



## **HIGHFIELD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011  
At the Highfield House Hotel.**

**Present** Jerry Gillen- Chair, Sue Hartley- Vice Chair, Caroline Knight- Secretary, Headley Rossell- Treasurer, Nicolla Martin, Roret Blue, Steve Connolly, Bryan Wakely, Allison Shelly, Nadine Johnson and Keith Reed.

**Apologies** Julia Brooking, Cllr Matthew Claisse, Cllr Vincenzo Capozzoli, Cllr Adrian Vinson and Peter Knight

**Attending** Jo Sage, Sam Ling – SU President, Peter Wirgman - Fed of RAs, Martin Moore- EBRA, Paula Prenke, Barbara Hodge, Jenny Arnold – PRG and Jackie Holt

### **Minutes of the April meeting**

- Sue's apologies had not been noted for last month
- Acceptance of minutes were proposed by Nicolla and seconded by Steve.

### **Matters arising**

- Regular bin collections have not yet resumed but there have been sporadic collections.
- We have found out that Stop Orders cannot be issued against domestic properties.

### **Correspondence**

- Letter re 13 Grosvenor Road
- Letter re formal consultation over parking strategies.
- Email from Nicky Bradshaw saying how successful she thought the Hog Roast had been.

### **University**

Sam Ling attended the meeting and introduced himself as the SU President for this year. Sam lived in Highfield for some time during his days as a Chemistry student. He is married and has a new baby. He told the meeting that there have been lots of changes at the University with the Transitions Project and that the SU is following suit. There are now seven officers and they will be addressing areas not previously covered. Frankie Fry is the Vice Pres and has Welfare and Communities as her remit. She will attend Residents' Assoc. meetings regularly. The SU has adopted Mission Statement and a five year plan which will allow continuity over the tenure of different presidents. Community Volunteering and encouraging students to be part of their community are both high on the agenda. Sam assured the committee that there are no plans at present to apply for and extension of licensing hours. Jerry said that we would welcome this new approach. He suggested that

the SU might be able to apply for Lottery Funds from Reaching Communities to help extend the Marshalling Scheme.

### Dr Jo Sage

Jo outlined her new research project which is looking at looking after elderly relatives and the effect of parental marital problems might have on this. She is looking for volunteers in their 40s and 50s with at least one parent still living. A full description of the project is available.

### Membership

- At present we have a database of 633 households a rolling total is 529. And 6 new members as a result of the Hog Roast.

### Finances

- The finances are healthy
- This year we have received £867 in subs so far and last year it was £945.
- We are still waiting to hear about a grant application we submitted to the Community Chest.

### Planning and Licensing

- Monthly list was circulated prior the meeting.
- HRA is supporting Ridgemount Ave in their opposition to a proposed nursing home. And the outcome of the appeal is still to come. (Post meeting note - Appeal refused – another result using Sarah Clover of No 5 Chambers)
- **Keith** will send Sam our policy document in reference to HMOs.
- Residents are feeling very frustrated at the perceived lack of action taken by the Council against landlords who ignore planning regulations and appear to get away with it.
- 13 Grosvenor – Adrian Vinson and Derek Willis are preparing a letter of objection. No5 Chambers have emphasised the importance of providing as much valid detail as possible as at an appeal only the grounds for refusal can be considered. They will list all planning history as that should all still be valid. The Residents' Parking Zone should also add strength to our case. Jerry reminded the meeting that it is one letter per person – not per household. **Keith and Jerry** will write letter on behalf of HRA. Jerry encouraged committee members to write. As the hearings only last a short time and objectors are limited to five minutes, letters are vitally important as is the attendance of Ward Councillors. The Council did get a temporary injunction but it was not renewed when the judge heard that some students had already moved in. It is hoped that planning permission will be refused but the process of appeal etc. could take two years. HRA will be contacting MPs to lobby pointing out the iniquities of the current system. Caroline Noakes has the upper end of Shaftesbury Ave in her constituency so she might be able to help.

Unfortunately in UK the local community is not considered a party in these cases this is not the case in other countries. Any lobbying must be in a positive manner.

It is claimed that the students were given the keys prior to the injunction being served after having been shown another property that was unsuitable. They claimed that they were advised by the SU Information Service to move in. The other group

of students were advised against and did not move in. **Sam** will investigate this claim. ( Post meeting note – letter received from SU and circulated)

### **Summer Event**

The Hog Roast was a success and Jerry thanked Bryan for all the hard work he did to make sure the event went smoothly. Peggy and Nicolla helped to clear up on the night and when Caroline and Steve turned up to help on Sunday morning Bryan had already done it all. Bryan thanked Nicolla and Caroline for their help prior to the event. Despite the no BYO policy some guests still did so. One table not only brought their own they also left all the empties for us to clear up which is really not acceptable.

### **Newsletter**

We have started to collect copy for the next edition which will be out at the end of October/early November in order to advertise the children's Christmas party which will be on December 10<sup>th</sup> this year. Sam agreed to do a piece for us and also will ask Frankie to do a piece. Jo also agreed to write something about her project.

### **Website**

Steve, Jerry and Caroline have met with James who has agreed to build us a new website. We will be paying him a small monthly amount for this. Caroline has sent him some of the documentation and also some photos for the site. Once we have the look that we want we can discuss the fine detail. It would seem that James might be away as Caroline's last two emails have not been answered.

### **Any other business**

- Jerry, in his role as VC of NORA is meeting with Alan Shrank and Bell Pottinger on Friday in order to discuss how the profile of NORA can be raised and how they can liaise with the Government. It is possible that it will prove too expensive to engage Bell Pottinger and this will be discussed at the next Executive Meeting of NORA.
- Peter Wirgman reported that at the last Federation meeting Chris Lyons and Dan Fitzhenry attended. They took the view that Southampton only had 9% of HMOs but this appeared to ignore that although this might be the case over the whole of Southampton some areas are struggling with a percentage of 80-90%. We need a map of the concentration of HMOs and if each RA did a map of their own area this could be accomplished quite easily. HRA conducted this exercise about 3 years ago and it could be updated.
- The consultation on residents' parking will finish on 22<sup>nd</sup> August. There has been no mention of HMOs in relation to parking. ( everyone please write in about this)
- Sam asked the committee if they could choose one thing to improve what would make the biggest difference. Most people said noise reduction. Sam was asked how he communicated with the student body. Communication takes place via the Freshers' Magazine. Email messages to the whole student body are limited to 3 per year.
- Martin Moore said that residents who live near Chamberlain Halls really suffer from late night noise.

- It was felt that the Ridgemount appeal had a very litigious feel. The residents put up a very good case and Sarah Clover was fairly happy with the proceedings. (see earlier comment)
- Bryan mentioned that the church has talked about a future joint venture. We will wait to see if they approach us.
- Jenny Arnold reported that PRG have been told that planning permission is not required for solar panels even though they are a conservation area. There is some discussion about this in OTRA also.

The meeting closed at 9.10.

The next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> August.