



The Review

The newsletter of the North Loose Residents' Association

Voice of the community

Autumn
2021

Chairman's Notes

A229

Since the last edition of the Review, we have met on site, Officers from Kent Highways to discuss the proposed changes to the Wheatsheaf and Swan junctions of this busy road. These KCC officers are the new project leaders and did appear to listen and absorb the NLRA thoughts and ideas. They were going over the whole project very thoroughly before making any final decisions. I think that we are all agreed (hopefully), that Sheals Crescent and Armstrong Road changes are okay. The Wheatsheaf still needs tweaking and we need to understand how we mitigate the problem of 25% of the traffic heading north, turns to go south at this junction and visa versa. Also the impact of closing Cranbourne Avenue and possibly having traffic lights at Plains Avenue.

We hope that we have made the point forcefully enough that a long slip lane starting near Sainsburys, going into Boughton Lane, is not a good idea. This would mean losing a great deal of the green space in front of the shops as well as the planters and trees. This is all about traffic flow and our recent traffic survey shows that apart from a couple of hours a day, there is no great advantage as traffic exiting Boughton Lane will remain the same.

We put forward yet again (over 4 years now), that bus laybys would remove the problem of traffic flow and while at our meeting on site, there were at least two occasions where the traffic had to stop because the bus had stopped at a bus stop.

Our final concern is that while we will be consulted as a statutory consultee on the final ideas, it appears there may not be a public consultation. We have made clear that this is wrong and we will involve our councillors if this was to be the case.

Sub Groups

In the last edition of the Review, I mentioned we would be making changes as to how the NLRA worked in the future. We have created 3 sub-groups. Planning – Environment – Membership. These all existed before but apart from Planning, were very informal. Now every member of the general committee is on at least one sub group. Each group also has at least one non committee member on it. This ensures that work loads are more evenly spread and we have views from outside and not just the general committee. Naturally, we still welcome our loyal volunteers, and if you would like to volunteer to help, please contact us. All contact numbers are on the back page.

Sean

Anti-social Behaviour



'There's no point reporting anti-social behaviour to the Police because nothing ever happens'

We need to ensure that ALL incidents are reported so the Police cannot say they are not aware.

In future, if you witness such an event, please dial 101 and GET A CRIME NUMBER. Do NOT let the operator say there is no need – it is your RIGHT to report and get a crime number.

Then please contact us with details, such as incident (eg motorbike in South Park), date and time and the crime number. We will record all information and use it when we next have a meeting with the Police.

Email secretary@northloose.co.uk or

Phone 07986 989764 (leave message)



Tel: 01622 746273

The NLRA would like to
thank Page & Wells
Loose Office for
sponsoring our Newsletter

Annual General Meeting

At last we felt conditions were suitable for us to hold an Annual General Meeting, so we met on Saturday 22nd September – our first AGM since May 2019. We decided to use the smaller hall at Eling Court because we did not expect large numbers and we could open the doors wide. Fortunately the weather was kind so we had plenty of air and space.

About 30 members were present and Councillors Derek Mortimer and Brian Clark also attended. 18 apologies were sent.

The usual papers were presented and agreed – minutes of the last AGM in May 2019 (which had been written soon after the meeting), and the Treasurer submitted his report for the years to 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021, pointing out that the accounts had been audited at the correct time individually each year.

Our membership secretary said that maintaining membership had been difficult during the lockdown as the Dolly Tub had to close, so it was agreed that no-one would be taken off our books for not renewing during this difficult time. Rhiannon thanked her volunteers who are now able to call on people to collect renewals, and in fact some people have kindly paid their missing subs retrospectively.

The Environment Group is probably one of the higher profile groups that we run because of the type of activity. David reported that this group had been difficult to manage during lockdown but became easier once we were able to meet outdoors. The group is also a big spender – since October 2020 they have had £2,000 from NLRA funds, all of which has been used for environmental work. The grass cutting in Richmond Way and tree felling for safety/coppicing in Mangravet Wood are the highest spending points. Although some work in the wood was lost due to lockdown, we did still have to undertake some safety work there. The positive side is that we have been able to enjoy two springs with a fabulous display of bluebells which cheered us all up, and the Greenway has been much admired and appreciated by many people. Work will continue now to clear the excessive growth of weeds due to weather conditions, and we are always looking for more volunteers if anyone can help for an hour or two.

We are still planning to instal two benches on the Greenway, but unfortunately this work has been delayed due to extra work needed to make the benches safe. The second notice board was installed – we had some critical comment but a lot of people stop to look at it and when we get some hedging plants around it over the winter, it will blend in.

