

**Meeting of Representatives of St. William of Perth R.C.P.S. Governing Body
and residents of Canon Close & Rectory Grange in St, John Fisher Church
Parish Hall. 19/07/2017.**

The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. with an introduction and welcome from Ron Fredericks, Co-Chair of Governors of St. William of Perth (SWOP). Ron invited residents to speak.

The first question from the floor was for a synopsis of the meeting held on 27/06/2017 in Canon Close for residents of the Close & Grange where parking enforcement officers were present and a Community Police representative. The parking officials stated that with the exception of the double yellow lines in the mouth of the Close and the Zig-Zag lines in front of the school there were no parking restrictions within the Close. This entitled parents to park wherever they wished within the Close as long as the driveways remained unobstructed. Were they to observe parents abusing the access to driveways they would, as a first response ask the driver to move from in front of the driveway. Were the vehicle to be unoccupied and blocking the driveway then they would consider issuing a parking ticket. There were major concerns about the newly created narrower entrance and exit from the Close onto the Maidstone Road with many residents stating that visibility to the right was severely impaired by parked cars on the pavement to the right and to a lesser extent, left of the Close. This made exiting the Close to the left difficult and to the right dangerous. The reasons given for the narrowing of the entrance to the Close were to increase the safety of cyclists traversing the Close when the new cycle path is created down the Maidstone Road. One of the SWOP Governors, (a serving Police Officer) advised that by narrowing the entrance/exit of the Close reduced entry speeds and disallowed 2 vehicles, sitting next to one another, one turning right and the other left, thus improving visibility for the single vehicle exiting the Close.

Reference was made to the cars which parked on the school side of the road just after the Double yellow lines finished who parked on the footpath, thus restricting the use of the path. It was thought that this was an illegal parking manoeuvre however; nobody could clarify that at the time. Concerns were expressed that parking in the entrance to Rectory Grange on both sides of the Grange was extremely hazardous for the children in particular as with the larger vehicles a small child walking in between the parked cars could not be seen. Parents with pushchairs were also mentioned as it had been observed that they would

push the infant in the chair into the road as they were unable to circumnavigate the parked cars. It was suggested that the double yellow line should continue all the way from the entry to the Close, across Rectory Grange to meet up with the existing Zig-Zag. A Governor explained that to achieve the extra linage would take a couple of years as traffic management orders have to be issued and surveys carried out. Pedestrian barriers would be quicker and easier to install.

Another resident felt that Rochester Grammar School for Girls (RGS) and Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School (Math School) ought to be included in this and subsequent conversations as pupils from those schools park their cars in the Close whilst attending those schools. Ron explained that John Belfield, resident in Rectory Grange and instigator of the original meeting had asked Ron if it were possible to have Governor representatives from RGS & The Math present at this meeting and Ron had advised John that it was extremely unlikely to be able to coordinate such before the end of term and Ron felt that it was more important that we had this meeting take place before the School Summer holidays which John agreed with.

A SWOP Governor asked the residents if they felt the situation had deteriorated and over what timescale. Residents virtually unanimously agreed that things had got worse over the last couple of years. It was explained that parent car usage had been discussed in Full Governing Body meetings but probably not for a year or so and if the situation had got worse then a further discussion needed to take place.

Another Governor advised that when he did the school run he was kindly aided by a resident in the Close who permitted him to park briefly on the drive to allow him to take his children into school and collect them in the afternoon, thus removing a vehicle from the roadside and would any other residents consider such permission.

A resident suggested that the situation was being further exacerbated with 2 teachers parking in the Close. (This statement has been investigated and it transpires that they cars in question are dinner time staff, SWOP is attempting to address this).

A resident had observed that some pupils of RGS & the Math used Canon Close as parking all day. As they have significant parking capacity could they not park on site (Ron will write to both schools requesting same).

A resident complained that a large lorry parks on the Maidstone Road on a regular basis. They were advised that this vehicle ought to be reported as it is unacceptable for this to take place.

A resident advised that occasionally a parent will park on the green at the bottom of Close. When she challenged them they were abusive. Members of the Governing Body advised the resident that this has to be reported to the school and their name taken or their vehicle registration.

A resident suggested that the increase of the yellow lines would help with the issues at the top of the Close but would do nothing to alleviate the problems at the bottom with dangerous parking on the corners. The resident asked that all SWOP vehicles be kept off road. A Governor explained that within the Building and Premises Committee of SWOP the option to increase parking availability has been discussed but planning applications need to be applied for. Whilst it is desirable it will take some time to arrange.

A resident stated that the number of staff vehicles had increased over the years and this is why a couple of staff cars now use the Close. Another resident suggested "double banking" vehicles, deliberately blocking a car that would not need to leave during the day. Ron said this option would be discussed at the next full Governors meeting.

A resident suggested that SWOP speaks to RGS and the Math School to use some of their parking facilities for SWOP staff. Ron agreed to make a request to both schools.

A resident said that to effectively solve the problem will require education of parents, engineering (increased lining and or bollards) and enforcement (parking tickets). The resident advised the meeting he would be happy to investigate the engineering and enforcement issues on behalf of the residents.

A resident asked if children were permitted to walk home unaccompanied. Ron explained that a number of Year 5&6 children do walk home but frequently there are younger siblings in the schools they all tend to go home together in a car.

A Governor advised that SWOP would back a resident's petition for new signage and or pedestrian barriers. It was explained that the children themselves have written notes to their parents requesting considerate and legal parking. This was a while ago and could do with revisiting.

A Governor asked Residents were asked if they had registered their drop curbs with the council. If drop curbs are registered then cars cannot park across them including yourself! No residents have registered their driveways. Once registered a single white line is drawn on the road in front of your driveway.

A resident asked if the Zig-Zags deeper into the Close could be changed to a "drop-off" zone. A Governor suggested that this wouldn't work due to the restriction of entry time for the children.

Residents mentioned that a number of parents arrive an hour before collection time for their children.

A resident said the school used to allow children into the playground. The Governors advised that nowadays this would not be allowed without staff supervision which is unavailable before school commences.

A resident complained that a Grandparent parked on the Zig-zags to pick up his Grandchildren. When the resident challenged the offender for stopping on the zig-zags the perpetrator swore at him. Governors requested that the registration number of the offending vehicle be taken into the school. The Headteacher and Governors take a very dim view of such anti-social behaviour and would take action to deal with such.

A resident requested that the school car park be made available to churchgoers on Sundays as similar problems occur in the Close during mass times. Ron agreed to discuss the matter with Mrs Keywood and Father Anthony.

A resident asked how the issues were going to be moved on. Ron suggested we needed to liaise with the council and community police to look at options. Ron asked if a resident would be prepared to become the "resident rep".

Ron agreed to write to RGS & the Math school requesting students were allowed to park onsite in their respective schools.

Subsequent meeting with Local Councillor 27/07/2017.

Those present: Cllr Stuart Tranter, John Belfield, Bob Dench & Ron Fredericks.

Matters Discussed; Extending the bollards on the Maidstone Road to the right of Canon Close further up the Maidstone Road to improve visibility for drivers exiting the Close.

Extending the bollards into Canon Close on the school side from where they are at present along to the entry to Rectory Grange and/or increasing the double yellow line on the same side.

Creating a "drop-off" zone before the school car park entrance.

Creating a "one way" "in" & "out" system in the church car park.

Cllr Tranter advised that he would speak to those concerned about the suggested changes and Ron would liaise with the Parish Priest over changes to the Church car park. Feedback would be through John. No specific timescale allocated.