

# NOTES FROM FIRST SEARLES ROAD COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

## Held at No 5 The Paragon, Searles Road on Thursday 1st March 2007

**Present:** Police (x3 from Community Support Team), Cllr Jane Salmon, Cllr Tim McNally, MP Simon Hughes + more than 30 residents

**Distribution:** Those present + ALL Searles Road residents

6Mar07

### ACTION

**Ian Sime**

- Purpose of the Meeting: In response to increase in crime (6 muggings and 8 burglaries reported in four months), residents in Searles Road asked the police, Councillors and local MP to meet and discuss ways of reversing the trend
- Two letters of apology for absence were read out both from residents experiencing recent robberies

**Police**

- Unusual to have such a large turnout of residents
- There are only six officers (1 x Sergeant, 2 x PCs, 3 x PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers)) in Community Support team for the East Walworth area of 10,000 residents
- Police computer shows only 1 robbery (mugging) and 5 burglaries reported in Searles Road since October. Police therefore have been unaware of any rise in crime in Searles Road. Their team looks at "hotspots" but Searles Road so far not identified. Police steering group meets to prioritise efforts in the area. These are mostly directed to problems on the Heygate, East Street and Elephant & Castle. With such a small team it is difficult for them.
- There was an increase noted in drug addicts using and hiding in Paragon Park. Police consulted Council and bushes have been cut back and situation has now improved.
- Police now have a permanent presence on New Kent Road patrolling as school kids come out. (There was concern from the floor that this may make the problem worse in Searles Road)

**Resident**

- Is it possible to make a 'dispersal order' and ban the group from coming into the road?

**Police**

**Police**

- Police are aware of a small gang in the area. Police are targeting them as they are known to live in the area. One person has been arrested and a local resident has given a statement and will attend ID parade shortly. Group are mostly 15/16yrs old who tend to get released by the courts, although if caught enough times, would be dealt with

**Resident**

- Youths throw a ball into garden and pretend to be collecting it to check out property
- Gang members ring door bells and knock to see if anyone home
- Kick in the door or enter by unlocked windows

**Resident**

- Local resident called police during an incident but no-one came. Response was non-existent

**Resident**

- Clearly statistics that police use are incorrect (several victims of recent crime attending the meeting) and so resources to "hotspots" will not be accurately allocated. What can be done to improve accuracy of police statistics?

**Police**

**ACTION**

Ian Sime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whatever the actual figures, the meeting was called because of RISE in local incidents and the need to work together and make a plan for the future</li> <li>Searles Road's relevant characteristics are that it is a quiet, poorly lit, cul-de-sac with five exits, a park and busy main road close by</li> </ul>	
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foot patrols have increased in Searles Road</li> <li>Police can survey individual homes and advise on how to improve security if requested</li> <li>Police advise Searles Road to start a Neighbourhood Watch managed by residents. This is known to act as a deterrent and help prevent crime. If residents let them know we are looking out for them and protecting ourselves they may move on somewhere else.</li> <li>Ensure all window locks fitted and used, good quality doors and locks</li> </ul>	Residents & Police
Cllr Jane Salmon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is money available in the Council for lighting or CCTV- JS will confirm details for an application</li> <li>Will investigate possibility of re-introducing lockable gates to reduce escape routes from Searles Road</li> <li>Can police park in Searles Road during their breaks?</li> </ul>	Cllr Jane Salmon Cllr Jane Salmon Police
MP Simon Hughes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was a similar spate a few years ago in Freemantle St and this was stopped by just a few actions which is encouraging</li> <li>Good lighting is an effective deterrent and SH would back requests for improvements</li> <li>Locking the park at night and reducing vegetation will help, the park allows easy access into and out of the road</li> <li>As a deterrent residents should produce fliers/posters to advertise a Neighbourhood Watch scheme</li> <li>Searles Road could recruit security "street guards" (eg young people vetted by voluntary groups) as an addition to a Neighbourhood Watch scheme</li> <li>Police are responsible to the Government so SH will, as local MP, press for residents requests to be considered</li> <li>Suggest everyone present meets again in April to discuss progress</li> </ul>	Residents Residents MP SH Residents
Resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security is discussed on a monthly basis at Paragon Management meetings and it would be good to encourage a wider perspective with the whole street</li> </ul>	Paragon
Resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We could start a Resident's association for the area, put money in to pay for posters etc</li> <li>Could Crime Prevention team provide posters?</li> </ul>	Residents Police
NEXT.....	Residents agreed to meet again a month's time with Police, Councillors and Simon Hughes. A date to be suggested	All

*Thursday seemed to suit most people this time. Please let me hear preferences for a THURSDAY in April (5th/13th/20th/27th)*  
*If anyone wants to respond to any of the above or suggest dates for follow up, please email me at [iansime@simemanagement.biz](mailto:iansime@simemanagement.biz)*  
***For ease, most communication will be carried out by email, please forward your email address as soon as possible. Thanks***  
**Ian Sime**