Councillor Brian Clark gave the meeting a quick update on the Local Plan and where we are (or are not) with the Wheatsheaf junction.

Congratulations were given to Councillor Derek Mortimer, who is now Deputy Mayor.

Both Councillors mentioned that the NLRA maintains a high profile with Maidstone Borough Council, mainly due to having a Neighbourhood Development Plan and being registered as a Neighbourhood Planning Forum.

Other issues discussed were Loose Ends, which is unlikely to start again until next Spring, the revised structure of SMART, and a revision to the structure of our working groups in that we will now have at least one non-committee member working with others on our planning, membership and environmental working groups.

Sean thanked retiring committee members; the new committee elected are:

Chair – Sean Carter

Vice Chair – Richard Hunt

Treasurer – Bob Thomas

Secretary – Jacqueline Day

Membership – Rhiannon Cox

Committee: Cathy Patton, Paul Kinnill,
David Southgate, Christine Marshall.

Lastly, Sean sent a big thank you to all our members and volunteers as without them we could not continue to thrive.

Membership

If we are going to maintain our ability to influence the decision makers, developers and other “powers that be” by making them take notice and listen to us we need to have a significant number of NLRA members in North Loose. We also need a high profile in the area as in this instance numbers do really matter.

We have recovered from the dip in numbers we experienced last year because of lockdown but we still need to run a recruitment campaign this autumn.

A substantial number of homes were sold in North Loose in the last eighteen months with new people moving into our patch and we would like to give them the opportunity to join us. We have decided to target these newcomers this year so if you have new neighbours or know where property has changed hands in the last two years I would be grateful if you could let me know.

The most effective recruitment tool is word of mouth so please talk to your neighbours about our work and try and get them to join us.

Thank you

Rhiannon Cox

Membership Secretary

Planning applications – September 2021

21/503893	7 Mayfair Avenue	Two storey side extension, pitch roof on porch and single storey rear extension	Objection	6.9.21
21/502911	22 Boughton Lane	Conversion of garage into habitable space and erection of two storey side extension (amended plans)	Objection	6.9.21
21/504562	8 Boughton Lane	Replacement single storey side extension	No objection	6.9.21
21/504319	7 Braddick Close	Demolition of rear conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension	No objection	6.9.21
21/504231	15 Braddick Close	Single storey side extension and demolition of existing garage	No objection	6.9.21
21/504457	16 Westwood Road	Erection of a two storey side extension (for use as assisted living accommodation)	No site notice time extension requested	27.9.21
21/504567	37 Sevington Park	Conversion of garage and storage area to annexe for disabled use	No objection	28.9.21
21/505017/TCA	Loose Court Farm, Old Drive	Maintenance work to various trees in conservation area	No objection	28.9.21

When you get to 80.....

It's a bit of a surprise. I know that when I was a teenager anyone over about fifty five looked 'ancient' and grandparents in general looked positively decrepit. I'm now a great-grandparent and whenever I see myself in a mirror I think "Good grief, who on earth is that?" Well, everything has got a bit crumpled and frayed but my generation – possibly due to a wartime diet which included cod liver oil, dried egg and dried milk later followed with malt extract, has turned out to be a pretty healthy lot. All the things that matter are still working reasonably well and I'll leave it at that.

There are other surprises. For example – and I hope I'm not ruining it for anyone who is about to join the Four Score Club – you will get a letter from the Department of Work and Pensions telling you that your pension will be increased! By 25p a week.....

Again, I hope I'm not ruining anything for anyone but I did write back (well within the allotted time to go before the Mandatory Reconsideration Committee) suggesting that it was highly unlikely that this amount of money would make the slightest bit of difference to anyone in the UK who had managed to reach such a landmark age. I also suggested that as there are now 3.2 million over 80 years old, this sizeable amount of money – in excess of £40 million a year, could be put to better use. We 'oldies' could give up a miniscule amount and donate it to, for example, the Green Recovery Challenge Fund. It would make a contribution to the future and would

be quite a good way of saying "Thank You" for what we've had.

Naturally, I haven't had a reply but I will take it further. Helen Grant will be next on my list followed by Adam Fleming on Newscast and the national press. I'll let you know what happens.

I think I am the longest serving male on the NLRA committee but that title is now up for grabs as I have decided to stand down. It has been a very enjoyable and informative experience. The knowledge, expertise, diligence and commitment of my fellow committee members has been – and I know will continue to be, highly impressive. North Loose is very fortunate to have this team of volunteers who are dedicated to safeguarding the best interests of the area.

