

ERITH TOWN FORUM ORDINARY MEETING



Wednesday, 29 April 2015 - 8.00pm-9.00pm
Erith Veterans Club, Park Crescent, Erith

ATTENDANCE

Forum Members:

Doreen Ives (*Chair*), DJ Akande (Erith Riverside Residents' Association), Joan Armitage (*Treasurer*)(Bexley Civic Society), Bill Brookes (Erith Playhouse Theatre), Cllr Joe Ferreira (Erith Ward), Alison Fisher (Erith Rowing Club), Ray Hudson (Bexley Neighbourhood Watch Association), Jerry Martin (Chair, Erith Safer Neighbourhood Panel), Jacquie McDonnell (Bexley College), Dee Mayston (Community Engagement Officer, NHS Client Commissioning Group), Terry Middleditch (Dep, Disabilities Groups), Cllr Abena Oppong-Asare (Erith Ward), Dennis Roberts (*Vice Chair, Community*)(Erith Baptist Church), Rev. Rob Radcliffe (St John's Church), Alec Tapper (FORGE), and Rosemary White (Erith Park).

Members of the Public:

Julia Baker, Janet Baxter, Mary Beadle, Stephen Boxall, Tracey Copley, Maureen Davis, L Finch, Simon Hart, Peter Kilner, Joan McCarthy, Therese Oliver, Irwin Parkhurst, Chris Scutt, Phil Simmonds, Fred Smith, David & Pauline Young,

Also Present:

John Abbott (Note Taker).

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Edward Boateng (Erith Ward), Chris Betts (Frogmore), Chris Broadbent (Disabilities Groups), and Fred Finck (Erith Yacht Club).

NOTES OF MEETING

Action

1.	MINUTES OF LAST ORDINARY MEETING – 28 JANUARY 2015 & MATTERS ARISING.	
1.1	The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 January 2015 were agreed.	
1.2	Two matters arising from the minutes were discussed – the proposed visit to the Belvedere incinerator and the problems for residents of Sherwood House crossing Queen Street.	
1.3	It was agreed to ask for the Forum's visits to the Belvedere incinerator to take place on Tuesday 16 and Thursday 18 June 2015.	Chair
1.4.1	The continuing problems for the elderly in crossing Queen Street were discussed caused by the speed of traffic using the public car park via Elrick Close and parking in Queen Street which restricted visibility. Van or lorry drivers from Serco, Inspire and Farm Foods were regularly parked and blocked the sightline for people wanting to cross the road when the off-road service delivery areas could be used.	
1.4.2	The Council had been asked to consider installing a zebra crossing and parking restrictions. It was considered that the speed warning sign displayed by the Council may not be located in the most appropriate place to be of most benefit. No road casualties had been recorded.	
1.4.3	Councillor Ferreira agreed to join with Cllr Boateng in pressing the matter again with the Council, and it was suggested that other members of the Forum, and residents or the warden of Sherwood House should make representations direct to the Council for parking restrictions.	Cllrs Ferreira / Boateng
2.	ERITH MARKET.	
	Doreen Ives reported that following the public consultation event at Erith Library organised by the Council in March 2015, there was no indication as yet on whether a market for Erith would be re-established. Funding from the Greater London Authority was available to assist in regenerating town centres and increasing footfall, but it depended the financial viability of any proposal.	

