

Selly Park South Neighbourhood Forum

The Forum was established in 2005 from the previous residents' association which had existed for many years. This was done as part of a Birmingham City Council initiative to promote and support community associations. All residents of the Forum area, which includes some 700 households, are automatically members of the Forum. There is no membership fee as the Forum receives an annual grant from the City Council – currently £550 a year. The Forum has a bank account and a written constitution, which is compliant with the requirements of the City Council.

The main objective of the Forum “is to enhance and/or maintain where appropriate the quality of the area in which we live”. Our strapline is “Your local residents' association - Working for the local community and environment”.

A key function of the Forum is to encourage people to show an interest in the area and to bring together residents and others on a regular basis to address community issues of common concern and interest. To achieve this the Forum holds four Open Meetings for residents each year to which we invite our local City Councillors and Neighbourhood Police Team and, when appropriate, representatives of other agencies. The Forum provides our community with a collective voice.

The Forum has a website through which we seek to keep residents informed and which also provides an insight for those outside the area (for example people who may be thinking of moving here).

As well as providing these facilities, the Forum has fulfilled a number of other specific roles over the years:

- The founding, maintenance and funding of the Flood Action Group.
- Local consultation, representation and liaison during the building of St Andrews Healthcare in Dogpool Lane, the new Dogpool Bridge and the Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- Working with neighbouring areas to prevent the takeover of and building on Holders Lane and Pebble Mill Fields. This led to the formation of the current Friends of The Fields Organisation to champion the interests of this important public green space.
- Liaison with other neighbouring community groups, including the Friends of The Fields and Stirchley Neighbourhood Forum.
- The installation of the security barrier on the service road to the rear of Cecil Road and the gating of the alleyway to the rear of the northern side of Kitchener Road. We have also made every effort to get the latter cleaned up but this is still to be achieved.
- Consultation with the City Council on local planning applications.

The Forum Management Committee meets 6 times a year to discuss the ongoing business of the Forum (including finance), and events, issues and concerns in the neighbourhood. The evening meetings, like the Open Meetings, are scheduled to last from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and are held at Christ Church Selly Park. The Committee is required by the constitution to have between 4 and 15 members, although for practical purposes the number has usually been around 8 people.

The required officers of the committee are the Chair, who chairs the committee and open meetings; the Secretary who is responsible for taking and producing minutes of meetings and dealing with Forum administration; and the Treasurer who deals with the Forum bank account and finance, and produces financial reports. The Forum bank account requires a minimum of two signatories but traditionally there have been four – the three officers and one other committee member. For several years the Committee has also had a Communications Officer to administer the Forum website. (The website is now 10 years old and requires html coding skills to operate it. As such it is now in need of updating/replacing). Members of the Management Committee on a flexible and shared basis also attend other meetings, such as City Council local Ward meetings, Selly Oak police-community liaison meetings and Stirchley Neighbourhood Forum meetings.

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