

Chair: Christine Thornton, 40 Cross Flatts Avenue, Beeston, Leeds, LS11 7BG. Tel 0113 270 0875

Secretary: Mr Robert Winfield, 7 Allenby Gardens, Beeston, Leeds, LS11 5RW. Tel 0777 379 7820

E mail [robert.winfield1@ntlworld.com](mailto:robert.winfield1@ntlworld.com) Forum Website- [www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk](http://www.beestonforum.btck.co.uk)

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## BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

### Beeston Forum General Meeting - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

#### Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Ratification of new Neighbourhood Forum members
4. Guest Speaker, Mark Burns Williamson OBE; Police and Crime Commissioner, West Yorkshire Police
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018
6. Police Report
7. Discussion about the Neighbourhood Forum
8. Report of the Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018
9. Correspondence
10. The Beeston Festival
11. Any Other Business

#### Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair), Councillor G. Almass, Mr. R. Bell, Mr. W.J. Birch, Mr. D. Bottomley, Mrs. M. Broadbent, Mr. S. Casserley, Mrs. R. Casserley, Mr. A. Cooper, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. M. Day, Councillor A. Gabriel, Mr. C. Hendrick Ward, Mrs. P. Jones, Mr. E. Leathem, Mr. I Logan, Mrs. D. McGuigan, Mrs. M. Munro, Rev. L. Pearson, Sgt. S. Saville (West Yorkshire Police), Councillor A. Scopes, PCSO L. Thomson (West Yorkshire Police), Mr. D. Villegas and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks – Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the meeting and noted that it is a lovely evening and the rain has not come
2. Apologies for absence were received from Jean Birch, Mark Clayton, Pauline Johnson and Mark Parry
3. Ratification of new Neighbourhood Forum members. Robert Winfield noted that a number of individuals attending the last meeting of the Forum had ticked the box to indicate that they wish to join the Neighbourhood

Forum, including a number of individuals who were already members. Robert Winfield pointed out that individuals who are already Neighbourhood Forum members do not need to join again. A number of individuals who were not already members of the Neighbourhood Forum sought to join ; namely, M. Shamraze, Nadia Hussain and Diane McGuigan. They were each duly ratified as Neighbourhood Forum members

4. Police Report. Christine Thornton noted that as the representatives of the Police force present needed to leave the meeting , this would be dealt with next .

4.1 Sgt . Stuart Saville apologised for the lack of police attendance at recent meetings, noting that there has been some confusion in connection with the dates of meetings. He introduced his colleague PCSO Lauren Thomson , who pointed out that he is new to the area but that Beeston is a busy place. Christine Thornton asked whether he patrols the area on foot or on a bicycle. Lauren Thomson patrols the area on foot .

4.2 Sgt. Saville outlined the crime statistics for the area. There have been three thefts of pedal cycles around the Cross Flatts Area. There have been eight burglaries and two attempted burglaries, due to insecure doors, probably as a result of the current hot weather. There have been sixteen instances of criminal damage, mainly involving windows , wardrobes and vehicles . There have been five thefts from motor vehicles and one attempt of such theft. None of the property has been located. There have been four thefts of motor vehicles. A suspect has been apprehended . Richard Bell wondered whether the thefts of motor vehicles involve getting into peoples' houses first. Lauren Thomson said that the method of committing the crime is not specified . Sgt. Saville said that there is a spate of thefts of mopeds and motor vehicles across the city. These typically involve the stolen item being taken in a van. There has been a reduction in burglaries due to two people having been arrested .

4.3 The meeting opened up to questions and comments from the floor. Christine Thornton referred to a number of instances of children riding motor bikes and quad bikes, and had phoned Parkwatch three times during the past seven days. She also referred to an instance of two cars driving around quickly, obviously racing . At one stage, one car overtook the other close to a bend. Sgt. Saville said that Beeston is not alone and people complain about this across the city. This is a perennial problem , and the police aim to carry out traffic operations using speed guns. There has been a bit of an upturn in the riding of bikes in Beeston , but there are a lot of problems in Middleton and Belle Isle. On one recent evening three people were spotted riding on a moped. The person on the back waved to police as the moped went through a red light. He was not wearing a crash helmet. Sgt. Saville noted that the police operates a no pursuit policy. Adam Cooper said that those riding the bikes knows that . Sgt. Saville noted that the police are reliant on catching them when they are stationery, finding out where they live, or where their bikes are stored and charging them. He noted that there has recently been a large bike ride into the city centre and onto Kirkstall Road . A number of people were arrested for causing a public nuisance and some had been jailed. Sgt Saville asked Forum members who have any information to forward it to the police

