

New Trees

This has been an interesting period for RCV – and not in a bad sense. Two subjects dominate: trees and parking. Some time ago we asked for members to come forward with ideas they might have about improving Elizabeth Park and from that response the Riverside Garden Group was formed under the leadership of RCV committee member Hilary Lee. Talks with Will Stops, boss of Landscapes Southwest ensued and eventually it was decided to plant trees as a first move to improve the park and public spaces. Final choice of trees was made in September with a view to planting in the Spring – subject to Crest's agreement. This was received via Francesca and on 1st March twenty four trees were planted in the Park.

The original plan was to remove the 3 (thought to be dead) tulip trees surrounding the seat in the centre of the Park and replace these with London Plane Trees. However we decided to give the Tulip Trees the benefit of another year in case they might revive, and the decision was made to plant the Plane Trees in the position you can see them now.

The five trees at the western end of the Park are Liquid Ambers planted in an arc. In time these will provide shade in the Summer and wonderful autumnal colour later in the year. They will form part of the Queen's Green Canopy and will in time be labelled as being in her late Majesty's honour. We have a plan afoot to ask a local dignitary to mark the planting at our Party on 2nd July.

The Roman orator Cicero said that we plant trees for another generation. I'm afraid he was right, but am hopeful that these trees will bring pleasure to us all in the years to come.

You can see the trees as they are now at www.riversidecommunityvoice.org.uk/#tree

Traffic and Parking

We have made some strides on this subject since the last newsletter – mainly due to the persistence of Councillor June Player who managed to persuade senior Council officers to come to a meeting on 14th Feb '23. Attendance included both our councillors and Sophie Broadfield, Director of Sustainable Communities; Claire Nimmo, Transport Developments and Policy Manager; Neil Terry, Senior Traffic Engineer and Parking Manager Andy Dunn.

We (RCV) were interested in two main issues: full yellow lining of Midland Rd - thus eliminating obstruction caused by parked vehicles - and early reinstatement of the Bus Gate. For their part the Council wanted to see progress with the parking regime on the north side of Stothert Ave. We made the point that the only way to achieve these aims within the next two years was not to wait for Crest to act, but for the Council to do the work and Crest to pay for it.

This was agreed in principle at the meeting and is now about to happen: since the meeting Crest have agreed in principle to pay B&NES not only to undertake the lining works on Midland Rd prior to adoption, but to give B&NES permission to enforce parking restrictions there. TROs (Traffic Regulating Orders) for the reinstatement of the Bus Gate are already in hand.

We residents are now called upon to let the Council know which system of parking we want for the (approx) 22 parking spaces on the north side of Stothert Ave that will revert to the council when the road is adopted. The choices are: Residents' Parking or Limited Wait Parking. This subject is treated extensively on the website www.riversidecommunityvoice.org.uk/#tree (scroll down to next item). There is a link to a pros and cons list for each of the parking regimes to help you to make up your mind.

We will eventually be called upon to choose the system. In order for as many residents as possible to state their preference, Francesca has volunteered to send a letter on the subject to all residents. If you feel strongly either way, email me at bj.doyle@btinternet.com (Please do not reply to this email).

Security by the River

Residents living by the river are concerned about some alarming incidents that have happened on their doorstep and are making a case for CCTV in the area. We support them in this, as does Pinnacle, who are investigating how best to enhance security in the area.

Gull Group, Anyone?

Some residents are already suffering sleep deprivation due to seagull activity – which will only get worse as the year progresses. Pinnacle are at present investigating netting the roof of Beatrice block which is a hotbed of seagull activity.

The RCV Committee have discussed forming a Gull Group to pool all we know about the bothersome creatures, establish communications with the Council gull man Gordon Dugan and act as a pressure group for those suffering from sleep deprivation and droppings. We have also been informed that physical patrols of the roof are to start to remove old and new nesting material and that more targeted flying of birds of prey is imminent. If anyone would like to be a member of this group, please let us know.

CURO

We had a meeting some weeks ago with Curo's Resident Engagement Co-ordinator Jamie Nicholson-Rutter to discuss how we might better communicate with Curo clients. He subsequently devised a questionnaire and sent it to all Curo tenants. From approximately 200 homes, 33 filled out the questionnaire on line, 17 of whom had heard of RCV. Not a great number, but we did get 5 households who wanted to join, who we will of course make very welcome. We are once again hoping that the Summer Picnic will attract more Curo tenants.

EV Points

Pinnacle's Francesca is hopeful that the financial problem (costs for Crest's lawyers to examine and approve the installation of 2 fast chargers outside Sovereign Point) can soon be overcome and that work should proceed this year. It is unthinkable that in 2023 we have no public EV chargers available for a development of over 800 dwellings.

Litter Pick

We have been asked to organise a litter pick along the river for 2 hours on 18th March. At present we need 2 more volunteers to help which we will probably have filled by the time you read this. Next time we'll try to give more warning – there are worse things to do than stroll along the river picking up litter.

Summer Party afternoon 2nd July Have you got this date in your diary? We have already engaged the same band as before – Magpie & The Shiny Things – which went down so well last year. Further details will be announced later by our events committee. Please put the date in your diary. If you would like to help in any way please let Events Supremo Andrew Vickers know. Email AKHvickers@btinternet.com

If you have any comments or queries, please address them to me direct: bj.doyle@btinternet.com