



HIGHFIELD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th September 2009
At the Highfield House Hotel

Present: Jerry Gillen - Chairman, Sue Hartley – Secretary, Headley Rossell – Treasurer, Julia Brooking, Peggy Augier, Brian Wakely, Roret Blue, Rafeal Persaud, Alison Shelly

Apologies: Caroline Knight – Secretary, Nicola Martin – Membership Secretary, Adrian Vinson – Planning Officer, Stephen Connolly, Josie Brown (Non-Committee Apologies: Jackie Barnes and Jenny Arnold – PRG, PC Andy Alderson, Cllrs. Jill Baston and Vincenzo Capozzoli)

In Attendance: Sarah Rasmussen – Northcote Rd., Ken Pullen – Glenmore Court, James Cox – EBRA, Dick Buckle, PRG, Naill Fraser – Bellevue Rd RA, Graham Lineacre –OTRA, Peter Knight – SFRA, Matt Martin –University liaison, Andy Pickles – Woodstock Drive, Simon Hill –Common Sense

Minutes of last meeting –10th August: accepted as correct

Matters arising and not on the agenda: Students at 28 Brookvale are away on summer break. Matt will contact them on their return. The car parked partly on the pavement in Brookvale Rd has now gone. EBRA were thanked for their contribution of £300 to legal costs re the SUSU application to extend opening hours.

Correspondence: Planning notice re 62 Sirdar Rd, to be passed to Adrian. Invitations to a Swaythling Neighbourhood community cream tea were distributed.

University of Southampton, Community Liaison – Matt Martin: Matt explained that students will move back into hall of residence on 26th/27th September and freshers' week begins on 28th September. Concern was expressed about various mega pub-crawls, one being run by Solent University and others by private companies. "Carnage" is a private event arranged by an ex-Southampton student for up to 1700 people. The first Carnage in Southampton takes place on 15th October, with other events here and around the country later. James said that EBRA would be writing to both VCs and SU presidents to urge them to do all possible to stop such events. After much discussion it was agreed that **Adrian would be asked to write to the two VCs**. Peter suggested that **Jerry should write to the police and relevant pubs**. It was agreed that **Matt would also liaise with the police** re the Carnage event. There have apparently been arrests for drunken anti-social behaviour associated with these events in Swansea and (post-meeting note) there has been a recent press report about a fresher in London dying after a "Night of Mayhem" party from acute alcohol poisoning.

Membership: Nicola is away so there was no report. **Rafeal and Sarah are going to knock on doors in Sirdar and Kitchener Roads** to try to recruit new members.

Finance: Headley reported that finances are healthy.

Common Sense: Simon Hill explained that much has been achieved, but there is still plenty of work to do. There is to be a working party for volunteers on 26th September. There is an illegal hedge near the Avenue campus. The estimate for the work from tree surgeons is £1200 and it was agreed that

Simon would try to get the Council to pay for the work. In addition Simon asked for HRA to support Common Sense's application to the Grassroots Fund (through the Daily Echo) for a £700 grant. This was agreed.

Planning:

- **Ken Pullen**, Hon Sec and Chairman of residents at Glenmore Court, Westwood Rd advised of concerns re the next door house, **14, Westwood Rd**. Residents have been informed by architect, Chris Edmonds that the owner intends to demolish the house and build 18 flats for rental. The plans include only 5 parking spaces and one space for disabled parking. The owner is already well known to HRA as a person with a history of breaching planning rules. Ken was told that it would not be possible to object unless and until a planning permission notice comes up, but that **Adrian will be asked to contact Ken** and HRA will support the residents as appropriate. There is also a problem with a dog at the property and environmental health is aware of this.
- **72, Westwood Rd**, a Victorian house, is to be sold by auction
- **1, Crofton Close** appeal is set for January according to No. 5 Chambers.
- **SUSU application to extend hours of opening**. Meeting and site visit arranged with Sarah Clover. There was some discussion of tactics for the hearing. James and Jean are mobilising people in the EBRA area and Jerry will contact relevant people in the HRA area to remind them of the importance of attending the hearing on 24th September.
- **Council Core Strategy**. Peter Knight reported on the Core Strategy meeting at Juries Inn Hotel, chaired by Nigel P.....?. Only two sentences in the plan relates to HMOs, which is worrying. However the Council thinks it will be enough if the sought change of legislation comes through.
- **HMO/student housing press publicity**. Jerry alerted the committee to recent articles in the Guardian and Observer highlighting our own long-standing concerns:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/sep/11/student-enclaves-denham-hmo-nus>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/sep/12/student-housing-areas>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/sep/13/antisocial-students-housing-blight>

Proposed community garden: Rafael and his neighbours would like to develop a piece of Council-owned but currently unused land in Bricklands Rd as a community garden. They have not yet got permission from the Council, but have support from a local church and primary school and would like an expression of support from HRA. After some discussion about tactics for gaining consent, sustainability and funding, HRA agreed that this would be a worthwhile addition to the area. There is to be a meeting to discuss the issues at Immaculate Conception RC Church on Portswood Rd on 7th October at 8pm.

Newsletter: Feedback about the last newsletter has been uniformly positive. Jerry and Caroline were congratulated on an excellent job. They are looking for an additional helper now that Gillian is no longer working on it. All members of the committee were asked to consider whether they could volunteer to help with what is an enjoyable and important task.

Website: As neither Caroline nor Stephen were present there was little to say, except that Tony Knight is kindly rebuilding the website. Matt commented that it slows his computer and Peter suggested that the logo should be at a lower resolution and should be JPEG rather than BITMAP.

Hog Roast: Bryan reported that all the arrangements were in place, with the pig from Uptons, puddings from M&S and only 6 tickets unsold.

Highfield and RAs area mapping: Jerry would like a more detailed map from the Council. Currently HRA uses Tony Edgeley's map and there is a problem expanding and contracting it.

According to Peter we own the copyright on the currently used map. James said that Sam from University Printing does a good map for EBRA and can deal with copyright issues. **Jerry to follow this up.**

Any other business:

- **Andy Pickles** complained that a Crofton Close resident had spoken rudely to his wife. Sue explained that there had been a problem of late night noise after the Ball, which had resulted in other complaints. Sue apologised on behalf of the Crofton Close Ball Organising Committee and said these issues were being taken into account in future planning.
- **OTRA book sale** takes place on Saturday 17th October at 10.30am at 9 Blenheim Avenue to raise funds for OTRA. There will be refreshments.
- **Peggy** reported a farcical sounding incident in Roselands Gardens involving a total of 7 council workers removing one perfect flagstone and replacing it with an ill-fitting flagstone. Surely a nice illustration of how our council taxes are spent!
- **Peter** reported that there had been a recent incident involving a handbag being stolen from a car in his road. Police caught the perpetrator within an hour. Police warn people not to leave bags or satnavs in cars. Many of these incidents involve youths on bikes. Peter also spoke about a number of armed robberies and an arson attack in Portswood and commented that with so much crime, police should be attending our meetings. **Jerry agreed to ask the police to come as often as possible.** Dick Buckle reminded the meeting that all incidents should be reported to the police and a crime number obtained. Otherwise they do not show up on crime statistics, thus giving a false picture of what is happening in the area.
- **Graham** commented that the quality of highway maintenance in the area was poor. Specifically the hole in Brookvale Rd near Portswood Rd was now patched but inadequate. **Jerry will pass on these comments to Cllrs Matt Dean and Vincenzo Capozzoli.**
- **Alison** is arranging to meet with Phil Banyard to discuss plans for the Christmas party.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

The date of the next meeting is Monday 12th October at the usual time and venue.