

The Wincheap Society

Minutes of the Committee Meeting of The Wincheap Society at 7.30pm on Thursday, 12th March, 2015 at 94 Wincheap (thanks to Joe)

Present: John Osborne, Joe Passey, Dave Wilson, Sarah Walter, Spencer Hollands, Pat Marsh

Prior to the meeting, there was a discussion with our local PCSO, Daniel Groom.

The following points were raised:

- i. Cycling on pavements – there is a special problem on Wincheap where front doors open directly onto the pavement and bicycles are not equipped with bells or lights. Residents and cyclists have often narrowly missed having serious accidents. Sarah suggested setting up a cycle path next to the road on half of the pavement where it is wide enough. The PCSO said he speaks to cyclists whenever he sees them on the pavements and warn them that they are not permitted to cycle on the pavement. Pat will email Daniel to ask the PCSOs to come to Wincheap around 5pm on a weekday to monitor cyclist behaviour.

Action: Pat

- ii. A camp has been set up by East Europeans (mainly fruit pickers?) behind Wincheap Industrial Estate in the trees behind the Gymnastics Club. There are concerns because of the use of drugs and alcohol on the site. Two incidents in the area may be connected to the camp: intimidation of sales assistants at Laura Ashley and shoplifting with trolley loads at Morrison's. There was also a case of someone exposing himself to children at the Gymnastics Club. The camp is growing and has 20-30 people. John will write a letter to ask CCC to look into the camp and perhaps serve an eviction order. John will update Daniel. We will wait to report this to the Kentish Gazette because it could all be blown out of proportion. Dave has a Polish friend who he can ask to visit the camp and see who the people are and why they are there.

Action: John/Dave

- iii. A new traveller family has moved into a property in Thanington and is connected with vandalism and thefts from gardens.
- iv. There is a problem with students causing disturbance and damage on Oxford Rd. Warnings have been given to them by Christ Church University and the matter will now go to court.
- v. There have been strange incidents of people knocking on 7 or 8 doors on Zealand Rd and asking for water.

- vi. Daniel's email for contact: 58814@kent.pnn.police.uk Mob: 07972 004457. Pat will send him an email and he will send her news and crime figures etc.

Action: Pat

1. **Apologies for absence:** Eddie Peake, Debra Johnson, Paula Spencer
2. **Minutes of the Committee Meeting 19th February 2015**

The Minutes were signed as a correct account.

3. Matters Arising

- i. Jubilee Hall

There has been no progress yet. Sarah has heard nothing from CCC about a meeting. She will contact them again about setting one up.

Action: Sarah

- ii. Meeting with CCCU and Article Four Direction

Meeting with CCCU:

Pat reported on the meeting she organised on 24th February with CCCU officials Andrew Ironside, Strategic Director (Resources), Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dr Moira Helm, Director of Student Experience, Lee Soden, Director of Facilities Management, Fred Whitmore, Oaten Hill District Society, Rev. Mike Walling, Barton Residents' Association and Tim Carlyle, South Canterbury Residents' Association. Pat represented the Wincheap Society (WinSoc).

The meeting had been arranged to seek more information on CCCU plans outlined at the meeting of OHDS on 7th January, at which a target increase of 2,000 students was mentioned.

Andrew Ironside (AI) stated that CCCU currently has 18,425 students, 13,111 of whom are on the Canterbury campus. He confirmed that the target is 20,000 students across all campuses. He also confirmed that the average CCCU student is 32 and part-time, but that the trend is towards younger, non-local, full-time students. There is limited scope for expansion on CCCU's other campuses; therefore Canterbury will see most of the planned increase in student numbers planned.

AI shared some of CCCU's current thinking on strategy, especially concerning purpose-built student accommodation and the future disposal of buildings owned or rented by CCCU. As this is still under discussion, it remains confidential. However, more purpose-built student accommodation is not a priority in view of the fact that there is some spare capacity this year. Unlike the University of Kent, which offers accommodation to all three years of undergraduates, CCCU can only do this for first-years.

The chief objective of the representatives of South Canterbury Residents' Associations in seeking the meeting was to assess how far CCCU respects the cap of 50% of non-local full-

time students living outside university accommodation and to seek a commitment on this. (This was Recommendation 13 of the Student Impact Scrutiny Review of 2006.) They pointed out the impossibility of achieving this when CCCU has no data on how many of their students live in privately rented accommodation in the city.

The fact that no reliable information currently exists on how many student HMOs there are in Canterbury was also brought up. The voluntary Home Stamp accreditation scheme run by Canterbury universities has 80 landlords on its books at the moment, providing 1,300 houses. The 2011 Luminocity statistics have 17,100 households in the city, of which 31% represent privately rented accommodation. That works out at 5,301 households. Of these the Council can only estimate how many are student HMOs from the number which do not pay council tax. However, the existence of 'ghost HMOs', where the landlord continues to pay council tax, is well known. Furthermore, all these figures are at least three years out of date.

Recommendation 30 of the 2006 Student Impact Scrutiny Review states: *In the event of the (Home Stamp student landlords' voluntary accreditation) scheme failing to attract sufficient landlords or otherwise not achieving its objectives, an additional licensing scheme should be considered. (Paragraph 11.23)* There is now evidence that rival groups of landlords, unaccountable to anyone, are forming to market each other's properties.

