

# *The Wincheap Society.*

## Chairman's Report

June 2019 to May 2020.



Hello everyone! Well, this is very different from our normal Annual General Meeting when I usually prepare this report. The Committee has not been able to meet since lockdown began. Our last Committee Meeting was on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2020. I'll give you details of what has happened since then later on. We were due to meet informally on 30<sup>th</sup> March with a formal Committee Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April – neither of which took place. We hope to resume committee meetings in September when we hope to welcome new members.

I usually say how quickly time has passed since our last A.G.M. but, for me, at least, time does not seem to have passed so quickly. I seem to have lost all motivation since the restrictions began.

Our small but dedicated Committee have worked very hard throughout the year, but we are really struggling at the moment. Following the death of our long term Treasurer, Eddie Peake, last year, you may recall that Barney Parsons was elected to the post at the last A.G.M. He is bringing our bank account into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, making it possible for electronic payments and receipts (whatever they are)! We have been very unfortunate in losing three of our Committee members in quick succession. Ed, who organised our litter picks and acted as our go-between over the refurbishment of the playground, has resigned for personal reasons. Pat, our Minute and Membership Secretary, has moved out of Canterbury. She is still in touch but not taking an active role. Gillian, who prepared many detailed and technical reports for us, has also moved, although she has remained in Canterbury. I would like to thank them all most sincerely for their hard work and support over the years.

Our Website was getting a little dated but it has now been completely revamped and contains far more information than it did previously. We hope you will find it useful both for keeping up to date with present campaigns as well as referring back to things from the past and getting in touch. The address is [www.winsoc.org.uk](http://www.winsoc.org.uk) – please take a look!

The Financial Statement is attached and for the first time in our existence expenditure has exceeded income. This is because, unfortunately, we were not able to hold any fundraising events during the year and the increase in our expenditure due to the website upgrade and donations to various causes dear to our heart.

We still support the Litter Round Table, although, with Ed's departure, no longer have a representative on the group. We were hoping to have another litter pick in our area on 5<sup>th</sup> April to coincide with the Great British Spring Clean but, due to the dratted Covid 19 virus and lockdown, it did not happen. However, I know that some people in the area have been doing their own solo unofficial litter picks to try to keep things tidy.

The Planning Application for student accommodation on the site of the former St Mary Bredin School, which was refused by the Council, finally came to Appeal in January this year when the decision was overturned by the Inspector. Demolition of the school building started the next day.

The development on the notorious former Roger Britton site has just about been completed, although it has already had an enforcement order served

on it, as the windows in the front are supposed to have brick arches and concrete cills. Still, it's a vast improvement on what was there.

The Wincheap Subway finally got its film wrap of local scenes and landmarks in September. The pictures are really great. To be confronted by a six foot high heron as you enter the subway is a great experience. Unfortunately, the tiles have not fared so well with many being removed as they come loose. They were scheduled to be replaced once the winter weather had passed but then.....lockdown. Maybe it will happen later this year.

For the second year running, we sponsored a Christmas window display competition for local businesses. More businesses seemed to make an effort this year and I think that the Wincheap traders did very well. The competition was won by "Clothesline" with "Elite Garages", last year's winner, coming a close runner-up. Others receiving commendations were "Canterbury Lighting", "Cosi Stoves", "Topsy Fish", "Gurkha Dine", "Paula's" and "The Maiden's Head".

The controversial proposed extension to the Park and Ride onto the Wincheap Water Meadows is still pending, although with the financial problems caused by you-know-what it is now uncertain if the Council will proceed with this. However, we mustn't take our eye off the ball and do all we can to prevent the water meadows being destroyed.

It should be noted that at last year's A.G.M. I reported that, despite the Council announcing a commitment to ecology and wild life, Serco cut the grass and vegetation hard back to ground level. The Council and Serco learn nothing. They have done the same thing this year, only even harder.

The Planning Court has agreed that a Judicial Review can be brought against the Council on the grounds that it did not carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment. This is an expensive process, so the Save Wincheap Water Meadows group are raising money to fund this action. The battle is ongoing.

We had planned to have a Quiz Night on 12<sup>th</sup> October last year, but for various reasons we had to cancel, mainly because many of our regular quiz supporters were unable to attend on that date. We hope to try again once restrictions on this sort of gathering are lifted.