4.4 Adam Cooper said that these issues had been coming up for years. He noted that he lives on a street which is used as a cut through and pointed out that some cars and bikes were going into third gear and travelling at 40 mph in a 20 mph zone whilst children were playing in the street. He noted that quad bikes are a nuisance. He also noted that there was a drug dealer outside the venue at the last Forum meeting. Adam Cooper noted that he had been out of work for four months and thus spent most of his time at home .Crimes were being committed all the time, but there were no police. Two litre cars were being driven in fourth gear at speeds of up to 60mph. Adam Cooper said that the police need to catch one or two of the people responsible , throw the book at them and advertise the fact that this has happened. He argued that this would curb the criminal activity. If there are no police on the street , people who engage in drug dealing and bike riding will think that they rule the street. Sgt. Saville noted that the police have limited resources, and try and target areas as best they can. Members of the public can send an e mail to the Neighbourhood policing team . Dennis Bottomley said that there have been high powered cars on Cross Flatts Grove and Dalton Avenue for several years. He had contacted Highways about this matter several times but no one is interested. He noted that cars come up Cross Flatts Grove at the junction with Wooler Avenue at around 60 to 70 mph. Adam Cooper added that speeding cars can be heard at

the other side of the estate. Police using an unmarked car would 'make a fortune' in tickets. Cars are not speeding on an odd occasion; this is a regular occurrence. Sgt Saville asked Forum members to feed relevant information to the police .

4.5 Sgt. Saville noted that it is not the practice to disclose the Neighbourhood Policing team's telephone number . Christine Thornton noted that in the past, such a telephone number was disclosed . Sgt Saville noted that members of the public may use the Inner South Neighbourhood Policing team's e mail address ; [innersouth@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:innersouth@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk), or contact the police online to enable them to collate information. Adam Cooper said that using the 101 telephone number is pointless. Christine Thornton wondered whether any e mails sent to this address could be acknowledged. She would not want a situation in which an e mail sent at, say 7 am is not acknowledged until 5p.m. Sgt. Saville said that there is an automated reply so that the sender of the e mail knows that it has reached the police . The police aim to give a personal reply within four hours .

4.6 Richard Bell felt that there is a crisis of confidence in the police, and said that local residents had not seen action for 6-24 months . Local residents, he said, want to see people being locked up. He appreciates that there is a legal system and that the courts do not back the police up, but there is a massive crisis of confidence. Adam Cooper added that the police know who is carrying out criminal activities in Beeston. When he visited Elland Road police station to report a crime, the police laughed and said that the person involved 'has a finger in every pie' . He also noted that a number of people had recently received a 'gangbo' , following a number of crimes including attempted murder, kidnap , arson and the ramming of properties . He said that if people do that , they should be locked up , rather than them being given a piece of paper . He said that this is the crisis of confidence. Everyone knows what the people are up to. A little work, would , he said, have seen them caught red handed. Sgt. Saville noted that the details of the 'gangbo' had been worked out with Leeds City Council and other partners. There was not enough evidence to take the people involved to court , so used civil legislation . He added that some of the terms of the 'gangbo' are restrictive. If the people involved are seen driving down the wrong street , they can be arrested and required to stay with the police until they come to court. A person involved got 11 days in jail. Adam Cooper noted that within days of the 'gangbo' being issued, a number of the people involved drove around the area in a high powered car laughing at the community, as though saying 'who cares?' . Bill Birch noted that on another occasion he had seen the people involved with the 'gangbo' , one of whom had said 'I'm the man who is banned from Beeston' . Sgt. Saville said that the police are intelligence led, and that if they can action something they will. The police like to put bad people away but have limited resources . He noted that the police are making ongoing inquiries into the recent attacks on a mosque and a sikh temple just outside Beeston. He added that a person had been arrested in Lincoln in connection with the 'awful' letters saying 'Kill a Muslim' . The person involved was in custody. Additional resources are being put in . He added that traffic officers are more proactive with speeders. Colin Hendrick Ward asked whether anyone has been caught in connection with the attacks on the mosque and the Sikh Temple . Sgt. Saville noted that someone had been named on Facebook, but had nothing to do with the incident . Colin Hendrick Ward said that there is no credence in posts on facebook.

