

## **Minutes of Semilong Community Forum meeting August 9<sup>th</sup> 2006**

**Present:** Alastair Melton, Ally Dunn, Andy Langton, Brian Crutchley, Daphne Barritt, Jen Kenny, Kerry Clarke, Margaret Honeybun, MP Brian Binley, Rob Chadwick, Steven Welyczko, Zoë Downes, Joanne McGeehan, Steve Sage, Ann Timpson, Jimmy Patel, Martin Wills, Kate Wills, Sarah Digby, Iris Gotschi, Eileen Brennan, Bobby Diggin, Alfred Jones, Ian Brown.

**Apologies:** Gerry Burbage, Kevin Gascoyne, Margaret Andrews, PC Ron Frater, Stephen Richards, Zoë Martin, Mo Kinsella, Stuart Russell, Giles Wilson, Sam Cooper Evans, Steve Scoles, Hillary Scott.

### **Abbreviations Used:**

SCF - Semilong Community Forum

NBC – Northampton Borough Council

NCC – Northamptonshire County Council

AGYCC – Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre

**The meeting opened at 7.35pm and was chaired by Rob Chadwick.**

**The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.**

### **Matters Arising from the last meeting 12/07/2006**

- Crime – Ron to set up a meeting with local licence's – no further update was available for the meeting.

### **Further actions outstanding from previous minutes**

- *Drawings for notices for social housing were agreed and will be forwarded to Gerry Burbage for the council to reproduce and laminate.*
  - *Ongoing.*
- The March 2006 minutes will be revised and redistributed
  - outstanding
- Brian to liaise with the co-op, a suitable time to locate the notice board
  - Brian will contact NBC planning to find out if permission is required.
    - Brian has contacted the council but as yet not had any response – Brian to chase up
- Karen will write letters to local businesses asking for donations for Raffle prizes.
  - No update

### **AGM**

Rob went through the list of ideas that had been proposed at the last meeting to raise awareness of the AGM in September and asked for any additional ideas. These are listed below.

- Ask to advertise on the CO-OP till receipts
- Ask to advertise on the cash machine at the co-op
- Include pictures of things we have done on our posters.
- Put posters in the Post Office and other local shops

Kerry asked if Brian Crutchely could produce some flyers for the balloon festival.

Brian Crutchley will not be standing again as Secretary at the AGM and Kerry will not be standing as treasurer.

#### *Action*

*Brian Crutchley to produce AGM flyers for distribution at the balloon festival.*

## **Social Housing.**

As there were no housing officers present this month. Rob asked if anyone else had any issues with social housing that they would like to raise.

Iris said that rubbish was being dumped by the recycling bins at Alliston Gardens – Rob asked if she had reported it to the council. She said she would. The telephone number is 01604 838281.

## **Neighbourhood Warden - Andy Langton**

Rob asked Andy to remind people what the scope of his work involved.

Andy said that he covers the whole of the Castle area and has some limited powers and can confiscate alcohol and cigarettes from minors. If there was an issue that he can help with people can call 01604 653083 or email [neighbourhoodwardens@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodwardens@northampton.gov.uk)

These queries are answered by a central office and tasks are then assigned to the relevant warden. Andy was not sure if a reference number was available.

Rob asked if Andy had had any luck with finding out details of rented accommodation to ensure that landlords were looking after their properties correctly and that graffiti could be removed.

Andy said he had a few landlord details but currently little graffiti was being removed, but there was a new manager responsible for removing graffiti so this service should improve once the new team has been set up to deal with this.

Andy also said he could stand as a professional witness, if people do not want to give their details.

At this point the issue over the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at the Kingsthorpe Hollow end of Semilong Road and the amount of anti-social behaviour being caused by young people was discussed.

Many suggestions were made but nothing could be agreed and it seemed that no solution could be implemented without support from relevant council officers being present.

Brian Binley said that he would be happy to organise a multi agency meeting and would liaise with Rob.

Andy said that there were a number of bin bags going out early so he will be leafleting those to remind them that they could be fined.

Some of the alleyways in Semilong had been filled with dumped rubbish and Andy is looking to have this cleared. The meeting reacted positively to this given that private land, such as alleyways, has previously been a no-no for NBC. Steve Sage said that he was hoping to purchase the alleyway land next to 12 Hester Street so that it could be gated to improve security and the cleanliness of the area. Kate was concerned that she would not be able to gain access to the back of her house, but Steve said that he was happy to provide keys to those who should have access.

Zoë Downes asked Andy about the issue of rubbish in front gardens. Andy said that he was working with Environmental Health on this. Rob said that the new, national legislation was now in force to enable NBC to deal with front gardens. NBC cabinet will decide how it is to enforce the legislation at a meeting in the autumn – so improvement should come in the next few months.

### *Actions*

*Brian Binley will organise a multi agency meeting at the site of the MUGA to find a solution to the anti-social behaviour and a more sustainable solution for managing the site.*

## **Crime.**

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Sarah Digby attended the meeting as Ron was unable to attend.

