

ST. MATTHEWS AND BIRCHILLS/LEAMORE
LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

19TH APRIL, 2006

FEEDBACK ON ISSUES RAISED BY WAY OF PUBLIC FORUM/PETITIONS

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

1. Mellish Road Church

The Repairs Notice was served on the owners of the Church on 23rd February. This will require the owners to carry out works as detailed in a schedule of works attached to the Notice, in order to bring the building back into a useable condition.

If the owners have not supplied the Council with sufficient evidence to prove that significant progress has been made in securing the restoration of the Church within a specified time span, then the Council will consider commencing compulsory purchase proceedings in accordance with their powers under the relevant legislation.

The Council have met with representatives from the Butts and Hatherton Community Group and agreed to share both the condition survey and the site investigation report with them in due course.

The appeal against the S215 Amenity Notice was dismissed by Aldridge Magistrates Court on 1st March. The Council will now proceed with legal action for non-compliance with the Notice. The Amenity Notice required the owners to carefully board the windows and to tidy the exterior of the site, including the grounds. The aim of this was to make the site look better in its surroundings while the full restoration of the Church is resolved.

Contact Officer: Claire Hines (01922 652449)

2. Youth Provision in Butts Area

No further information available.

Contact Officer: Angela Carr (01922 650448)
Paul Leighton (01922 652500)

3. **Traffic problems in Caldmore**

To complete the Walsall – Blackheath 404 bus showcase scheme, the Council has published traffic regulation orders affecting Caldmore Road, Weston Street and West Bromwich Road. In respect of Caldmore Road, between Mount Street and Brace Street, the effect of the order would be to prohibit waiting on the western side between 7 am and 7 pm. The consequence of this, if approved and in combination with the existing orders on the eastern side will be to prohibit waiting on both sides of this section of Caldmore Road between 7 am and 7 pm. Parking on sections of the western side would be allowed between 7 pm and 7 am. Also published were proposals that would prohibit loading on the eastern side between 7am and 10 am and 4 pm and 7pm.

The published orders generated a large numbers of objections, including many to the above element of the proposals. During discussions into these objections, it was suggested that, instead of introducing waiting restrictions, the 404 bus route should be diverted away from Caldmore Road (the alternate route being Bradford Street/Wednesbury Road/Corporation Street) or a one way system be introduced. This would necessitate the out-bound and in-bound bus journey taking different routes – Caldmore Road in one direction and Bradford Street/Wednesbury Road/Corporation Street in the other (out-bound and in-bound directions not determined).

The views of Travel West Midlands, as one of the main bus operators have been requested because their agreement would be required into any changes of the route. As part of the consultation process, the views of the LNP on this alternative proposal to the introduction of waiting restrictions would be welcomed.

Contact Officer: Neville Owen (01922 652562)

4. **Walsall Civic Quarter - quality of workmanship**

Concern was raised at the meeting on 23rd January, 2006 regarding the standard of workmanship of the laying of the pedestrianised area . The Project Manager has reported that work is continuing to progress well with the scheme remaining on programme for completion by the end of March, 2006. The project has been extremely complex one to deliver both in scale and the programme of works to maintain access to the area, however, quality control has always been an integral part of the project management of the scheme. To date, the majority of the scheme has been delivered to a high standard, however, the project team have identified to the contractor where areas are not. During the early phases of construction, whilst Leicester Street remained open to traffic, there was a need to continue construction and maintain vehicular access. In some of these areas, there has been settlement and some minor damage.

These areas and other defects will be thoroughly addressed as part of a comprehensive snagging of the entire project by the project team. This snagging process is also to involve the Walsall Disability Forum to ensure that the quality of finish on the scheme is at the highest standard.

Contact Officer: Paul Leighton (01922 652500)
Simon Tranter (01922 652543)

5. Blue Coat School - traffic problems/traffic calming measures

Following detailed discussions with members of the School Council at Blue Coat Performing Arts College, Planning and Transportation has set aside £20k from the 2006/07 Safer Routes to School Project. This is to be spent on minor measures in Birmingham Street, subject to the school producing a Travel Plan before the end of March, 2006. These will include the removal of guardrails, floodlighting the zebra crossing and creating short cycle lanes to link the National Cycle Route. The creation of cycle lanes, together with coloured road surfacing should also help further reduce the speed of traffic in this traffic-calmed area.

Contact Officer: Mark Rickard (01922 652508)

6. Stephenson Avenue/Beechdale Regeneration Partnership

Representatives from WHG and Beechdale Housing Community Housing Association, have met to further discuss options for the flats, above the shops, in Stephenson Avenue. Beechdale are currently looking at options to lease the properties off WHG and refurbish them for rent.

Contact Officer: Mark Chaplin (01922 652631)

7. Re-surfacing of Green Lane

Terry Edis asked at the last meeting why the section of Green Lane between the 4 x 4 car sales lot and Birchills Street had not been re-surfaced since it appeared that the road works in that area had been completed.

It has been established that the section of road in question is the "Hospital Street cross roads" and that this section of road is to be funded from a different pot to the rest of the re-surfacing programme.

It is apparently part of the Red Routes Scheme and it was originally intended to commence immediately after Christmas. However, due to a delay in receiving approval from the Red Routes funding body, the commencement of the re-surfacing works was delayed. Work has now commenced and it is anticipated that the works will be completed by the next LNP meeting on 19th April.

Contact Officer: Glyn Oliver (01922 652503)

8. Proposed change of use of the former Metal Casements factory site in Birch Street to car auction site

The Partnership's support for objections made by WATMOS and the tenants of Burrowes Street in relation to the above proposal was heard at the Development Control Committee on 31st January, 2006.

Notwithstanding the objections raised, the application was approved as recommended in the report.

Contact Officer: Bob Scrivens (01922 652488)