4.7 Bill Birch said that there is a massive drugs problem in the area. He noted that he had picked up four drugs bags on the litter pick which had taken place on the previous Saturday . Christine Thornton said that she had picked up more than that . Bill Birch said that the police should find out who the drug dealers are and sort it out. Adam Cooper said that the police know who the drug dealers are . Sgt. Saville said that he would like to carry out a warrant on the address of the dealers or where drugs are being hidden. However, a magistrate will not issue a warrant when the only evidence is 'We have heard that ....' . Three pieces of verifiable evidence are required before a magistrate will even consider the issue of a warrant.

4.8 Adam Cooper recalled that two years ago, he had gone to the police to report a car being set on fire in front of himself and Bill Birch. Nothing happened, even though the police know what was going on. He recalled that as soon as he gave the address, the police smiled at one another. He noted that he is paying an additional 7% towards the police; more than any likely pay rise. The police he said, know the family involved. Sgt. Saville said that there are two families involved. Adam Cooper said that the police should keep an eye on the situation and

catch those involved

4.9 Rosemary Casserley said that the police they do see do not tell criminals to 'stop it' but just wave at people . There is petty law breaking such as dropping litter and the riding of motor bikes. There is a disregard for the law . No one knows what is right and wrong. The police always seem to be taking the view that 'we cant act until you tell us' , and that evidence must come from local residents . She said that police going around the area should collect evidence. She noted that the object of Neighbourhood policing used to be to get to know people . However criminals were doing whatever they like wherever they like . No one is saying that this is bad. She noted that she had seen a person going into gardens and picking flowers. Stuart Casserley noted that when PCSOs were introduced , their sole job was to walk the beat, get to know people and report things back. Sgt. Saville said that two months ago, there had been a shake up of Neighbourhood Policing across West Yorkshire. The local police has moved from five teams to three larger teams . There has been a slight uplift in the number of staff and it is now possible to assign specific officers to dedicated areas; for example Lauren Thomson is assigned to Beeston. It is hoped to see more regular faces as the teams get bigger . There are not sufficient staff to mount massive operations , so the police must target specific objectives. They must build up an intelligence picture to justify devoting effort to particular problems which are important to the local community. It is only possible to put a certain number of staff into one area.

4.10 Bill Birch asked about 'Stop and Search' , which he noted had got a bad name several years ago. He noted, however , that London had 'gone crazy' with knife attacks . He asked what is the view of West Yorkshire Police about Stop and Search, and whether this could be used against suspected drug dealers. Sgt Saville said that Stop and Search had received a bad press due to the actions of the Metropolitan Police , and a media which regards London as the centre of the world. It is a good policy, but if it is followed to the letter , it is quite difficult. It is necessary to see a drug dealer doing something before he can be stopped and searched ; for example driving furtively and looking in pockets . He added that PCSOs do not have the powers of police officers . The powers of PCSOs are geared to Anti Social Behaviour.

4.11 Richard Bell recalled that several years ago the police were asking local residents what issues they had so that the police could produce a list of priorities. He noted that this seemed to him like 'who shouts the loudest' . Sgt Saville said that Forum members could decide what priorities are and send an e mail to the Neighbourhood Policing Team for his attention. If three main priorities are stated , the police would look at their system. It is possible that a stated priority might not be supported by police intelligence. Colin Hendrick Ward said that where the police have reasonable suspicions and intelligence, a suspect could be stopped and searched. Richard Bell said that the situation just generates resentment; there is no consensual policing

4.12 Councillor Gohar Almass noted that a 42 year old man had been arrested for arson and is currently on bail. A thirty five year old man is under investigation in relation to the 'Punish a muslim' letters. He noted that he had recently met the new Police Inspector Ian O'Brien whom he described as a 'tough on crime' type. He has full confidence that things will improve , but he added that this is not an 'us and them' situation , but something involving the whole community. He noted that he formerly sat on a Stop and Search and hate crime scrutiny panel , which , he noted , has not met for six months . The issue is not just being tough on crime , but having a perception of this by the public.