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3.	FORMER SWIMMING POOL SITE – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.	
3.1	A public exhibition was arranged in February 2015 by the L&Q Housing Association on their development proposals for the former Erith swimming pool site. L&Q had indicated they would be reviewing the comments received from the public before formally submitting their planning application.	
3.2	Alec Tapper said he had attended the exhibition and was concerned about the proposals for another high-density flatted development in the north of the Borough with only limited provision for family housing. He considered more variety of dwelling was required to improve the tenure of the area.	
4.	ERITH QUARRY DEVELOPMENT.	
	Planning permission for the development of the Erith Quarry site had been approved on 31 March 2015, the first phase of which included the building of a new primary school which was due to open in 2017. Some site clearance works had started. The developer would be working with Bexley College and Resources Plus regarding the employment of local labour and five Apprenticeships had been promised.	
5.	FORGE (FRIENDS OF RIVERSIDE GARDENS ERITH).	
5.1.1	Alec Tapper reported that in conjunction with Thames 21 arrangements were being made for the fifth clean-up of the Thames foreshore in Erith on Sunday 10 May 2015 (10am start for a health and safety briefing).	
5.1.2	The event was being supported by Wm. Morrisons, the Council, Erith Safer Neighbourhood Team, KFC (food provision), Erith Yacht Club and Erith Rowing Club. There had been an excellent response from volunteers to help remove shopping trolleys and traffic cones from the mudflats, and to litter pick along the riverside path.	
5.2.1	Alec also reported on progress with the summer planting of the Riverside Gardens with the aim of maintaining colour in the gardens throughout the seasons. Unfortunately, he had heard that the Council was to propose planting with perennials in future to reduce costs.	
5.2.2	Joan McCarthy mentioned she had met at a recent Crossness Engines event a woman who was the keeper of the register of historic parks and gardens and there was a possibility of the riverside Gardens being included on the register which could afford greater protection for the area.	
6.	COMMUNITY LUNCH – 7 JUNE 2015 (CHRIST CHURCH HALL).	
6.1	The Community Lunch (for 300 people) was to be held at Christ Church Hall on 7 June 2015 (12.30pm-3.30pm) with the theme being the 800 years celebration of the signing of Magna Carta.	
6.2	Rob Radcliffe was preparing a quiz for the occasion.	
6.3	From 3pm, there would be an opportunity to visit the bell tower which had been a later addition to the church 100 years ago.	
7.	ERITH FUN DAY – 18 JULY 2015.	
7.1	The Erith Fun Day on 18 July 2015 was being organised by the Rotary Club of Erith and Therese Oliver reported on the progress with arrangements for booking of stalls and entertainment.	
7.2	There was a Facebook page with facility for on-line bookings and payment for stalls and sponsorship had been obtained	
7.3	Therese said she would welcome the involvement of more community and faith groups at the Fun Day.	
7.4	Suggestions were made that the emergency services could be invited to have say a police car or fire appliance at the event.	
8.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS.	
	a) Erith Rowing Club	
8.1	Alison Fisher distributed a handout on the development of the Erith Rowing Club which had been founded in 1943. Over that time, the Club had developed into a valuable asset to the community for people taking up rowing through training courses, and had provided opportunities for racing and participation in local events e.g. Bexley rowing squad for the London Youth Games.	

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<p>8.2 There was now serious concern about the future of the Club as the Council was seeking to impose a market rent by making a dramatic increase in the rent charged. The Club received no outside funding and had to raise its own funds. The Club could realistically raise only a fraction of the rental costs being asked.</p> <p>8.3 The Forum expressed support for the Erith Rowing Club and Alison agreed to keep the Forum informed of progress with the negotiations with the Council.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) Litter in Erith Town Centre</p> <p>8.4 The Chair had written to Cllr Linda Bailey, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth about the increasing problem of large amounts of rubbish on the streets surrounding the Town Centre, much of which clearly came from fast food outlets in the town.</p> <p>8.5 The Council had been asked to reinforce the Forum's request to these businesses, by reminding them of their civic duty and enforcing any planning conditions imposed. The Council had also been requested to provide more street cleaning around the town centre, perhaps funded by a levy on the fast food outlets if that was legally permitted.</p> <p>8.6 A reply had been received from the Cabinet Member to say the matter had been passed to the relevant department of the Council for consideration.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">c) Annual Outing</p> <p>8.7 Dennis Roberts reported that the annual outing this year would be to Bognor on Saturday 22 August 2015 (10am from the Baptist Church – cost £10)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">d) Health Care Provision in Erith</p> <p>8.8 Dennis Roberts circulated a flyer about the new appointments system for arranging blood tests at Erith & District Hospital and referred to the forthcoming formal inspection of the London Ambulance Service by the Care Quality Commission from 1 June 2015.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">e) Erith Vets Club</p> <p>8.9 The Chair reported she had written to the Erith Vets Club thanking them for the use of their hall for the Forum's meetings over several years.</p>	
<p>9. DATES OF MEETINGS 2015/16.</p> <p>The following dates were agreed for meetings of the Forum at the new venue of Bexley College, Walnut Tree Road beginning at 7pm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 23 July 2015 • Thursday 29 October 2015 • Thursday 28 January 2016 • Thursday 28 April 2016 (AGM) 	