Sarah informed the meeting that the recently formed Safer Community Team, that was set up to cover Spring Boroughs, now covers Semilong. This team comprises 1 Sergeant, 2 police officers and 3 PCSO's. This also includes 6 Special Constables who will work over the weekend. In addition it is likely that Ron Frater will join the team. Sarah added that there is likely to be a dedicated number that people can call when it's not an emergency so the team can collect information locally. This number should be available to publicise in September.

Kate wanted to raise the issue of the houses that have been referred to as bail hostels on Hester Street and the antisocial behaviour that was being caused in the street during the night. Steve Sage invited any member of the meeting to view the security measures he has in place by visiting him at 12 Hester Street. There followed a very heated debate during which Steve Sage left the meeting. Steve Welyczko said that there were similar problems with a house in Gordon Street.

Brian Binley asked that the local community give the new police team an opportunity to sort the problems out.

Iris pointed out that 3 story homes in multi occupancy must have a licence.

#### *Actions*

*Rob to contact NBC planning to find out what permissions were given to the three properties in Hester Street.*

### **Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre**

The Open Day has been postponed until the 21<sup>st</sup> October 11-3pm as there was a lack of groups available to attend on the original date. Rob informed that over 600 people a week are taking part in activities at the centre.

### **Events**

#### **Balloon Festival Stall**

The balloon festival runs from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> Aug to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Aug. Our Community Stall will be manned from 10 – 4 each day except the Sunday when it will be manned from 10 – 12. Kerry has 6 people who are willing to volunteer so far and is looking for more.

Kerry is hoping to secure some free 'Innocent' smoothies and is also hoping to get some free fruit what can be given away. Kerry will also be getting some display boards to display positive information about the area. There will also be a map of the world where we hope to chart those people from Semilong who visit us where they originate from. Giles Wilson from Friends of the Racecourse Group will be attending to canvass people's ideas to improve the park.

#### **Barn Dance**

This item was not discussed as the event is not until December 2<sup>nd</sup>

#### *Actions*

*Brian Crutchley will provide pictures of past and present events to Kerry by 14<sup>th</sup> August.*

### **Treasurers update**

The current balance is £632.31. Kerry asked for a budget for the Balloon Festival. Brian proposed that £100 pound be spent on the balloon festival stand. Ali seconded it. The rest of the forum agreed. The new bank account does need some signatories; Kerry felt that as the committee is likely to change at the AGM it is best that this is left until after this event.

### **Environment Green**

Volunteers from St Giles Church had been in the area on the day of the meeting and had removed  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton of green waste from the plot of land next to the MUGA. They are hoping to work with us again later in the year.

Brian Crutchley is overseeing the spending of a £540 credit note that has been earmarked for the area, to be spent on plants. Due to a need to clear this credit note, and to avoid duplication with works being planned for Millers Meadow, Brian is ensuring that this is spent on the Grafton Street memorial garden.

Rob said that £2M will be spent on Millers Meadow and other green areas in Castle ward as part of the improvements to Spring Boroughs – this money has come from the government.

*Actions*

*Brian Crutchley to liaise with the garden centre that is providing the plants for the memorial garden.*

**Environment Urban**

Rob reported that the railings at the substation on Semilong Road have been painted green, as requested. Rob is hoping to photograph other substations in Northampton to shame Central Networks into improving the overall condition of this one.

There is currently a planning application to demolish St Paul's School and build 30 'one bedroom' flats. Rob asked for comments: Ali said that she was concerned about the density of housing which she thought was too high. Ann Timpson asked if the number of car parking spaces could be increased. The development is being managed by West Homes UK. The meeting agreed that the forum should object to the application due to it's density and that two bedroom flats should also feature. The meeting asked that the Vice Chair writes to NBC planning to convey this view.

Martin Wills asked about the planning application for 7 Hester Street. He pointed out that the property on the plans is actually of 6 Hester Street. Rob said that he would contact planning and see if they were aware. Martin was also bothered by the fact that the new property would overlook other properties and that 7 Hester Street had 6 doorbells despite only being 3 flats which raised questions regarding the use of the building.

*Actions*

*Alastair said he research West Homes UK to see if they were a housing association or not and pass details to Rob.*

*Rob to contact NBC planning about number 7 and number 6 Hester Street.*

*Rob to contact NBC planning to object to the current plans for the St Paul's School site.*

**Communication**

Brian reported that most copies of 'Semilong News' had been delivered that day. Many thanks to Peter Evans and the Labour Club for allowing us to print the newsletter. Many thanks to Jimmy for collecting the paper for printing.

Brian will produce posters to promote the AGM and distribute around the area.

*Actions*

*Brian to produce posters and flyers to promote the AGM in September.*

*AOB*

*Brian Binley thanked the committee for being invited to the meeting. Brian Crutchley asked if he held any regular surgeries in the area. Brian Binley said that they were held at the Gateway Resource Centre when he was in the area.*

*The Meeting Closed At 9.29*

The next meeting is on 13<sup>th</sup> September at the BBOB Rugby Club on St. Andrews Road at 7.30 – 9.30pm  
Our AGM will be on 27<sup>th</sup> September at Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre 7.30 – 9.30pm

Minutes Agreed (signed)

Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_