4.13 Robert Winfield referred to Sgt. Saville's comments about the confusion surrounding the dates of meetings. It was noted that the date of the current meeting had been put back a week due to the international football match which had taken place at Elland Road on the previous Thursday . Robert Winfield pointed out that the notice of dates of Forum meetings for a particular year is given at the Forum's AGM the previous December . The current meeting represents a very rare example of the date of the meeting being changed after the notice of dates is given, as the timing of the football match was unknown to the Forum at the time when the dates of meetings were fixed. If there are any unexpected changes in the dates of meetings , the police could be informed. He noted that the Forum meeting due to have taken place on 1<sup>st</sup> March was cancelled as a result of the unseasonal snow which had fallen at that time. The police had been informed about the cancellation. Robert

Winfield noted that although the decision to cancel the meeting was only taken on the afternoon of the intended meeting, the process of informing people about the cancellation had proved so successful that not a single person came to the venue in the expectation of a meeting taking place.

5. Guest Speaker. Christine Thornton introduced the guest speaker, Steve Thompson , of the Beeston Skills Hub.

5.1 Steve Thompson observed that he knows some people who were present . He explains that he will be speaking about the Beeston Skills Hub, which is a Health for All (Leeds) project which uses a building in the grounds of Cockburn School, which, however, is not part of the school. The building is used by a number of independent groups for their activities. This is all about a wide variety of skills . He noted that Ian Logan , who runs a woodwork group , and Douglas Villgas, who runs the computer group, were present in the audience. Steve Thompson noted that he takes part in the woodwork, computer and photography groups. He added that some groups are aimed at people with disabilities or mental health groups , although everyone is welcome to take part . Groups typically run between 10am and 12pm, and between 1p.m and 3p.m although certain groups take place at other times. He urged Forum members to tell friends about the skills hub and that everything is free .

5.2 Steve Thompson referred to the woodwork group; group which makes picture from veneer, which is currently without leader, and the photography group , which is run by Steve Thompson , which takes place on Thursday afternoons, with an additional session on Monday for people with learning disabilities. There are also trips out using a free minibus. A man named Michael, who came from Ireland around a year ago , is a video expert and runs a group which makes films. Steve Thompson noted that one new project is the starting of an internet radio station , which is an attempt to resurrect the former South Leeds Community Radio, but is independent of the group which ran that operation. There is no licence to play copyright music, so the station is just talk and non copyright music. On Friday afternoons , there is a sewing group which deals with both hand and machine sewing , and is also concerned with the recycling of old clothes. The organisation is creating a new cycle group , and groups for mechanics and craft will be starting shortly. People who are long term unemployed can be given more skills which will enable them to get back to work, including Maths, English and IT, as well as how to write a letter to get a job, interview practice and job searching. A massive part of the building is a horticultural site. There is a garden and an orchard including vegetable growing. There is also five a side football team for the over 40s. It is also possible to help people to start a business , including the setting up of bank accounts . Advice as to how to set up a constituted group is also available. Such advice includes the writing of a constitution, policies, data protection including the importance of getting the balance right, and the setting up of a bank account . Steve Thompson noted that at the back of the sheet which was given out to those present at the meeting outlines the experience and qualifications of group leaders. Steve Thompson urged forum members who have the necessary skills to start a new group to come and speak to him. The group needs skills in creative writing , as well as artists for painting and drawing. Steve Thomson also referred to the wishing well at Hunslet Carr garden .He said that people love it down there . He explained that it is also possible to print a photograph onto a piece of wood. The photograph must be of good quality, otherwise the reproduction is poor. It is possible to produce a small planter. A planter made for Cockburn School bears their logo . Ian Logan noted that he had made a Leeds United clock with the LUFC crest . Ian Logan noted that there are structured courses , for anyone, of any ability on Thursday and Friday afternoons. There are also courses on Thursday mornings for people with mental health issues.