It was agreed by all sides that there is a dearth of up-to-date information on student HMOs in Canterbury. We therefore resolved to press Canterbury City Council (CCC) to carry out a new Student Impact Scrutiny Review, similar in scope to the one carried out in 2006. If CCC plead lack of funds for this, CCCU would be willing to contribute to the cost and Dr Moira Helm (MH) will speak to Wayne Campbell of University of Kent Student Services about both universities sharing the costs with CCC. The Review could be carried out through the Student Community Working Group, headed by Deputy Chief Executive Velia Coffey, and MH will also speak to her about the idea.

The RA representatives present will put the proposal of a new Student Impact Review on the agenda at the next meeting of the Alliance of Canterbury Residents' Associations (ACRA). They hope the proposal can go forward to CCC from ACRA.

Article 4 Direction:

The St Michael's Road Area Residents' Association has for some years been urging the Council to issue an Article 4 Direction which would enable it to control the conversion of family houses to HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation). The Council has now, at last, done so. The A4D was formally made on 25th February.

This does not guarantee that there will be no further increase in the number of HMOs. It does mean that landlords who buy properties with the intention of converting them to HMOs will now have to apply for planning permission to convert them, and permission will normally be refused if the proportion of existing HMOs in an area is already 10% or more.

The new policy will not take effect until February 2016, as the Council is giving a year's notice of the proposed change. It is inviting comments on the proposal, which have to be submitted by 19th March.

Pat appealed to all WinSoc members to send a comment in support of the Article 4 Direction. The Council got to this point once before, four years ago, and then backed off and failed to implement it. We do not want this to happen again.

There is no need to send a lengthy response. Just write to say that you support the Article 4 Direction made on 25th February 2015 concerning Houses in Multiple Occupation. Of course, feel free to say more, but there is no need to. The important thing is just to make it clear that the proposal has local people's support.

If you want to know more, you can ask to see the relevant documents at the Council offices in Military Road, or at the Beaney Library, or on the Council website at:

<https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/other-planning-documents/planning-permission-for-small-houses-of-multiple-occupation-in-canterbury/>

You can send your comments by email to: planning.policy@canterbury.gov.uk or by post to: Planning Policy, Planning and Regeneration Service, Canterbury Main Office, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW.

iii. Peugeot and Slatters Sites

It was felt that since ACRA and CCAC are sending representations about these plans there was no need for us to do so as well.

iv. Canon Appleton Court Beech Tree

John has noted that the bark on the tree is green so he believes it isn't dead.

4. Quiz Night

It was very successful and feedback was good.

i. Financial Results

£90.41 profit.

ii. Organisation

Joe and Sarah reported on the fact that they had saved on the cost of the cheese compared with last time. It was agreed that next time we will again serve tomatoes and satsumas but not celery. The tablecloths were thought to have been a good idea which should be repeated.

Lessons we've learned:

- a. We need to advertise earlier.
- b. We should allocate tables to groups beforehand.

- c. As for the Quiz itself, ambiguous questions and too many dates should be avoided.
- d. The Quizmaster should give the answers to rounds before giving the answer papers back.
- e. The photographic round was too complicated as it had a different number of points for each question. There should be one point for each answer and we should take the photos ourselves to avoid identification errors as occurred with the Greyfriars Chapel.
- f. We should also have more information on the answer sheets, especially to show the group is playing its joker.
- g. There should be more of a prize-giving event at the end.
- h. There should be no extra round – people are too tired.
- i. We should think of another event rather than the raffle or bottle bowling.
- j. We need to organise more help at the end, perhaps even paying someone to wash up.
- k. We should have another Quiz in the autumn.

5. York Road

We will contact Martin Vye about the road which has collapsed outside Hinges and Brackets. John believes this has happened because the gully was not cleared when works were carried out last year. We should also report it to KCC in case of accident. The eroded broken kerb outside 19-20 Martyrs Field Rd will be reported to Martin as well.

Action: John

6. Obituaries – Deaths recorded since our last meeting

Sir Terry Pratchett, fantasy comedy writer (*Discworld* series) and Alzheimer's campaigner; Jim Williams, Wincheap Butchers; Ervin Drake, songwriter (*I Believe* and *It Was A Very Good Year*); Gerald Sim, English actor (the Rector in *To The Manor Born*); Sam Simon, co-creator of *The Simpsons*; Leonard Nimoy, Mr Spock in *Star Trek*.

7. Any other business

- i. The matter was raised of Boris Johnson's declaration that 115,000 homes should be built in Canterbury and Dover for London commuters, as we are now within 1 hour of London by train.
- ii. John has not yet paid the sub to the South Canterbury Alliance but he will now do that.

Action: John

- iii. Joe brought up the pigeon-proofing and repainting of the Wincheap railway bridge. He first contacted the company in July 2011 and was finally promised that the work

would be carried out in 2013-14 but nothing has been done. Joe will be writing another letter (he now has six different reference numbers for this item).

Action: Joe

- iv. Dave had attended the CAMP meeting and alerted us to the fact that Martin Vye is looking into having a traffic light system around the Wincheap roundabout because the irregular heavy flow is not really suited to a roundabout.

8. Date of next meeting

Thursday, 14th May at 7.30pm at 53 Wincheap