I would like to thank all the many NLRA members who turned up for Traffic Surveys over the years. The response to my emails for help with 'yet another traffic survey' was always immediate and positive. The 'problem' was that I usually had too many people! I can tell you that it was the envy of other parishes. Thank you also to the green fingered people who have looked after the planters on Boughton Parade since they were first sited there. They are always colourful and attractive - people still comment on how good they look.

I'm not disappearing completely – I'll be on Work Parties and Litter Picks whenever I can and I have a couple of NLRA projects I'm determined to complete – but that's another story.

Meanwhile thank you, goodbye and I'll see you around.

Alan Moore

The Environment Group

We have had a busy summer and early autumn getting back to work on our projects following the easing of restrictions in place for COVID.

Due to the nature of the weather this spring and summer, being quite cloudy, wet and warm, it has been perfect growing conditions, not only for all the trees and plants we are trying to encourage but also for the weeds.

Most of our work parties spent the time cutting back overgrowing vegetation and weeding on the Loose Greenway. I have to say the display of summer wild flowers made all this hard work worthwhile and I hope you took the opportunity to pay a visit or two.

However with the summer now over, we have already started the task of clearing away all the dying flower vegetation and allowing them to set seed for next year.

We also spent a lot of time weeding the bank at the Cripple Street end and seeded with grass as we attempt to make this a grass bank with spring bulbs and flowers.

Our one frustration has been with the progress of the benches. We made a good early start preparing the site, building retaining walls and putting in the foundations. But getting the benches refurbished has taken longer than we had hoped. This work was being done for us by various other parties who were lending their time and expertise to us and we have had to be patient.

However, as I write this piece we have now received the three replacement wooden slats, meaning the benches can be put back together and installed on site shortly.

The new noticeboard installed on the Greenway has created quite a lot of interest and raised the profile of our work on this busy foot corridor.



A work party member busy clearing the area around the new notice board which can be seen on the left.



Another volunteer cuts down the summer's wildflowers now they are dying back. They are left in-situ to allow them to drop their seeds ready for next year's display and will be cleared away later

We have started the task of removing the stinging nettles, brambles and bindweed from between the hedging whips alongside the footpath that leads from Cripple Street to Postley Road.

Whilst the hedge whips have done well this relatively wet and cool summer, the Stinging nettles brambles and bindweed in between have proliferated. Some were as high as we stood! We estimate a success rate of about 60% for the hedging whips, which were donated to us by the Woodland Trust. We will complete this task at another work party and the fill the gaps with the whips we had left over, which have been looked after elsewhere over the summer.

Two more litter picks are planned this autumn; on 26th October 2021 in the South Park area meeting in the car park and on 3rd November 2021 in the Mangravet Wood area meeting at the barrier in Pheasant Lane. All events start at 10 00 and litter pickers and sacks will be provided. We welcome anyone who wants to come along and join us on these activities.

The environment group will be taking over responsibility for the Planters at Boughton and Wheatshaf Parades and I will be the main point of contact for all those volunteers.

David Southgate

NLRA Environmental Lead.



Hedging whips alongside the footpath that leads from Cripple Street to Postley Road showing the hard work done to remove Stinging Nettles, Brambles and Bindweed.

Work parties – Autumn 2021

Saturday 6 November Mangravet Wood

Thursday 18 November Loose Greenway

Should you wish to attend, please contact David Southgate in advance so numbers can be confirmed.

All work parties start at 10am and everyone is welcome to stay as long as they wish.

Please bring any necessary tools with you if you have them.

A reminder e-mail will be sent out the week before to confirm the type of work activity taking place on each date.

Additional dates may be added at short notice for particular items of work.

Loose Greenway – meet at the entrance from Westwood Road

Enquiries to David Southgate –
david@northloose.co.uk or phone 07801 296699

Greensands – Health Centre

This item below was received from the Greensands Health Centre

OUR LOOSE SURGERY – IT IS HERE TO STAY!

On more than one occasion recently we have been asked whether we will keep our Loose surgery at 1 Boughton Lane, particularly once our new surgery is built in Coxheath – well the answer is an emphatic YES!

The Partners of Greensand Health Centre purchased the property nearly a year ago & continue to make various improvements to it, investing both time and money into the premises.

Many of you will already know, or seen, that only in the last week we have been having the existing carpet tiled flooring replaced with new clinical flooring. We also have work planned to replace all the windows and replace all the clinical sinks & units. Then once all the messy work has been completed we will re-decorate throughout.

Also, we continue to welcome new patient registrations for those who live in the local area.

The Loose surgery plays an integral part in Greensand Health Centre's future so if you hear otherwise be very reassured it is NOT true!



A blast from the past! This photo of the Papermaker's Arms in the 50s or 60s was spotted on a local Facebook page.