5.3 The meeting opened up to questions and comments from the floor. John Cunningham asked whether the Skills Hub supplies computers or whether those attending sessions are expected to bring their own . Douglas Villegas suggested that Forum members might wish to pop in and see things. He noted that the courses are suitable for people with no computer knowledge . He referred to an 86 year old lady who came to learn how to use a computer. Within two months, the lady disappeared . Some time after she had learned how to use a mobile phone, she used the knowledge to see her son in London. The courses involve internet security ,safety online, passwords and the use of facebook .Douglas Villegas added that it would be great if people see what they do. Steve Thompson added that anyone who is frightened of a computer could come and see them. In two weeks ,

he added 'we will not be able to stop you' . Ian Logan added that the skills hub offerers an informal environment. Steve Thompson said that training is also offered as to how to get from a digital camera to a computer. He noted that the teachers on the skills hub all work together and Douglas Villegas is helping with the computer course. Steve Thompson added that the skills hub needs an artist to teach how to draw and paint. Ian Logan said that there is also a requirement for a knitting course.

5.4 Colin Hendrick Ward said that the Save our Beeston Holbeck and Cottingley facebook group could advertise details of the courses and the requirements of the Skills Hub. Steve Thompson said that the Skills hub already makes a lot of posts on this facebook group. Douglas Villegas noted that everything is free. Adam Cooper noted that they make a good cup of tea! Colin Hendrick Ward noted that the enthusiasm of the group is unbelievable. Steve Thompson said that no one else in Leeds does the same as the Skills Hub , certainly not the skills hub. Gohar Almass noted that he has visited the skills hub and was quite impressed. Steve Thompson noted that the person in charge of South Leeds Radio is developing a programme . They were supposed to launch today , but this has not happened . Ian Logan noted that they are in the process of recording programmes entitled 'My History and Music' in which people pick a number of music tracks and explain what they mean to them. Steve Thompson noted that the Skills Hub has groups applying for grants. The radio station needs to be pushed further and needs money ; an online licence costs £250 per annum; a music licence costs £400 per annum. The group is applying for a lottery grant but this takes four months. Ian Logan noted that people with learning disabilities are doing a radio programme. One or two shows have been recorded including a sports programme, a technology programme and a folk programme all of which are an hour long. Ian Logan asked forum members whether they know anyone who might wish to be involved, whether as a presenter or behind the scenes. Steve Thompson added that people can send in a podcast. Ian Logan noted that the aim is to build the profile of South Leeds . Steve Thompson noted that Jeremy Morton, of South Leeds Life is helping

6. The minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May were agreed as a fair and accurate record of the meeting . There were no matters arising

7. The Neighbourhood Forum . Robert Winfield noted that members of the Neighbourhood Forum and other members of the local community had been involved in a litter pick on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. Robert Winfield himself had offered local residents the chance to take part in a survey identical to that which was carried out at the Neighbourhood Planning event on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Robert Winfield noted that he had not yet had the opportunity to collate the responses, but ten local residents had taken part in the survey. The responses had been very similar to those obtained at the event on 3<sup>rd</sup> March ; there was virtually universal agreement with the various propositions, and most residents felt that they have a high priority. Mark Day suggested that the litter pick should have been publicised more widely; he had only learned about this at the last minute and was unable to take part . He also suspected that many people taking part in the surveys live in the area close to St Mary's Church, and felt that there is a risk of survey results being skewed in favour of residents of this area. Christine Thornton noted that the event on 3<sup>rd</sup> March was intended to get the Neighbourhood Forum up and running again as we have been in the doldrums. The event which had taken place on the previous Saturday was intended to add to this momentum. She took on board the point made by Mark Day and noted that it is the intention in the future to move around the area and get surveys but this needs to be organised. Richard Bell noted that he had been given the task of publicising the event on 9<sup>th</sup> June, and acknowledged that he had forgotten this until someone reminded him. He also took on board the point made by Mark Day about the skewing of the surveys but he added that we should not lose sight of the fact that the Neighbourhood Forum has a specific geographical area assigned to it. Mark Day wondered whether the surveys could be placed on facebook. Richard Bell said that there are issues of verifying that people taking part in the surveys are residents of the area. Christine Thornton noted that fourteen bags of rubbish had been collected in the litter pick; Leeds City Council collected the bags immediately, and the equipment used in the litter pick was also collected quickly from Christine Thornton's house. Richard Bell noted that we cleaned the streets!

