

## **Minutes of Semilong Community Forum meeting May 9<sup>th</sup> 2007**

**Present:** Andy Langton, Brian Crutchley, Rob Chadwick, Daphne Barritt, Jen Kenny, Steven Richards, Zoë Martin, Mr and Mrs Thompson, Peter Slack, Karen Fruish, Ann Timpson, Carolyn French, Sarah Digby, Steven Welyczko, Wendy Howes, Sarah Fraser, Lucy Liesowic, Tony Clarke, Ron Frater

**Apologies:** Ally Dunn, Rachel Duncan, Ruth Taylor, Alan Taylor

### **Abbreviations Used:**

**SCF** - Semilong Community Forum

**NBC** – Northampton Borough Council

**NCC** – Northamptonshire County Council

**AGYCC** – Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre

**MUGA**-Multi use games area (at the bottom of Semilong Road)

**WDNC**-West Northamptonshire Development Corporation

**PCSO**- Police community support officer

**The meeting opened at 7.40pm and was chaired by Zoë Martin**

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

### **Matters Arising from the meeting 14/4/07**

*Zoë to establish if a housing officer will be attending meetings*

Zoë has chased this but has not heard back yet

*What constitutes affordable housing*

Tony Clarke talked to the forum about this ..... See minutes.

*Rob to email Brian Binley re NBC 'Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005' and find out when these powers will be enforced.*

Rob had a copy of the email, but as yet no response from Brian's researcher.

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

*Brian to contact social club re reduction in rate.*

### **Youth worker Lucy Liesowic**

Lucy introduced herself as the youth worker for Caspar. One of her remits is to raise the profile of the MUGA. She has organised basketball over at Spring Boroughs, which was very successful. She is hoping to set up a football and basketball tournament on 2<sup>nd</sup> June for all ages and both girls and boys. Lucy handed out some leaflets and posters to display.

Rob wondered how we could get some of the younger polish kids involved Lucy said there had been some good interest from the Somali community.

Lucy currently has 24 kids and was looking for a bigger venue. Ann suggested the Roadmender. Zoë said she knows the contact details for the manager.

*Actions Zoë to contact Ally Dunn to get some publicity on the radio*

*Zoë to pass on the email address of the manager to Lucy*

### **Neighbourhood Watch – Laura Major**

Laura introduced herself as the community watch liaison officer. She said that there is only one neighbourhood watch in the Semilong area. Laura gave a brief history of neighbourhood watch and stressed how it helps to build the community spirit and is neither vigilantism nor time consuming as many people worry. There are over 270 co-ordinators in the Northampton area. The groups are run on a street by street basis and consist of a co coordinator backed by management support teams. The co coordinator is the main point of contact that passes on the information to the other members; they keep records and numbers of members and also distribute leaflets, newsletters and marking kits as well as encouraging new members.

Members help distribute advice and packs as the co coordinator does. All members are able to use a phone line to get support. Laura stressed that anyone who wishes to set up a scheme will be well supported to get the scheme set up. Zoë asked where in Semilong the neighbourhood watch scheme was. Laura said that it was in Lower Priory Street

*Actions* no actions

### **Social Housing**

There was no housing officer present.

Following the action about affordable housing .Tony explained that affordable housing is based on income .This is the cost of utility bills and 30% less of income. Members asked how this average income was calculated and Tony said that it is worked out countrywide. This affordable housing can be rented/owned or part owned. The councils can choose their required level of affordable housing the government recommendation is 35% , but new estates may be 25-30% but because there is not as much new housing it does not have that much impact.

Mrs French asked about what happened to these affordable properties once they were sold on. Tony said that many local authorities have properties to rent or part own to stop people selling on quickly.

Karen asked if there is a limit on the amount of new properties that can be built. Tony said that the housing figure for Northampton is slower that the outlying areas such as Towcester, Corby and Kettering.

Karen asked about the Semilong road property which had the planning application for flats .No one had heard about it being resubmitted.

Zoë asked whether there were rules about how many people are allowed to live in properties. Tony said that it is difficult to get planning permission to convert due to new fire regulations. He said that he would like to have a register compiled to enable illegal residences to be checked. This only applies to individually locking rooms. Rob said that multi occupancy houses are often the cause of social problems

*Actions*

### **Neighbourhood Warden – Andy Langton**

Mrs Thompson said that rubbish was still building up outside Alliston Gardens .Zoë said she had seen surveillance areas in the mounts to combat flytipping. Andy said that this was possible if there is a big problem.Mrs Thompson wondered if some people thought that the warden would collect the rubbish and were just mistaken, maybe a need for more education.Andy said that some more boards will go up.

Tony asked if there were stickers that show the public that the warden is aware of flytipping.Andy said there are but that they are very tiny.

*Actions*

*No actions*

### **Crime**

Ron said that crime is still falling .There have been a few robberies although not against Semilong residents. There had been some disputes one of the streets. The PCSOs have been asking residents their concerns, the top 3 will be picked up by the compass action group.

In conjunction with operation uncanny there have been some radio programs on prostitution on Northants 96. There will be surgeries at Alliston Gardens

Mr and Mrs Thompson described some trouble with a resident. They have tried to talk to housing officers about the problems as he suffers with mental health needs. Ann asked about the warden or supervisor and that maybe they can contact his doctor. Sarah said she was having a terrible time with him. It was suggested that perhaps his social worker should be contacted so that this can be discussed at his next review.

*Actions*

*No actions*

### **Events**

The Spring Boroughs event on 21<sup>st</sup> April was well attended .There was no further news to report on our event as yet.

There will be a community BBQ held by the friends of the racecourse on July 14<sup>th</sup> all are invited to attend

*Actions*

**Treasurer's Report**

The wed hosting receipt was £56  
The balance is £452.36

*Actions no actions*

**Environment Green**

The first phase of Miller's meadow is now complete  
The memorial garden has been awarded £2500 to spend for some more planting and to discourage people from sitting on the wall. Wendy said that we could research about it at the library by looking at the archives of papers from the time.

*Actions*

**Environment Urban**

The High-grade motors planning application has been approved.

*Actions no actions this month*

**AOB**

Mrs French said that the Forum cinema has a branch at St Georges Avenue.  
Brian said that the Northampton concert Band is playing at St Giles Church.  
Jen said that our previous treasurer Kerry has opened a Yoga studio on freehold street

*Actions*

The next meeting is on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007 at the BBOB Rugby Club on St. Andrews Road at 7.30 – 9.30pm

Minutes Agreed (signed)

Chair Date

Secretary Date