

Newtown Community Association Open Forum Meeting Monday 28th April 2014 at 7.30 pm, Belmont Hut

Draft Minutes

Present: Su Aves (Secretary), Kelly Allan, Joan Bond, Richard Branston, (Councillor), Derek Burnside (Treasurer), Jacky Cox, Rory Cunningham, Chris Dent, Suaad George (Respect), Jackie Holdstock (Hut Bookings Manager), James Leigh (Hut upkeep), Rory McNeile (Chair), , Peter Montgomery (Webmaster), Sally Palmer, Michael Parrott (Vice Chair & Publicity) , Roger Spackman (Councillor), Galvin Short (Exeter Parks), Saxon Spence, Nic Unsworth (PCSO), Sarah Unsworth, Richard Westlake (Councillor), Marina Williamson.

Apologies: Fiona Daughton, George Dumble , Gabriele Gvozdociciute, Paloma Hermoso, Arran Mornin.

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by:</u>
1	Welcome	
2	Police report. PCSO Nick Unsworth reported that a Designated Public Places Order is being sought for the park. (DPPOs give officials a little more authority when trying move anti-social drinkers and others on.) Bike thefts are still a problem. Respect Festival organisation is ongoing. Nick and Kate Rees had both attended the recent Bike Cafe, where bike security marking was on offer.	
3	Newtown Ward Councillors' report The CCTV camera promised following the recent dog attack incidents has been erected on a Belmont Road lamppost. It is a temporary installation, present only as long as it's not required by another area. It will be monitored only when an incident is reported; specific timings and locations will be helpful. Roger Spackman reported that a police crackdown on drug use in the park and Blackboy Road area has been successful, but that it has displaced the problem to other local residential areas. The police are addressing the issue.	
4	Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Kelly Allan reported that local residents are seeking to establish a neighbourhood watch scheme on Herschell Road, following concern about burglary and other activities in the area. Six households have expressed an interest in joining. Student households have provided no problems. If it does take off it could be publicised through the NCA website. 'Community Messaging' is a system from the police so local residents are alerted about local issues by text, email or phone as you choose. Explanatory leaflets were distributed.	
5	ECC Parks 'Way Ahead' Forum – Galvin Short (Parks and Playing field manager) on 'The Way Ahead for City Parks and Open Spaces' Galvin reported that local community groups are being asked to consider taking over the running of some amenities, due to the current 'financial black hole' facing local government. Footpaths, shrub beds and roundabouts will stop being maintained, and residential green areas will lose half their upkeep; local residents will be asked to take more responsibility.	

	In Belmont Park the borders have been reworked to reduce required upkeep. Grass cutting is the main cost, and some areas of the park grass are being sown to become wild meadow; the park has received considerable biodiversity enhancement. NCA will receive a proposal in the near future to take on management of the Gordon Road-adjacent grassed area, the shrubbery in that zone, and the sensory garden. If that offer is declined, the council (who remain the landlord) will continue maintaining it, but to a lower standard. Similar discussions are ongoing across the city with other community groups.	
6	<p>The Vision update</p> <p>Rory presented the latest situation. The New Homes Bonus scheme has granted £100k towards the total £500 - £750k cost. The 'Granted' fundraising firm has been assisting the identification of and approaches to appropriate grant-awarding bodies. The most hopeful source, the Big Lottery Fund, has reported that the current bid falls short in its evidence of community enhancement; there is urgent need to improve our bid. A questionnaire has therefore gone to all current hut users, both regular user groups and individual hirers. The university will also be approached. Councillor Spackman suggested that umbrella charities (such as Mencap and Age UK) be approached to assess whether they could benefit from the enhanced hut. Contacting park users and local schools was also suggested, as was emailing all the store holders attending the Respect Festival.</p> <p>This need for greater evidence of community enhancement will be made known through the website.</p> <p>Bids have also been submitted to Devon Waste Management and two other funds offering smaller grants.</p>	
7	<p>Upcoming events.</p> <p>Respect Festival. Suaad Genem-George reported that there is a waiting list for contributors. There will be a cafe, and engagement from local schools, including the decoration of some staging, plus a children and families' zone. The main stage will again operate, as will the community stage, and there will an enhanced emphasis on youth events. Suaad outlined the wide range of other stalls and events. NCA will have a stall throughout the Saturday and the Sunday; any offers to volunteer to staff the stall would be gratefully received by Su Aves.</p> <p>WW1 Commemoration. Jacky Cox presented the 'Bunting Project', as part of commemorating the 118 Newtown men who fell in the Great War. Themed around 'war and peace' 118 red and white poppy and dove-themed flags will be created. The 11th May Arts and Craft cafe will include a flag-making session. Full instructions for flag-making are also on the website. Jacky and Lou Fearn (of the Portland Street Advent Calendar project) will string the bunting together in time for its raising at the WW1 Commemoration Cafe on 3rd August. We were all encouraged to make a flag, either as individuals or as a group.</p>	
9	<p>University Liaison Officer Rory Cunningham works with ten student community wardens, who help student residents live in safe cooperation with other local residents. 'Students on the Move' is an initiative to assist refuge collection for students vacating their properties in June and July. Stickers will be provided to enhance the swift disposal of any rubbish left out outside of normal refuse collection times. 723999 is the number for 'Estate Patrol' who respond to complaints about behaviour in student residences.</p>	
10	<p>Noticeboard. George Dumble is pursuing the possibility of another community notice board at the Blackboy Road entrance to the park. Any feedback or suggestions to George, please.</p>	
11	<p>Hut Issues – Health and Safety</p> <p>Repairs to the floor in the piano room are ongoing..</p>	
12	<p>Treasurer's Report. Derek reported that our current bank statement stands at £10845.58. We have made a slight loss on the year to date, probably due to hut bookings being slightly down. The summary of the accounts for the first quarter are attached with these minutes.</p>	
13	<p>Cafe Programme</p> <p>The Bike Cafe, the first of the season, was a great success. We are all encouraged to support the following forthcoming events, and to encourage our neighbours and friends to do likewise. Volunteers to help serve and make cakes are always appreciated.</p>	

	<p>Arts Café/ Toy and Book Sale. Sunday 11th May, 2-5pm Dog Walkers Café/Health Café Sunday 20th July, 2-5pm WW1 anniversary event. Sunday 3rd August, 2-5pm Food festival. Sunday 14th September, 12-4pm Halloween Café, Saturday 25th October, 5pm Craft Fair. Sunday 30th November, 11 – 4pm. Winter Warmer, Sunday 14th December, 6pm.</p>	
14	<p>AOB Minutes will be posted on the website, as will details of other activities we are asked to publicise, often through ‘Newtown News’, also to be found on the website.</p>	
15	<p>Date of next Open Forum meetings: 7.30pm, Belmont Park Hut. Monday 14th July. The AGM will be on Saturday 25th October at 10am.</p>	