8. Report of Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Christine Thornton noted that much of the meeting had been taken up in planning the event which had taken place on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

9. Correspondence- Robert Winfield noted that Ash Mahmood had resigned from the Committee of the Beeston Community Forum . Adam Cooper asked why he had resigned from the committee. Robert Winfield said that this is for the stated reason that as a result of changes to personal commitments , he was no longer able to serve the committee as he would wish.

#### 10. Ratification of elections to the Committee

10.1 It was agreed to ratify the election, by the Committee of Susan Ottley Hughes to the Committee of the Beeston Community Forum

10.2 It was agreed in separate votes for each individual involved to ratify the election of Richard Bell, Bill Birch and Susan Ottley-Hughes to the Committee of the Beston Neighbourhood Forum. It was noted that as a result of a recent decision by the Committee, Committee members are now requested to provide documentary evidence of their residence in Beeston

#### 11. Any Other Business

11.1 Dennis Bottomley said that Marsden Avenue 'is like Kew Gardens' , and wondered whether weedkiller has stopped going around. Councillor Angela Gabriel said that teams of people with weedkiller have been going around following a complaint about weeds from Beeston in Bloom . Myra Munro said that they are coming around on a buggy . Christine Thornton and Myra Munro noted that they clear weeds from outside their gardens. Councillor Andrew Scopes said that local residents are welcome to contact councillors if weed clearance has not been carried out properly

11.2 Rev Lindsey Pearson noted that there will be a Strawberry Fair and Open Day at St Mary's Church on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

11.3 Christine Thornton noted that there are five cars in the yard of the Tregenza Building. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that the owner of the site has been given notice to remove the cars. If he does not do this, he will be taken to court. This is in hand but takes time. This is nothing to do with Leeds City Council, who are not being neglectful . Bill Birch said that council officers had ignored his e mails in relation to Tregenza. Councillor Andrew Scopes pointed out that if this happens this could be escalated to councillor. He referred to a recent case in which someone had e mailed the Parks Department. The mail had been passed to him after no reply had been forthcoming. The Parks Department then reverted to Andrew Scopes , who informed the person making the original enquiry.

11.4 Christine Thornton noted that there is rubbish in the yard of the house at 2 Cross Flatts Avenue Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that the owner has been given until 2<sup>nd</sup> July to clear this. A barrier was erected but subsequently taken down . Councillor Gohar Almass noted that the front of the property is okay but that people had been using the back for flytipping

11.5 Dennis Bottomley noted that he has a friend with his own business which involves going into rented flats and cleaning them out. He recently took away a fridge , but was charged £41 for disposing of it at a Leeds City Council waste tip. Colin Hendrick Ward and several other Forum members said that such charges encourage flytipping. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that it is a legal requirement that charges are imposed for the disposal of fridges because of gases in fridges. She added that manufacturers should take back used fridges. Myra Munro noted that Leeds City Council takes garden waste free of charge . Angela Gabriel noted that mattresses can be accepted at a tip free of charge . Bill Birch noted that this is a knock on effect from the landfill tax. Councillor Angela Gabriel said that there had been no increase in flytipping since charges for certain types of waste had been introduced. Bill Birch said that he would like to see the figures. John Cunningham noted that he lives on back street with no neighbours opposite. As such , this is a favourite spot for flytippers. However, when the council is sent an e mail, they come within two hours. Councillor Angela Gabriel noted that Leeds is the cheapest council for rubbish collection.

11.6 Mark Day noted that a litter pick last year had picked up 40 needles. When all the bushes had been cleared out , the equivalent litter pick this year had picked up two needles which were obviously old. Residents had said there had been a big improvement now the bushes had been removed.