

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES WORKING GROUP HELD ON
10TH NOVEMBER 2004 AT 6.00 p.m. AT THE COMMUNAL HALL IN THE
SHELTERED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION AT WELLFIELD**

Present: Cllr Mrs J Burns - Chairman
Cllr Mr B Ramsay
Cllr Mr V Sewell

In attendance by invitation: Linda Hogan (Association of West Kent Tenants)
Vera Kirkham (West Kent Housing Association)
Keith Mandy (West Kent Housing Association)

Members of the Public: 9

In attendance: Mrs Gilder (Assistant Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mr C Alford.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Community Facilities Working Group held on 27th May 2004 be approved and signed as a correct record.
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3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Land adjacent to 72, Caxton Close

Cllr Mrs Burns welcomed Keith Mandy the Development Officer from West Kent Housing Association.

Keith Mandy explained that the proposed development was for the erection of a terrace of two 2 bed houses and one 3 bed house and associated car parking, landscaping and a children's play area.

Mr Mandy confirmed that he had received several letters from residents expressing their concerns over the development and explained that the purpose of his attendance at the meeting was to give residents the opportunity to express their views and to put forward any questions that they may have.

Mr Mandy told the group that the main areas of objection that he had noted from the letters received were that:

1) Residents did not want a children's play area to be incorporated within the design. Mr Mandy explained that the children's playground had originally been included in the plans following a request to the Parish Council from residents in Caxton Close for a toddler's playground and that when the housing development was proposed, following consultation with the Parish Council, West Kent Housing agreed to include a children's playground on the site.

Mr Mandy told the group that following feedback from residents it was now clear that the playground was not required.

2) The bin area in front of the proposed middle property appeared to be an area of confusion. Residents understood that the bin store would be a communal area.

Mr Mandy confirmed that should the bin store be incorporated in the design it would be solely for the use of the middle property.

Mr Mandy then gave residents the opportunity to express their views and to put forward any questions.

A resident informed Mr Mandy that his main objections to the development were that the houses would be offered for rental, the bin store, being adjacent to his property could produce odours in the hot weather and that the alleyway, although only accessible through a gate which would be locked with only key holders allowed access, would attract youths who may climb over the gates.

Mr Mandy assured the resident that West Kent Housing take anti-social behaviour very seriously and would take action if they received reports of any problems.

Mr Mandy explained that the bin area that the resident was concerned about was solely for the use of one property and should therefore not cause a problem.

Residents reported that for some time they have experienced problems with anti-social behaviour from local youths and that this is one of the main reasons for the objections to a children's play area as they feel that this would worsen the situation.

Keith Mandy informed residents that if they experience problems with anti-social behaviour involving West Kent Housing Association tenants they should inform West Kent Housing Association in order that they may deal with the situation.

Vera Kirkham told the group that she had not received reports of anti-social behaviour for some time and that unless West Kent Housing Association is made aware of any problems they are unable to deal with them.

Residents explained that they often feel intimidated and that there is a lack of policing in the area which doesn't help the situation.

Cllr Mrs Burns informed residents that a Rural Community Warden has been secured for Hartley and should be in place by June 2005 which should help to improve things.

Cllr Sewell explained that Hartley has a Youth Worker who could be contacted regarding any problems with the young people in the area.

Cllr Mrs Burns agreed to contact Gary Benzies the local Police Officer and request that he make more regular and more obvious patrols around the area but asked residents to contact the Parish Office if they felt that their problems were not being addressed.

Keith Mandy explained that West Kent Housing Association is trying to improve the area and feel that erecting the proposed development will help to improve things. Also, there is a need to provide housing and West Kent Housing feel that it would be more responsible of them to develop small pockets of land rather than building large developments.

Mr Mandy explained that should planning permission be granted, inconvenience to residents would be kept to a minimum.

Keith Mandy agreed to revise the plans removing the play area and bin storage area and showing the gate to the side access which had been omitted from the original plans. Mr Mandy asked that should residents have any further concerns they be put to him in writing.

5. Land east of 23, Pitfield

Mr Mandy explained that the proposed development for the construction of 4, 2 bedroom 2 storey houses with associated parking was on a former garage site. Due to vandalism, the garages had become unsafe and had been removed from the site. The proposed four houses would be shared ownership dwellings for local people giving priority to key workers and those on the Sevenoaks Housing Register.

Keith Mandy confirmed that planning permission has now been granted by Sevenoaks District Council.

6. Bulk collection service in Caxton Close

No feedback had been received regarding the additional bulk refuse collection but Vera Kirkham informed the group that West Kent Housing Association gave all new tenants details of the collection.

RESOLVED: That,
Details of the bulk refuse collection be put on the noticeboard at Wellfield and that an item be placed in the next edition of the Parish Council's newsletter giving the times and dates of collections.

7. Benefit Outreach Surgery

Cllr Ramsay reported that Sevenoaks District Council have agreed in principle to provide a Benefit Outreach Surgery but that the location needs to be checked to confirm whether it is suitable for the IT equipment required to run the Surgery. Cllr Ramsay advised that he is currently awaiting further contact from Sevenoaks District Council.

RESOLVED: That,
an item be placed in the next edition of the Parish Council's newsletter informing residents that a Benefit Outreach Surgery has been agreed in principle and that further details will be provided when available.

8. To consider any other issues affecting the Working Group

At the previous meeting of the Community Facilities Working Group it was recommended that the names of residents who had previously expressed an interest in forming a Community Group be obtained in order that they may be contacted to ascertain whether they would still be willing to form a Group.

Cllr Burns asked Vera Kirkham if anyone had come forward and Vera confirmed that they had not.

The Group received and noted a letter and attached outline plans from the owner of Down Ampney, Gorsewood Road. The owner is currently investigating the possibility of erecting two blocks of two bedroom flats with six flats in each block.

The proposed development would involve an access road through Caxton Close which would require the plans submitted by West Kent Housing Association for the development of the land adjacent to 72, Caxton Close to be altered.

Further contact with the owner of Down Ampney is awaited and any information received will be reported back at the next meeting.

Keith Mandy informed the Group that West Kent Housing Association is currently looking in to the possibility of using a large, unused car park in Caxton Close for future development.

The Group will be updated with any progress at the next meeting.

9. Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 7.32p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....