Smile

I read recipes the same way I read science fiction. I get to the end and I think, 'Well, that's not going to happen.'

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory

Change is inevitable—except from a vending machine.

Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician

Some cause happiness wherever they go.
Others whenever they go.

Your Committee 2021/22



Sean Carter
Chair



Richard Hunt
Vice-Chair



Jacquie Day
Secretary



Bob Thomas
Treasurer



Rhiannon Cox
Membership Secretary



Paul Kinnill



David Southgate



Cathy Patten



Christine Marshall



Pat Excell

Sub Groups

Planning

Sean Carter (Group Leader), David Southgate, Jacquie Day, Rhiannon Cox and Robert Marshall

Environment

David Southgate (Group Leader), Richard Hunt, Paul Killen, Denis Excell, Jacquie Day and Tony Day

Membership

Rhiannon Cox (Group Leader), Paul Killen, Cathy Patten, Pat Excell, Christine Marshall, Robin catt and Bob Thomas

Loose Ends

Richard Hunt (Group Leader), Cathy Patten and Philip Patten

Volunteers

A big thank you to all who help with leaflet distribution, membership recruitment, work parties, Litter picks, traffic surveys, maintaining the planters outside the shops and many other jobs. Without you the NLRA would not exist

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE ON PRODUCTION OF MAGENTA MEMBERSHIP CARD

Luckys Newsagent, Boughton Parade
01622 747352

Home news delivery. Buy 2 bottles of wine and get a 3rd bottle half price (Echo Falls)

The Dolly Tub, Boughton Parade
01622 743082

10%
Service washes if required

C.P.M. Plumbing, Sutton Road
01622 759999 M. 07766 132392

10%
Good clean work with professional finish

MDK Electrical Services, Loose Road
01622 203031 M. 07757 944896

10% off labour charges

Rumwoods Garden Centre, Sutton Road
01622 861477

10%. 20% on special days.

Domino's Pizza
Boughton Parade, Loose Road 01622 747900

50% on pizzas, side orders, and desserts
(Not ice cream or any drinks.)

This is for collection only and not valid with any other offer or multi buy deal

Nicki's Florist, Wheatsheaf Parade
Your friendly local florist since 1993
01622 685849

10% when you spend £20.00
on flowers in the shop.
(collection only, excludes delivery)

Footsteps Flooring 196 Loose Rd
01622 757411

5% off floor coverings (excludes
underlay, preparation work or labour)

Glowing Fitness (Pilates Classes)
Ask for Vicki 07759833097

free first class to all N.L.R.A. members.
Help with back pain- injury re-hab

Maidstone Fencing
01622 370559

5% off orders over £1000
jon@maidstonefencing.com

Disclaimer: the NLRA takes no responsibility for any services given by the above



Useful Contacts

If you report to the 'phone numbers below you will receive a reference number to monitor that work is carried out within 28 days.

Please report to K.C.C .on the following phone number **03000 418181**

Any fallen trees on footpaths to Transport and Highways option 2

Any potholes option 3

Street lights in need of attention option 4
quoting number stenciled on the lamp post column

Drainage option 5

Note: KCC phone lines are often busy, especially during bad weather, so if your problem is not urgent you may prefer to report it using the KCC website - www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem

EMERGENCY ONLY please use highways emergency line between 5.p.m. – 9 a.m. **03000 419191**

Please report the following to MBC on **01622 602000** general enquires -

Any broken street name signs

Committee Members 2020

Chair	Sean Carter	07946 302824	chair@northloose.co.uk
Vice Chair	Richard Hunt	07840 897141	richard@northloose.co.uk
Secretary	Jacquie Day	07986 989764	secretary@northloose.co.uk
Treasurer	Robert Thomas	07950700553	bob@northloose.co.uk
Membership	Rhiannon Cox	01622 741261	membership@northloose.co.uk
Committee	David Southgate	07801 296699	david@northloose.co.uk
	Paul Kinnill	07969 793311	paul@northloose.co.uk
	Cathy Patton	01622 743444	cathy@northloose.co.uk
	Christine Marshall	07792 361273	christine@northloose.co.uk
Co-opted	Pat Excell	07854 001591	pat@northloose.co.uk

COUNCILLORS AND POLICE CONTACTS

MBC COUNCILLORS

Paul Wilby	07949 769276	paulwilby@maidstobe.gov.uk
Derek Mortimer	07825 916930	derekmortimer@maidstone.gov.uk
Brian Clark	07963 757767	brianclark.ld@gmail.com

K.C.C.

Paul Cooper paul.cooper@kent.gov.uk

Police contacts: ring 101