessment Unit has been opened within A and E to ensure that diagnosis and treatment take place as quickly as possible.

The trust has recently seen many improvements to its service and continues to strive towards returning to its 2010 status as Trust of the Year.

Following Nicholas's presentation, questions were taken from members of the public. These predominantly addressed the ongoing issues arising from William Harvey staff members parking in local residential areas including Wilson Close and Lees Road. Nicholas confirmed that the trust is aware of this problem and aim to find an effective solution in the near future.

The William Harvey continues to benefit from the high number of voluntary workers who give up their spare time to offer a wide variety of services for both patients and visitors to the hospital. The League of Friends are always in need of volunteers, if you are interested in joining, please call 01233 633331 or go to www.friendsofthewilliamharveyhospital.co.uk for further information.

3. Councillor Reports

Local Councillor George Koowaree advised that plans are in place for double yellow lines to be installed in Lees Road under the M20 bridge in an attempt to resolve parking issues in the area.

In recent months street lights have been turned off in some areas after 11pm, it is recognised that this is causing safety issues. This system will be reverted with LED bulbs being installed to increase energy efficiency, however this will take up to three years to be implemented.

The Highways Agency is considering resurfacing the M20 between junctions 9 and 10 with tarmac rather than concrete to reduce noise pollution.

There are already over 1,000 signatures on the petition regarding improving road safety at the Barry Road junction.

Councillor Bob Davidson advised that in light of the forthcoming local elections, most council issues are currently on hold until new council members are elected. However, following the removal of traffic lights from the junction 10 roundabout traffic movements and accidents continue to be monitored. In total there have been 5 incidents, but these were all as a result of unsafe driving.

Councillor Jane Davey advised that the Church Road/Bentley Road crossing plans are currently being held up due to land ownership issues, however plans are still in place for a crossing to be installed.

Councillor Andrew Mortimer advised that work has commenced on the Conningbrook Country Park which will be open for public use in the spring of 2015.

Andrew Mortimer will be standing in the forthcoming elections. However, Jane Davey and Bob Mortimer will not.

4. Community Council campaign

The Community Council campaign is moving forward. Kennington had achieved the required number for their petition and Ashford Borough Council had voted to start the Governance Review process, timetabled to be complete February 2016.

5. Speedwatch

Speedwatch is currently on hold during the winter months. However, the team continue to look for new volunteers; new members would receive a one hour information session. The plan is to have two speedwatch sessions per week. To join the team, or for further information, please contact John Mickelthwaite: 01233 661556.

6. Local Planning News

Junction 10a - ABC/Highways Agency Community Consultation Group meetings ongoing.

U19 Sevington Warehouses - Developer has been asked to address certain issues and resubmit - resubmission not expected until summer.

Highmead House - development has been rejected.

Blackwall Road South - Comments regarding this development will be accepted up till 28th February. There are currently concerns regarding sewerage and drainage on the proposed development site.

White Horse public house - There are plans to demolish this and replace it with a row of town houses

For more information see the Ashford Borough Council planning website <http://planning.ashford.gov.uk/>

7. AOB

Calendar - Most residents in the North Willoughby area should have received their WCF Calendar - feedback so far indicates that, in the main, they were well received. Contributions for next year's edition are welcome with the focus on being on historical images of the area. If you have any photos that you think

would be of interest, please contact Ian Stevenson at chair@north-willesborough.org.uk. It is hoped that the 2016 edition will be a community project possibly involving local schools.

Overgrown Footpaths - WCF has started to compile a list of affected footpaths - to report any you know of contact Ian Stevenson at chair@north-willesborough.org.uk.

Quiz - Plans for a community quiz are in place. This will hopefully take place shortly after the Easter break.

Dementia Friends - Dementia friends is a voluntary organisation aimed at helping sufferers to go about their daily lives and to feel included in their community. As a friend you could learn a little about what it's like to live with dementia and help sufferers deal with day to day challenges like which bus to get on. WCF is looking for volunteers and will arrange a training session for those who have signed up. Please contact Ian Stevenson for further information.

Hythe Road Pedestrian Crossing - WCF will be lobbying for a crossing close to the Windmill Inn.

Election Special - WCF is planning an Election Special meeting to give North Willesborough residents and opportunity to meet the prospective new ABC members. This will likely be held at Willesborough Baptist Church from 7.30pm on either the 22nd or 29th April (TBC).

Road works on the Hythe Road/ Church Road junction - These will commence from 18th February, delays and disruption are expected.

Libraries - KCC are currently rolling out a public consultation regarding libraries, registration and archiving. This is a valuable community service which would be missed if it was no longer available. For further information, please go to www.consultations.kent.gov.uk for further information.

Universal Credit - DWP's new Universal Credit system is currently being tested on a handful of claimants in the Ashford area. It is proposed that all single claimants will be using the new system by December 2015 and two applicant households from 2016.

Junction 10 Without Traffic Lights - A quick show of hands revealed that all but one at the meeting considered J10 to function better without traffic lights.