

AMENDMENT TO MINUTES OF 29 MAY 2012

After reading and listening to many people's concerns about the wording in the last minutes regarding the CCTV cameras, the minutes have been amended to read as follows.

Doug was asked to update the group on the CCTV cameras at Budgewoi. Doug reported that the cameras were installed at Halekulani and East Budgewoi, however, it was unclear if the cameras were fully functional. Jillian asked if the cameras were working or not. Maree advised the cameras were currently a legal issue. There were no further questions from the floor or discussions on this issue.

I would like to remind the group that the NWGF is not an incorporated entity but rather a working group. Although we have always taken minutes it is of no benefit to our voluntary secretary to have the unwanted stress of having to ensure minutes are a true and correct record. As a result we will no longer be taking minutes but rather we will be taking notes.

The notes of the meeting held on the 26 June are below.

Jillian



NORTHERN WYONG SHIRE GRAFFITI FORUM NOTES FROM MEETING HELD ON 26 JUNE 2012

Present: Jillian Hogan, Services Manager, SRNC; Emma Ward, Restoring Harmony Project Worker; Beth Gaudin, Tuggerah Lakes LAC, NSW Police Force; Thelma McFarlane, Blue Haven Craft; Gwen Gehan, Wallarah North Precinct/Blue Haven Craft; Doug Darlington, The Entrance Precinct; Doug Vincent, Councillor, Wyong Shire Council; Tricia Carlson, Warnervale Family & Community Centre; Neil Wynn, Mannering Park Tidy Towns; Andrew Whitbourne, Mannering Park Precinct; Robyn Croft, Mannering Park Precinct; Ian Rumbel, Gosford Juvenile Justice; Julie Vaughan, Manager, Community and Cultural Development, Wyong Shire Council; Ian Clarke, Community Buildings Manager, Wyong Shire Council; Bill Symington, Councillor, Wyong Shire Council.

Apologies: Mark Izzard, Unique Security; Toni Trent, Benevolent Society; Coral Burnham, Mannering Park Progress Association; Jean Tyler, Bamboo House; Jill Hall, Federal Member.

Jillian Hogan opened meeting and welcomed everyone and introduced a new face, Robyn Croft from Mannering Park Precinct. Jillian recapped as follows:

Integrated Approach

Council and MP's – Writing of Graffiti Management Policy, Funding, Kits, Education, Posters, Changes in Legislation

Community – Paint-outs, Graffiti removal, Letters to businesses and Council, Posters, Collecting information, Graffiti Clean-up Days, Trailer, Murals, Schools

Businesses – Toukley, The Entrance, San Remo, Lake Haven

Police – Information for policy writing, Information sent to graffiti tag team @ The Entrance, PALS, Youth Service and Police working together

Forum Principles

Four E's – Eradication, Engagement in Projects, Education and Enforcement

Aims of Forum = Responsibility, Report, Removal, Reward and Respect

Northern Wyong Shire Graffiti Forum Endorsed Initiatives

- The NWSGF supports rapid removal programs – removal within 48 hours.
- The Forum supports recording and reporting graffiti harm.
- The Forum and Wyong Shire Council does not support graffiti art or graffiti walls as a way of deterring graffiti tagging.
- The Forum uses So Safe products.
- The Graffiti Beater trailer is equipped with chemicals, a gurnie and equipment for graffiti removal and is available for use by community and businesses.
- The Forum will provide an introductory kit to community members and groups and educate people on methods to remove graffiti.
- Wyong Shire Council will provide graffiti kits to residents.
- The Forum and WSC supports murals as a means to deter on-going graffiti vandalism.
- The Forum and Wyong Shire Council supports tree planting as a way to deter graffiti tagging.

