

Highfield Residents' Association

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12th June 2006 at the University Staff Centre at 7.30pm

Present: Mr Jerry Gillen, Chairman; Dr Julia Brooking, Vice-Chairman; Mrs Nicolla Martin, Membership Secretary; Mrs Gillian Gain, Editor; Mr Steve Connolly, Website Manager; Mr David Ely, Planning Officer; Mrs Angela Dyke and Dr Josie Brown.

Apologies: Mrs Peggy Augier; Mrs Caroline Knight; Mr Headley Rossell

Welcome: Mr Steve Sollitt, new Liberal Democrat Councillor for Portswood Ward

In Attendance: Mr Nick Bacon of Brookvale Rd

Minutes of last two meetings: Proposed by Gillian, seconded by David

Matters Arising: Page 3. Jerry has written to Steve Waring expressing our desire to continue to liaise closely with the University of Southampton on all local issues, including the Boldrewood development and commenting on the "Studentification" document, particularly the need for an independent liaison officer.

Correspondence:

6th May 06 Proposed Customer Charter from Council. Jerry and David replied with examples of failures. 9th May. Response from Council

15th May 06 Planning Application for 29 Highfield Crescent

16th May 06 " " 134 Upper Shaftsbury Ave

16th May 06 " " 132 " " "

17th May 06 " " 240 Bassett Ave

23rd May 06 " " 24 Abbotts Way

23rd May 06 " " 47 Orchards Way

17th May 06 Request from Sainsburys to attend P & RW Panel

17th May 06 Response from Richard Ivory re Students' Union Appeal Hearing

22nd May 06 Letter from Steve Waring re proposed university liaison group for Boldrewood development

31st May 06 Our letter of objection to Licensing Panel re University Halls of Residence applying for 2.00am closing

Membership: Nicolla reported an increase in membership to 510 households. One of the street representatives, David Clark, is to have surgery and will be unable to deliver for a few months. Headley will have a copy of the membership database during Nicolla's absence in Southern Africa.

Action Nicolla

Finance: Although unable to attend the meeting, Headley submitted accounts, which show the finances continue to be healthy.

Planning and Licensing:

- Monthly list and addendum circulated as usual by David
- David announced his intention to resign as Planning and Licensing Officer from the end of the month. He will continue to produce the monthly running report, but not deal with correspondence. For the time being Jerry and Caroline will take care of planning-related correspondence.
- David was thanked for his outstanding contribution to HRA work over many years.

Action Jerry and Caroline

- 106 Portswood Rd. David will follow up the application to switch from retail shop to take-away. **Action David**
- 28 Brookvale Rd. The appearance of a bungalow at the back is now listed for investigation.
- Corner of Upper Shaftesbury Ave and Sirdar Rd. David will monitor **Action David**
- Jerry reported attending the Development Forum meeting. The Planning Dept dealt with some 500 applications in the last year. In future all applications must include a “design and access” statement from the Residential Design Guide. Alterations to existing properties must in future include upgrading the whole property to current insulation standards.
- 53 Shaftesbury Ave. Council is about to prosecute the owner. Angela and Jerry reported on recent developments. Jerry to write to Alan Sayle re date of court case. **Action Jerry**
- 3 Blenheim Gardens. It is thought that the caravan has been removed. **Jerry to confirm**
- 1-3 Blenheim Ave. Enforcement action is proceeding re breach of conditions for fencing.
- Sainsburys have been granted planning permission. 325 parking spaces have been agreed, which is fewer than they wanted, but better than the Council originally agreed.

Discussion with Steve Sollitt

Steve told us he is new to Southampton City Council and has been elected initially for just one year. He will try to attend HRA meetings and asked to be put on the mailing list **Action Caroline**
 Steve sees his role as trying to understand our concerns and responding to them as far as possible. He is happy to be our “first port of call” if that is our wish. He warned that the Council is often constrained by government policy and that progress is necessarily slow. He is a Cabinet member for Leisure and Culture.

Members welcomed Steve and expressed concern that Highfield is often treated as low priority because of our relatively low levels of social and economic deprivation. Nevertheless members perceive a decline in quality of life in the area because of HMOs, noise nuisance and chronic traffic problems.

Nick Bacon expressed frustration that promised solutions to traffic and parking problems had not been delivered. A long-awaited traffic survey had never been actioned. Solutions such as residents’ parking permits and building a large car park on the university’s Highfield campus were discussed. **Steve Sollitt agreed to consult with Mr Mortimer and report back.**

Josie applauded Portsmouth City Council for introducing a city-wide 20mph speed limit. Steve Sollitt commented that traffic calming in “home zones” can take out parking spaces and a low speed limit is useless unless it can be enforced. **Steve Sollitt said that he would monitor the Portsmouth and similar schemes and report back to us.**

Summer Ball: Nicolla reported that 151 tickets have been sold and just one single ticket is now available. There are 22 people on the waiting list. A cheque from the university is still outstanding. Nicolla will hand-over to Caroline prior to her departure this week.

Newsletter: Gillian listed the many articles written or in preparation for the autumn issue. It was agreed that a double issue was needed to accommodate the quantity of good material available; if Sainsburys could be persuaded to sponsor it (**Action Jerry**) Gillian explained why it would be preferable to publish at the end of August rather than a month later as originally planned. This was agreed. She is also to meet with AE Insurance, Westwood Road this week re feature and advert. As Gillian will be in France throughout July and August, all her articles will be given to Julia before she leaves (**Action Gillian**). Jerry and Julia will then finalise the layout etc and liaise with the University Print Centre **Action Jerry and Julia**

Jerry suggested incorporating a Spitfire logo in view of the R J Mitchell association with Highfield. This met with general approval. **Action Jerry**

Website: Steve will put in a link to the Northern Neighbourhood Partnership. Steve reported that he is progressing plans to put advertising onto the website. **Action Steve**

Any other business

Jerry reported we might in future have to pay to use the Staff Club for our monthly meetings, because of the cost of security staff to keep the building open for our use in the evening. Jerry will meet with John Beale, Asst Director of Business Services to discuss later this week. It was agreed that a small payment would be acceptable as any other venue was likely to be more expensive.

Jerry action

Nicolla reported that the new “sold sign” letter is ready to be distributed to street reps.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.15pm

Date of next meeting is Monday 10th July at 7.30pm at the University Staff Club.