Under the "Adopt-a-Phone-Box" scheme, we have looked into taking over the telephone kiosk by the former Round House pub which is in a very

sorry state despite it being locally listed. It seems that we would have to carry out repairs and maintenance on the box. We felt that this was too much of a responsibility as we survive on a shoestring.

The area is still plagued with graffiti tagging. I think that we were beginning to get on top of some of it before lockdown. The graffiti on the buttresses of the railway bridge had been painted over but since then, with no enforcement or similar the tagging is coming back. Again, there are a few residents with “graffiti wipes” keeping smaller tags on post boxes, parking meters, etc., at bay. Hopefully, we’ll be able to have a go at the bigger scrawls, along with our litter pick, in due course.

The trees which were promised for the playground have been planted. I don’t know when this was done, but I suspect it was during the Autumn / Winter, which is the correct time. However, as with many other tree planting schemes by the council, the follow-up maintenance is non-existent. Two of the trees seem to be alright, one is hanging on and the fourth appears to be dead.

The request for a bus stop between Canterbury East and Westgate Towers is still ongoing. I have recently tried to contact the person dealing with this at the Council but, because most Council staff are working from home, things are taking a lot longer to process. We will keep chasing this.

Since our last Committee Meeting, one or two things have happened on the planning front. Firstly, Wickes have put in an application for the former Homebase site. This involves felling most of the trees on the site. We have objected to this aspect of the application. The area cannot afford to lose such a valuable asset. Another application has been made for the former Fenwick’s warehouse for change of use to a skate park and other uses. Many local residents have objected on various grounds and we have sent a representation on grounds of noise, traffic and possible anti-social behaviour.

Recently, a group of members of The Wincheap Society have come together to consider ways in which our area can be improved, both in the short term and the long term. This group recently collected and collated some ideas and their report can be found on the WinSoc website and can be contacted by email at [wincheap2020vision@gmail.com](mailto:wincheap2020vision@gmail.com) .

I think that this just about concludes our activities for the past year, except to thank all our committee for their hard work and support over the last twelve months.

Best regards to all. I hope you are all well and keeping safe.

J. Osborne, Chairman – The Wincheap Society.

#### Postscript.

I'm sorry, but I omitted these snippets from the main report.

A complaint was made about the lighting on Club Chemistry overlooking the City Wall but we were advised that the lighting did not require planning permission and was compliant.

We were invited to take part in a quiz organised by Greenpeace in January but were unable to enter a team.

In October we were very pleased that Paula Spencer, of the Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre, was presented with The Canterbury Society's Civic Champion Award. Congratulations.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOLLOWS ON NEXT PAGE**

# *The Wincheap Society*

## Financial Statement 1st June 2019 to 31st May 2020

### Opening Balance

01/06/2019	Cash in Hand	32.12	
01/06/2019	Balance at Bank	231.89	
			264.01

### Income

04/05/2019	Uncashed Cheque (ID Consultants)	25.00	
05/07/2019	Subscriptions at AGM	100.00	
17/05/2020	Further Subscriptions	5.00	
			130.00

### Expenditure

03/06/2019	RNLI (Eddie)	30.00	
05/07/2019	Donation to Love Hambrook Marshes Trust	40.00	
04/09/2019	Save Wincheap Water Meadows	25.00	
27/10/2019	Challenge Trophies	31.15	
23/01/2020	ACRA Subscription	20.00	
03/03/2020	Canterbury Society Subscription	20.00	
30/04/2020	Website consultancy	80.00	
			246.15

### Current Balance

31/05/2020	Balance at Bank 31st May 2020	110.74	
31/05/2020	Cash in Hand 31st May 2020	37.12	
			147.86

**Excess of Expenditure over income 1st June 2019 to 31st May 2020**      **116.15**

### Notes

This has been a year when no fundraising has been carried out:

- Covid19
- Lack of interest in Quiz evening
- Below average attendance at AGM

We have a new website and are now liable to pay £75 annual hosting fee.

- Need to increase membership
- Need to collect subscriptions more effectively
- Need to hold a fundraising event or two?
- Sponsorship?