- The Forum and Wyong Shire Council supports the Warner's Education Program.
- The Forum supports Graffiti Action Days – San Remo, Warnervale and Mannering Park involved.
- The Forum supports the Wyong Shire Council Graffiti Management Strategy.
- Wyong Shire Council and the Forum will work together to address graffiti harm.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Jillian introduced **Senior Constable Beth Gaudin, Crime Prevention Officer, Tuggerah Lakes LAC, NSW Police Force**. Jillian said the missing link for the Forum over the last two years had been the lack of Police representation at meetings and Beth will be filling this void and speaking on reporting to Police.

Beth said she was now back as Crime Prevention Officer, Tuggerah Lakes LAC - Wyong Police after two years and was pleased to be part of the Forum's meeting. She spoke about the unprofessional responses people had been receiving when reporting incidences of graffiti to Police. She did suggest that if the response was not good when ringing to report graffiti, the person ask for the officer's name and ask to speak to the Supervisor. She also emphasised that even though the new Police Station at Wyong had opened, the Police Stations at The Entrance and Toukley were still fully functional.

Beth spoke on graffiti, reporting to Police and related matters as follows:

- Reporting of graffiti is difficult and she felt it had not been dealt with in a proper manner.
- She had heard reports that the Police Assistance Line (PAL) will not take reports of graffiti if the person ringing is not the victim of the graffiti incident.
- She spoke on training in Safer By Design principles.
- As far as she knows there is no graffiti database – she might be able to speak to the Commander about getting a database started again.
- The two priorities were (1) Reporting and (2) Rapid Removal and there needs to be a win-win solution re reporting.
- Discussion on Graffiti Hot Line, Eyewatch Project (like Facebook) and VandalTrak.

- What is going to work when reporting graffiti in Tuggerah Lakes Local Area Command – Jillian said there is no real one way of reporting and it was also felt that no one knew who to report to when ringing Police Station – consistency needed.
- Beth said she didn't have any answers as yet but said there was a need to move forward and she would be looking at where we are at the moment, what systems are in place and working on making it easier for the community to report.
- There was further discussion on Police response when reporting graffiti and Neil said on behalf of the Mannering Park community that it was disappointing as he felt all the emails he sent with photos of graffiti have gone nowhere. Julie Vaughan assured Neil that as a copy of his emails were also sent to Wyong Shire Council, his photos have been captured.
- Neil also reported that he been given the name of a tagger but had not reported it to Police as he has no faith in the system.
- Beth informed the Forum of the undercover Target Action Group which gathers information on graffiti incidents, tags and locations that people report. This information is designated to the Target Action Group at a crime meeting held every fortnight.
- Beth also mentioned a two prong approach – train junior police in taking reports and develop a mechanism for reporting.
- Graffiti is not high on list of crimes in relation to other crimes.

General discussion on reporting graffiti took place as follows:

- Emma felt the Graffiti Hotline doesn't work well – reports she made were not acted on within a fortnight. She said Energy Australia were fast at removing graffiti from their property usually within a week of reporting.
- Robyn suggested a system whereby graffiti was reported to the local Neighbourhood Centre in each area and then the Neighbourhood Centre reported to Police or the respective agency. It was felt that this would not work because of the time and resources which would be needed.
- Doug suggested that the NSW Police set up a site like Eyewatch where people can log onto computer and post photo and information. Local libraries could also be involved but the structure of it would need to be simple.
- Beth said what we need is a centralised reporting system localised to each Local Area Command. Reports of graffiti on Council property would need to be sent to Council.
- Jillian felt that Police Officers needed to take graffiti seriously. Discussion followed on court actions and how there are not many convictions as people are often unwilling to go to court to provide evidence. Ian, Juvenile Justice spoke about youth who are charged under Graffiti Act undergoing graffiti removal as a consequence.

Bill Symington asked if we were on the wrong track in trying to catch graffiti offenders as there is not a lot of positive stuff or successes. Jillian said that there was not one solution and there have been some successes such as rapid removal, etc. The Forum also creates pressure on Government to act and we need to keep heat up as graffiti is a concern in our community.

