

Twerton Pact meeting, 11th February 2010

This is a write-up on the Twerton PACT meeting which took place on 11th February 2010. PACT meetings begin with reports on what ground has been covered regarding the key issues raised as priorities in the previous meeting. These are as follows.

Leaf Clearing

At the previous PACT, residents had complained about the amount of leaves lying about on public paths and especially the hazards that these present to the elderly.

Bill Walters, the Council's Neighbourhood Manager for Environmental Services, revealed that 750 tonnes of leaves were collected last year, with 400 tonnes collected in Bath alone. Extra resources had been applied to the leaf clearing, these being a mechanical sweeper and two agencies for 6 weeks. Due to the extra effort put in by all staff, the time taken to clear away the leaves had been reduced by a month. There is no set pattern of leaf clearance each year; staff wait until leaves start falling.

Bill Walter pointed out that the Council get a lot of complaints from residents of Pennard Green, but nearly all of this land comes under the responsibility of Somer Housing.

Redland Park play area

The condition and future of a derelict children's playing area at Redland Park had been raised at the previous meeting. We were told that the play area is owned by the Council, and that the play equipment will not be replaced but the area will be grassed over with wild flowers when budgets allow.

Anti-social behaviour at Pennyquick Park

The police have received no complaints of anti-social behaviour at Pennyquick Park since the last PACT meeting. Tackling anti-social behaviour is one of PC Adrian Secker's top priorities. He and his team have stepped up patrols of the area in response to this concern but have not come across any incidents.

However, police have successfully raided a cannabis growing operation in one of the flats at Rodney House, after tenants complained about the smell of drugs. This is an example of how information supplied by the public can lead to effective police action.

Claire James of the Children's Society said that some local anti-social behaviour among children was currently being remedied by one-to-one work with the child. The Children's Society can do this work but they too, rely on information from residents.

Sam West, a detached youth worker, said that with the warm weather coming, young people will soon be gathering in local parks. His branch of the youth service builds bridges with young people by organising barbecues and games in these parks.

Meanwhile, there are signs that the demolition of the nearby empty buildings at Pennyquick View is imminent. The planning has been agreed and some structural preparations have been seen going on.

New priorities and issues

Some residents of Redland Park complained about the poor state of the fencing around gardens. Part of the problem was that the wooden fences had never been painted, contributing to their decay. Somer representative Dan Marks said that a small program of fence replacement was underway, with the old wooden fences being replaced by black steel rails. He also said that the responsibility of the repair of the fences lay partly with residents and partly with Somer.

One resident complained about the absence of a grit bin at Newton Road, which would have helped when the pavement was covered with snow and ice recently. They knew of someone who had broken their ankle by slipping down on the path.

Another possible priority mentioned was the installation of further play equipment in Pennyquick Park.

Someone raised the issue of the amount of dog's mess lying around in the area. Bill Walters said that as the economic recession was causing the Council to make cutbacks, it was unlikely that extra resources could be made available to tackle this problem. It was suggested that free dog litter bags (which are provided by the local authority) be made available from local shops – an idea that originated from the Southdown PACT.

Andy Iles of Somer Housing said that in one part of Twerton, Somer were close to taking out an injunction on a resident who persistently lets his dog foul a certain area, following many complaints from people living nearby.

It was noted that misuse of parking was blocking streets for some residents and potentially leading to situations where emergency vehicles like fire engines might not be able to get through. The suggestion was made that

parking bays might be the solution, but these would be expensive to install. The general feeling from the panel is that there is no 'quick fix' for this issue.

Some residents of Redland Park are trying to set up a resident's association. They had planned to organise a barbecue earlier this year but were unlucky with the weather. Zoe Balzer the Police Community Support Officer, is hoping to support this group to continue what they started.

In this meeting the three issues voted for as priorities to be actioned were:

- 1) Parking – additional bays on grass verges
- 2) Dog fouling
- 3) Further play equipment in Pennyquick Park

The next PACT meeting for Twerton is scheduled for 12th May at 7pm and will be held in St Michael's Junior School at Newton Road.