

South Gosforth Residents Association Chairman's Annual Report 2004 – 2005

The Association has been actively involved in several issues over the last year which has covered the South Gosforth area.

I am unable to describe all of them but the following items will be of interest to most residents in our area.

Nomad Housing who had an office on William Street have sold their land to **Persimmon Homes** for flats to be built on the site. The Association vigorously opposed this as we knew that this would have a detrimental effect on the area. Unfortunately we were too late to organise a campaign against this and planning permission was granted. The Association felt that the consultation process was extremely limited and asked if we could be included in future planning applications. We were informed by the department that residents associations are not normally consulted as they come and go. We disagreed with that opinion and I raised this matter at the Ward Committee meeting. It was subsequently passed by the City Council that Residents Associations were to be consulted in matters of local planning and issues that have a direct impact on residents in the area.

The Association arranged to have the fence repaired on the green after joy riders bulldozed a car from William Street to the top of Ridgewood Gardens. This event occurred on the 29th of October and an email was sent to Tom Jarman (Environmental Ward Steward) on the 1st of November. At the Ward Committee meeting that same evening the matter was raised and the fence was repaired on the 3rd of November.

The Association met with Dave Roberts who is the Neighbourhood Response Manager. As a result of this meeting the edges of the green have been strimmed, and the steps cleared of the gravel and weeds. The land outside the front of the Milldene Nursing Home had a circle of grass which was never cut. This land does belong to the council and has now been included in the grass cutting schedule.

We were approached by a resident from William Street flats who was having problems with her electrical supply. The Association requested Your Homes Newcastle to carry out a survey on the residents behalf. The resident was extremely grateful for our help in this matter.

One of the concerns that we had was that we felt news letters were not being received in the area so we decided to deliver these ourselves. We produced an Easter Card and a Xmas Card which were distributed to every single house in the area 400 in total. As a result of this six new people have approached the Association and were warmly welcomed.

The Association has received several requests from young children in the area for goal posts for the green, the Association proposed for a local artist to meet the residents and he will carve Totem Poles which can be used as goal posts. The idea being that he would carve what they would like to see. This led to the Association meeting representatives from the Council consisting of investment, design, Your Homes Newcastle and the Ward Steward. We discussed the Totem Poles and the reasons why that they were being asked for, also the steps and trees for the green. It was suggested that a seat outside the Milldene Home would be an asset.

Traffic Issues - Three of the main concerns this year that we objected too were the proposed bus lane from Benton Park Road to South Gosforth roundabout; we are still waiting on the outcome from this. The other was the proposal at a Ward Committee meeting in May that a solution for the traffic in Hollywood Avenue was to close Salter's Bridge all together. The effect of this would mean even more traffic at South Gosforth roundabouts. I have expressed several times with the Council the volume of cars that drive through the pedestrian crossings whilst the lights are on red at the Victory and the Brandling. A representative from the Council attended an Association meeting and she experienced a car driving through as she was crossing.

The Association liaised with the Council after receiving two requests from residents to have branches lopped from trees in their gardens as this was affecting the quality of their lives.

The Association has reorganised the website which is now www.southgosforth.org this has all the minutes and reports of the Association since June 2004.

My report would not be complete if I didn't thank the following for helping the Association and offering guidance when needed – My thanks to the committee members Jo, Clare, Andrew, Gordon, Colin, Ruth, Pat who have contributed over the year.

Also Tom Jarman, Annabel McKinnon, Dave Roberts, Helen Nickson from Newcastle City Council.

Jerry Ruddick

15 September 2005