- Doug reported to Beth that there were shops at Westfield, Tuggerah displaying and selling spraycans. Beth said to send information to her – they could receive an “on the spot” fine. Jillian said she had reported one of the shops at Westfield, Tuggerah to CrimeStoppers, Pal and the Police for displaying spray cans last year but to no avail as they were still on display.

Beth said her next step would be to sort out all the reporting mechanisms including what reports do Council, RTA, Energy Australia and other agencies take and come back to next meeting with more information.

Jillian said “welcome back” to Beth and thanked her very much.

Jillian introduced **Ian Clarke, Community Buildings Manager, Wyong Shire Council** to speak on graffiti cleaning by Council.

- Ian explained the process when requests made to Council to remove graffiti:
 - Service Requests received from Customer Service Section.
 - Requests sent to Long Jetty Depot – all go to one person who removes graffiti (Shannon).
 - Requests average 60 plus per month.
 - Goes to job – 3 large jobs a day – too much. Sheer volume of work is impossible due to surfaces graffiti written on (brick, stainless steel, sandstone, scratched into perspex on bus shelters and more) and materials used to write with are becoming more creative.
 - When job finished, data captured, photos taken and job signed off.
- An iPad application is being developed whereby before and after photos go into new graffiti register. Due to legal obligations photos cannot be disclosed to public.
- Discussion on different methods of removal:
 - Doug asked if Council has tried So Safe Shadow Remover on sandstone – expensive but very good as the graffiti vanishes before your eyes.
 - Neil said they remove with chemicals first then paint over.
 - Discussion on barrier paint.
 - High glazed brick - easy to remove graffiti from. Ian said when using gerny it can take the glaze off brickwork.
 - It was agreed that tree planting around buildings was a most effective way of deterring graffiti offenders although this would not help when inside of toilets were graffitied - out of sight/out of mind.
 - Julie said there were peak periods for graffiti eg Christmas holidays.
- Ian said he was looking at trying to put another person into removing graffiti although can only work with resources been given. It would mean taking resources from other areas in Council.
- Discussion on culture of Council employees and when they see graffiti they should report it. Education perspective needs to be looked at. Gwen commented on the graffiti at Blue Haven and asked why Council workers who are there mowing lawns and undertaking other maintenance work cannot remove graffiti. The answer was that they had their own specific jobs. Julie reaffirmed that Council employees are asked to report graffiti when they see it.
- Bill commented that areas such as Mannering Park and Gwandalan where a lot of graffiti removal is undertaken by committed community groups there should be less requests for Shannon’s (WSC Graffiti Removal worker) time. Discussion around service requests not being geographic, what works in some areas does not work in others and the need to look at different strategies.
- Bill asked Ian what areas graffiti offenders target most - dark or lighted areas. Ian said from experience they targeted secluded spots with lights. If no lights graffiti offenders will not paint as they cannot see what they are painting.
- Blue Haven – look at increasing lighting.

Jillian thanked Ian for coming and talking to Forum.

UPDATES

Warners Education Program

- Julie reported that the Program, fully funded by Wyong Shire Council, and run in 10 high schools in Wyong Shire in May/June 2012 had been received very positively.

- The Manager was at present compiling a report to investigate what follow-up can be done in schools and school principals to be asked what difference the Program had made.
- Beth Gaudin and Rachael Garland, Police Youth Liaison Officer would also like to receive information.

Proceeds of Crime Funding

- Julie reported that she was surprised that we were unsuccessful for this grant as they had rung her and encouraged the Council to apply.

Restoring Harmony Project

- Emma spoke on and handed out flyer advertising the Goodbye Graffiti Public Meeting to be held at Blue Haven Community Hall Meeting Room on Thursday 19 July 2012. This meeting will discuss and develop strategies for addressing the issue of graffiti in the Blue Haven area. Speakers will include the Tuggerah Lakes Crime Prevention Officer and representatives from Wyong Shire Council and this Forum.
- Emma also mentioned the Forum's Facebook page-northernwyongshiregraffitiforum.

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 28 AUGUST 2012
AT 3 PM
AT SAN REMO NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

