



HIGHFIELD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 14th November 2011
At Highfield House Hotel.**

Present Jerry Gillen - Chair, Caroline Knight – Secretary, Headley Rossell – Treasurer, Alison Shelly, Roret Blue, Steve Connolly, Nicolla Martin, Keith Reed, Bryan Wakely, Peggy Augier, Nadine Johnson and Julia Brooking

Apologies Sue Hartley, Josie Brown, Matthew Claisse, Peter Knight, Derek Willis (Grosvenor Rd),

Attending Frankie Fry – SU Officer, Simon Hill (Common Sense), Cllr Vincenzo Capozzoli, Cllr. Adrian Vinson, Taz Judge, Nick Bacon, Jenny Arnold and George Coates

Minutes of the October meeting

- Adrian Vinson added to apologies
- Impermeable changed to permeable

Acceptance of minutes - proposed by Steve and seconded by Peggy.

Matters arising

- HMO Consultation – emphasised suggestions made.
- Newsletter has been delivered
- Common Sense – there was a working party on Saturday and the visual effect of the clearance is apparent.
- Nicola needs the numbers for Mangos

Correspondence

- Jerry has received several letters relating to planning.
- There is a meeting at the Civic Centre on Nov 21st at 5.00 re the RPZ. AV suggests arriving at 4.30.

Taz Judge

- Taz has become increasingly concerned about the escalation in the number of burglaries in her area. She has spoken to the police and they are aware. They are concerned that students are not taking adequate precautions to keep their premises safe. Jerry reported that at a recent Police Liaison meeting they said that they are undertaking covert surveillance. Crime in the area is a standing agenda item for

these meetings and the police ask that residents to be vigilant. There is always a spike around Christmas and the awareness campaign is on-going. Police are leafleting. VC says that the police will target specific roads if requested: they have recently concentrated on two roads in St Denys. They also ask residents to report everything and write things down. Figures can be found on the Southern Daily Echo website and the National Crime website. Highfield has been highlighted as an area of concern. We can put links on our website and will carry an article in our next newsletter. CK

SU and University Liaison – Frankie Fry

- Frankie meets with the Head of Security at the University regularly.
- They are working on a Community Strategy – a 3 year plan which will run alongside the 5 year Union Plan. Frankie extended an invitation to Jerry and one other to attend a meeting on 15th December.
- 13 Grosvenor Road – Frankie is now concerned about the well-being of the students in this property as they are very stressed and worried as they have been served with Enforcement Notices. They have been advised that they have to vacate the property. This was the scenario they were warned about before they occupied the premises and although they were told by their Advice Centre legally they could occupy this was always going to be the consequence. HRA is concerned for the well-being of students renting homes in this area. Jerry has written to Stephen Lawrence – the enforcement notice expires on 17th. The owner has employed an agent to look at possible alternative uses for the property.
- 6 Hartley Ave. Frankie has spoken to the Advice Centre but they have not had any communication from the students of this property.
- There is a meeting on 5th-6th December about housing.
- AV has been contacted by students about a landlord who is withholding their deposit. He has given them directions to obtain help. Students should be advised to take photographs when they take up tenancy to protect themselves. Frankie says that students are given this advice if they rent properties covered by SASSH. They can also have their contracts checked etc.
- Roret voiced her concerns at the vulnerability of overseas students.

Membership - Nicolla

- The rolling total is 422 – actual number is 503 and the database stands at 633 households.
- NBSP Association has folded and some residents have expressed a wish to be reintegrated within HRA.

Finances – Headley

- Headley reported that the finances are healthy.

Planning and Licensing – Keith and Jerry

- Report as circulated.
- 2 Sherbourne – erection of rear extension.
- Keith will write re temporary accommodation at the University.
- 124-126 Upper Shaftesbury – Keith will write.
- Sainsbury's- should be in line with other food stores in the area in terms of range of goods and opening hours. There has been a Licensing Request for supply of alcohol 6 am – midnight. We would oppose this. They are also applying for a Pharmacy Licence and we understand that a condition of their planning permission was that they would not. We will oppose.
- There is a query if a planning application has been submitted for the house on the corner of Brickfield and Portswood Roads.
- There are currently a large number of Enforcement Actions in place.
- Teams are tracking back history re the paving over of front gardens.
- Jerry attended the Anchor Care Homes presentation. They are applying for a 70 bed care home with medical facilities in the same vein as Sunrise. They have been offered a reduced number of parking spaces but this does not seem practical. HRA will write a letter of support asking for the number of parking spaces originally sought. Anchor has done its own consultation and deemed that a quality home is required. This is a pre-consultation period and the time to give views. The application will go in in the New Year. They anticipate the build time to be 63 weeks. VC will look into the provision of a secure barrier pending the work starting.
- We will ask for an article for the Newsletter and perhaps some sponsorship.

HMO Lobby

- Landlords are opposing the Article 4 Directive process. Our Council has confirmed that it will be implemented in March and there has been discussion about the threshold and restraint figures. Portsmouth has gone for 10% and the landlords are challenging. VC has a meeting with Matthew Claisse and Cllr Fitzhenry tomorrow night; because it is a consultation all figures have to be considered and VC will report back. The figure could be as high as 20-30% which could give a level of 50% of residents in an area living in HMOs. Sometimes the concentration is measured in distances but this is felt to be unacceptable. There is concern that officers might be looking for higher numbers.
- Alison reported that in Switzerland all University students live in purpose built blocks and therefore do not have to take over family housing. Universities should provide accommodation for all their students not just first years. AV has introduced a motion to adopt the same scheme as Oxford whereby if there is an increase in student numbers there must also be an increase in accommodation provided.
- Jerry and Caroline have had a meeting with Tessa Harrison- she stated that the University is aware that more accommodation is needed and are seeking permission for a new building in Swaythling.
- NE Bassett Residents Assoc held an event to encourage more students to engage with the communities in which they live. It was extremely successful.
- Simon Hill reported that when walking around his area he is noticing considerable deterioration of rented houses- he passed round some photographs. The Council

do have powers under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act to require landlords to make repairs.

Website – Stephen

- It is up and running.
- Nicolla asked that the reference to a Junior Section be removed as this did not take off. The whole form needs to be updated. CK

Newsletter

- The autumn edition has been delivered. We need to get some sponsorship for future editions – any suggestions would be welcome.

Winter Event

- Ghandi's has been booked for March 7th. This has been put in the newsletter.
- Jerry raised the possibility of a summer event- perhaps in conjunction with PRG. Jenny said that they were already considering an event to mark the Queen's Jubilee and she would talk to her committee at their next meeting. Jerry will ask Veronica for possible dates.

Any other business

- Alison helped a couple in Blenheim Gardens who were having problems with the students living next door. She emailed Sarah, Frankie and Sam and she has now received an email from the residents saying there appeared to have been a result.
- Jenny told the committee about a lecture by Graham Roberts on the River Itchen in the PRG Pavilion on Wednesday.
- There have been problems in Portswood with purse snatching so be vigilant.
- Simon reported on the clearance of the Little Common. The contractors and about a dozen volunteers worked very hard and removed huge holly bushes. He thanked Chris Lyons for the speedy processing of the planning consent - 3 days. It has made a huge difference. Simon has written expressing thanks.
- The new Ranger is now talking about ground clearance.

The meeting ended at 9.20

The next meeting will be Monday 12 December