
KATESGROVE NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP

Date & time of meeting: 21st August 2008, 7pm.

Location: Community Police Office, Aveley Walk, Reading, RG2 0AP

Apologies: Dave Aldred (DAL), Rob Oldham (ROL), Heather Plummer (HPL), James Sankar (JSA), Maria Soulsby (MSO), Warren Swaine (WSW).

Chair: Kath Langdale (KLA).

Present: Chris Bailey (CBA), Gareth Epps (GEP), Omendra Gurung (OGU), Natalie Jones (NJO), Peter Kennedy (PKE), Mary McManus (MMC), James Schlackman (JSC), Carol Shepherd (CSH), Insp. Kevin Sinfield (IKS), Richard Stainthorp (RST).

Guest: Ashley Spooner, Coley NAG Chair.

MINUTES

1. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

KLA began by asking the NAG members to introduce themselves as a courtesy to Ashley Spooner. Apologies were made for the lack of printed minutes available; JSC will endeavour to produce copies at the next meeting.

KLA noted an error on the previous minutes; the two local newspapers are the Reading Evening Post and Reading Chronicle, and not the Reading Post and Evening Chronicle. JSC to update minutes.

2. MATTERS ARISING

IKS explained that due to upcoming maternity leave, PS Nikki Pocock is currently being assisted by PS Pete Moody, who will be assuming her role when she is on leave, but that neither were able to attend.

RST gave apologies for previous inattendance at NAG meetings, was missed off of communications.

CSH has map of Katesgrove area from Emma Jones

MMC was missing from NAG contact sheet – JSC to amend.

IKS reported that PCSOs will be regularly attending New Christ Church School from September onwards.

3. FEEDBACK

COMMS

Feedback from the Comms team via GEP: katesgrovenag.co.uk is unavailable for the website. katesgrovenag.info approved as alternative.

GEP reported that a sample Redlands NAG newsletter has been forwarded to WSW. Work on the Katesgrove newsletter to resume once MSO returns from holiday.

EVA

KLA reported on the EVA since ROL is off sick. Last EVA covered Waterloo Road, Collis Street, Edgehill Street, Alpine Street, and Elgar Road. Bins left on the street were a recurring feature, but no major issues noted. Printed results of the EVA were distributed. The next EVA is on Tuesday 26th, meeting at Whitley Street 10.30am (by bus stop).

IKS reported that the EVA on the 23rd September will be attended by Katesgrove Primary School pupils and Headteacher, and is likely to attract press.

IKS reported that a message asking for drugs feedback was distributed to Katesgrove contacts via Community Messaging. Ahsley Spooner enquired about being copied in on such bulletins as a neighbouring NAG chair. IKS advised to request this directly from Liz Herbert at TVP.

4. CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

Elgar Road: issues were raised regarding drug dealing around a shop on the corner of Elgar Road and Francis Street. There was a suggestion that this is possibly related to graffiti in the area, but there is no hard evidence of this.

RST explained that a lot of information passed to him is often from residents who have suspicions rather than hard fact, and that this contributes to a perception that sometimes a reported problem is in fact not a true issue, but simply down to exaggeration of suspicious behaviour.

GEP passed on what small amount of evidence he had from local residents

IKS commented that Parthia Close is a historical issue, but no current problems.

Suggestion to move priority from Drugs as there is little action that NAG can take at present.

IKS explained that due to ongoing action from TVP, most dealing is now off-street as dealers become aware that open dealing is likely to lead to a prompt arrest. While individual properties continue to be dealt with by TVP via warrants, there are no general areas in which drug dealing is concentrated that are not already under investigation, so there is little for the NAG to do on this priority unless and until new intelligence suggests a new area.

KLA suggested that we move onto the next Neighbourhood Priority of Auto Crime. This is to be reviewed at the next meeting.

RST enquired as to whether vandalism of vehicles is to be included as both he and GEP receive a large amount of correspondence from constituents.

IKS confirmed this, and explained how auto crime is broken down for reporting by TVP.

Both GEP and RST commented that car vandalism in Elgar Road is an ongoing issue.

JSC mentioned the southern business side of the NAG area, and emphasises that NAG members from businesses in the area should be encouraged to contribute as they have not been in attendance while drugs was the priority focus. JSC will write to the members concerned.

KLA asked for a breakdown of auto crime categories; IKS to supply at next meeting. KLA will also contact Jo Daley for data regarding vehicle crime.

IKS noted that trap cars are in use as often as “every other day” in Reading.

JSC asked whether the plan to use a map of Katesgrove to map drug incident reports should be used for auto crime. This was agreed by the NAG. IKS will supply auto crime hotspot information.

5. RESIDENT'S CONCERNS AND/OR VIA COUNCILLORS

KLA reported regular flytipping on Alpine Street, and that although the latest incident was reported to RBC on Saturday 17th, the rubbish was still present on Thursday 21st (pm). CSH noted that Streetcare had reported it had already been cleaned up, so there was a possible error in communication or identification of the problem.

GEP commented on a wider perceived 'Customer Care' issue with RBC, in that action following reports from residents are rarely fed back, so residents often think nothing is being done. PKE also suggested the NAG solicit feedback on RBC response times.

GEP noted that graffiti is on the rise. IKS informed the NAG that PC Katy Lucas, Neighbourhood Anti Social Behaviour Support Officer, is maintaining a database of graffiti tags. One major tagger was caught in the last week. PC Lucas is especially interested in photographic reports of graffiti which can be sent to her directly at katy.lucas@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

KLA mentioned that graffiti cleaning kits are available for RBC. GEP has one and plans to bring it to the next EVA to demonstrate.

IKS suggested the possibility of organising a Katesgrove NAG 'community cleanup' day.

RST raised the issue of permanence of Elgar Road bollards, suggesting that a more permanent fixture could replace the bollards without impeding access for emergency services. KLA suggested raising it at the SRC forum, and will co-ordinate information sharing on this issue to pass on to SRC.

IKS reported that he has a spare temporary CCTV camera at his disposal at present, and invited suggestions for placement for the next 3-6 months. Possible sites discussed were the junction of Waterloo Road/Elgar Road (IKS), and the junction of Elgar Road/Pell Street.

KLA enquired about the success of the camera currently placed in Whitley Street. IKS reported that a lot of useful evidence had been gathered.

IKS would like further suggestions for placement ASAP.

GEP reported that HSBC are planning to close their Whitley Street branch. They are asking for feedback; GEO s to supply contact details to JSC for circulation.

IKS circulated the most recent TVP crime figures for the area. Overall crime in Reading South is up 2.7%, but crime specifically in the Whitley Street beat area is down 7.6%. The other area IKS is responsible for, Reading East, is down overall 10.7%, so see that as his target, as in his view, crime is "still too high".

JSC noted that some accepted NAG members have yet to sign the NAG constitution. IKS to bring the master signature copy to the next meeting.

ACTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1. JSC to amend NAG contact sheet and circulate updates.
2. JSC to write to business members of the NAG to encourage future attendance.
3. IKS to supply breakdown of auto crime categories and hotspots.
4. CSH to bring Katesgrove area map.
5. KLA to contact Jo Daley for data regarding vehicle crime.
6. Suggestions for CCTV placement to be fed back to IKS.
7. GEP to supply HSBC consultation details to JSC for circulation.
8. IKS to ensure constitution is available for signing at next meeting.