

WICKHAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION – MAY 2024



The AGM of the Wickham Residents Association was held on Thursday 4th April 2024 at 7.00pm at Wickham Community Centre. The meeting covered committee elections, finances and reports by committee members on significant activities during 2023/24. It was well attended and was chaired by Robert Broad for the final time as he has resigned from the position of Chairman which he has held for three years.

During his tenure Robert has increased membership by almost 200% and has provided strong resident focused leadership. He has made a significant impact, leading an active committee and addressing some of the key issues faced by Wickham.

Key projects delivered or in progress this past year.

Titchfield Solar Farm Application – this was withdrawn in September 2023, by the applicant Navigate Corporation, after a 19 month “battle” led by WRA, supported by residents, the Parish Council and other organisations. We provided evidence and analysis, informing the professional work of HCC Planning, who finally did not support the application. WRA were commended by HCC Planning for their constructive help. Residents are advised to be aware that the applicants can still reapply up to 9 Sept 2024 without an additional fee and that concerning volumes of HGV’s and safety issues are still under review.

A Traffic Plan for Wickham - was unveiled which targets the numerous traffic volume and safety issues faced by Wickham. It embraces the whole of Wickham and the WRA will be adding this to their website for members to view and comment on in a short questionnaire. It is anticipated this will appropriately be presented to the Parish Planning Committee. This is not a simple issue and there are many aspects to be first considered requiring input from residents, traders, local and county authorities and undoubtedly requiring external expert help. This is the start of an initiative which will significantly improve Wickham for the residents and our welcome visitors.

The new village gates - to be installed by Hampshire Highways on the A32 to emphasise to drivers as they are entering a village are due to be installed by Hampshire Highways in May. In addition, WRA is putting forward a proposal for a “casual” pedestrian crossing on School Road through the Parish Council for approval by Hampshire Highways.

The Wickham Community Speedwatch - instigated by Robert, began operating in the first week of March operated by fully trained volunteers trained by Hampshire Police. Over the course of a month, it has revealed startling results – see separate report. This will provide vital data for the Traffic Planning.

The Sports & Recreation Developments at Mill Lane and the Rec - are now back with the Parish Council for final consideration. WRA continues to contribute data support and maintains an active interest on behalf of residents.

WRA, as a member of the Surgery Stakeholder Group - is working with the Surgery, Parish Council, Knowle Residents’ Association, Wickham Society and the Patient’s’ Participation Group regarding the impact on all existing patients. WRA and the Parish Council support the Surgery’s aim to secure a re-drawing of the boundary for the area the Surgery serves. The aim is to limit the additional number of Welborne residents who will be able to register for GP services at the Surgery to protect surgery service levels and minimize impact on traffic and village amenities. The Surgery has agreed to take 690 new patients from the first phase of the development where planned space is being made for a pharmacist and surgery in what will be known as the Village Centre.

There was very active participation by members in the Open Forum and the AGM concluded - with the retiring Chair, Robert Broad, thanking the Committee and the members for their support over the past three years and he invited members to join the Committee to help with the new initiatives planned for 2024/5.

MANY THANKS ROBERT FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN WICKHAM

The Association is increasingly aware of an alarming rise in anti-social behaviour around the Village ranging from elderly residents being harassed/frightened by persistent door kicking, eggs being thrown at resident's property to vehicle tyres being deflated. This is in addition to an increase in shoplifting and threatening behaviour in shops and other behaviour such as thoughtless parking on grass verges spoiling public amenities. The matter has been raised with the Wickham & Knowle Parish Council to investigate if a Community Safety Officer could help alleviate these anti-social behaviours before the situation gets out of hand.

This has been effective in Swanmore where the Parish Council has appointed an Accredited Community Safety Officer (ACSO) working closely with the Police and partner agencies to help make Swanmore a safer place to live and work. It's not all about anti-social behaviour and crime prevention, the ACSO is also on hand to share information, educate and sign-post residents and visitors on all things to do with community safety.

We residents, also, must play our part. If you see or are aware of any antisocial behaviour directed at yourself or someone else or property, PLEASE REPORT IT. You can contact "Local Bobby" PC Sharon Conway, your neighbourhood policing officer dedicated to Wickham. Contact details are Mobile: 07917 077576 or email: sharon.conway@hampshire.police.uk. You can also dial 101.

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

The Community Speed Watch initiative went live on the 8th March thanks to a dedicated group of local volunteers. Initially using equipment loaned from Hampshire Constabulary the Association were delighted to be presented with equipment at our AGM on the 4th April by the Chair of Wickham & Knowle Parish Council, Mr. Craig Manuel, for our Speed Watch Scheme (Radar Gun and Hi-Viz Safety Vests).



The WRA Community Speed Watch scheme has so far held 14 roadside sessions (8th March up to 7th April) which were conducted at approved locations in Winchester Road and School Road lasting anywhere from half to one hour per session. The results so far confirm what many residents have long suspected that speeding through Wickham is rampant and raises serious safety concerns for the Village & its residents.

The data collected by the Speed Watch Scheme will be shared with the Parish Council and together with the Parish Council's own Speed Indication devices will provide evidence in support of future road & pedestrian safety measures in Wickham.

Key Statistics to date, based on Winchester Road and School Road

Vehicles caught speeding	414
Vehicles exceeding 40mph	170
Maximum speeds observed were - car	58 mph and motorbike 89 mph
Repeat offenders	24

Note1: Statistics obtained from the Department for Transport show that a pedestrian hit at 40mph has a 90% chance of being killed whilst if hit at 20 mph the chance is just 20%. **During the 12 sessions the Community Speed Watch has been running 414 vehicles were caught speeding and of those over 40% were exceeding 40mph with the potential to cause a fatal accident.**

Commented [Ma1]: Also needs revising.

Note2: The maximum speeds observed coincide with the figures recorded by the Parish Council's Speed Indication Devices in Winchester Road & School Road of 75mph and 68mph respectively. There is potential to include additional site(s) in the future, subject to the approval of Hampshire Constabulary, such as Titchfield Lane where residents have long complained of the dangers of speeding vehicles.

The Association would like to thank Wickham & Knowle Parish Council for supporting this initiative and it is hoped the data collected and speeding motorists receiving notification from Hampshire Constabulary will help to create safer roads in our community.

If you would like further information or have any questions regarding a Community Speed Watch Scheme for Wickham please do not hesitate to contact our coordinator at SpeedWatch@WickhamResidents.org.uk

WRA Membership is available to anyone 18 years or older who lives in the PO17 postcode area. Joining is simple and FREE just e mail your name, address, and contact number to membership@wickhamresidents.org.uk OR visit our website at wickhamresident.org.uk.

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER - JOIN US AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Mike Perkins
WRA Press Officer