

Newtown Community Association

Meeting Tuesday 24 August 2010 in the hut

NOTES

Present: Jonathan Asprey, Derek Burnside, Ian Harrison (Chair), Jackie Holdstock, Duncan Jackson, Anne Markey, Charlotte Markey (prospective Conservative candidate), Tom Milburn (prospective Green candidate), Peter Montgomery (Treasurer), Sally Palmer, Michael Parrott, Edward Pocock, Isaac Price-Sosner, PC6250 Paul Vaughan, Gay Smith (Secretary), John Staplehurst, Cllr Richard Westlake (DCC)

1. **Apologies:** Joan Bond, George Dumble, Billie Cornish, Muriel Forrest, Richard Branston, Roger Spackman (Lab Prospective Candidate).
2. **Notes of Meeting 15.6.10** Approved and signed.
3. **PACT**
 - a) **Speeding in Belmont Road and Park Issues** The Police ran a speeding observation in Belmont Road on 23 August. There were a total of 202 cars in one hour. Three were caught speeding and many braked when they saw the Police. It was agreed that sometimes there is a perception of speed when in fact drivers are not breaking the speed limit. Someone asked if the Police could also look at the area of Belmont Road which runs uphill to Polsloe Road and PC Vaughan said that he would look at this next time. A number of cyclists were observed coming down Clifton Hill at speed so it was planned to get PC Nic to run a cycle safety campaign like that undertaken at the Mount Radford Pub.
 - b) **Pedestrian Crossing in Belmont Road** It was suggested that a pedestrian crossing opposite the park gate on Belmont Road would be both useful and possibly deter speeding and this was noted. Cllr Westlake asked if anyone keen to support this would email him so that he can make representations to DCC.
 - c) **Students and Young People** Because of the summer vacation there were no issues with students to report. The Police were working closely with the University to combat noise nuisance and were hoping to use Zippy of the children's Rainbow programme as a mascot. The project will be called Zip It. The Police felt that the night time disturbance in the park was less having received few reports of problems. However, Duncan reported that there has been a lot of drinking and subsequent litter on the tables and ping pong table. Duncan asked why our park was not designated a "no drinking zone". The Police said that the City Council was reluctant to dedicate Belmont Park as a no drinking zone because that would affect the activities of genuine users.

- d) **Drug Users** The Police were doing their best to mitigate the drug activities around the public toilets and at the Odeon end of Sidwell Street. However drug use is a moving target which is difficult to ascertain in advance as the drug users move around the city to where the drugs were available. Charlotte had had a report that drug users were able to purchase keys from ECC to enable them to use the disabled toilet. It was confirmed that anyone can purchase keys without question. It was suggested that representations should be made to ECC to ensure that only registered disabled people could purchase the keys. However it was noted this would still not completely prevent problems with drug users having access as some drug users were registered disabled.
 - e) **Recent Attack Incident in Sidwell Street** Concern was raised about a recent attack at the top of Sidwell Street. Cllr Westlake asked the Police for clarification as to whether it was unprovoked as some residents were concerned about their safety.
 - f) **Gordon Road/Ping Pong Table** Cllr Westlake reported that there was now a shade on the street light to make the ping pong table less attractive after dark. Our thanks to Cllr Westlake for making this possible. However, Duncan reported that the light scatter still illuminates the concrete surround of the table so the solution was a step in the right direction but did not completely solve the problem.
4. **Prospective ECC Candidates for Newtown Ward** Charlotte Markey (ons) and Tom Milburn (Green) were present at the meeting and introduced themselves. Roger Spackman (Lab) is on holiday and sent his apologies.
- a) **Charlotte Markey (Cons)** is a student at Exeter University and also works for an MP in Devon. She is interested in representing Newtown because of its diversity and individuality. She would like the opportunity to make things happen and is particularly interested in our Vision Project and would like to assist in an Action Plan for Newtown. Peter asked about her view of the “Big Picture” and how we are going to energise more community volunteers when it is already difficult to do so. Charlotte felt that the overall message was that one person can make a difference. She was aware of the political apathy in all areas which made it difficult to recruit more volunteers. Charlotte is willing to get involved with NCA.
 - b) **Tom Milburn (Green)** lives in Newtown and has done so for some years. He has worked for Exeter City Council and now works for UNISON. He wants to represent Newtown because he believes we have a good neighbourhood community and deserve more say in what happens in our community. He is supportive of the Vision project. He supports many causes such as CND by fund raising and had some exciting new ideas about raising funds for Newtown Community Association. Tom is willing to get involved with NCA.

5. Events

- a) **Summer Sunday Musical Cafes** It was agreed that with one to go on Sunday 29th these have been great fun and have brought residents together. Grateful thanks to all those wonderful people who baked cakes and helped in the cafe: Billie, Duncan, Ian, Tess, Kat, Sally, Polly, Rob, Peter, Derek and to all the fantastic musicians who entertained us: Jon Asprey, Kevin Beaverstock, Nick Burrow, Crystal Carter, Ben Cornish, Pete Dempsey, Simon and Joseph Hall, Ali Jones, Caroline Jones, Judith (of Night Kitchen), Marie and Martin Leverett, John Phillips, Chris Rudd, Jon and Becci Springall, Keith Woodhouse

It was agreed that this should be a regular event throughout the year, perhaps once or twice a month, as it is sometimes difficult to get together sufficient musicians willing to play for free! Charlotte mentioned that the University will have musicians that we may be able to invite to take part.

- a) **Guerilla Bulb Planting** It was agreed that it would be a lovely idea to plant spring bulbs around Newtown. Various people offered to look at obtaining a supply of free bulbs for this through garden centres and the University. 2nd October was suggested. Cllr Westlake will get in touch with Newtown School and arrange a meeting with Ian. We will need to obtain permission for this from ECC.
- b) **Halloween event for families Sunday 31 October** Duncan is leading on this and is making plans at the moment. The event will probably comprise storytelling sessions, a parade round the park with lanterns and prize for the best one, soup, cake and refreshments.
Duncan and Sally will make soup and it was agreed that we may need to purchase a large pan for the cafe. Tom offered the use of his Macro card for this. Ian and Gay offered preserving pans. Gay will find a storyteller and report back to Duncan. Duncan will contact Ben to see if he can do some juggling.
- c) **Tea Party for Older Residents** Joan sent a report to say that the residents of Cleveland Court would be keen for this to happen. She is happy to organise it and proposed tea and cakes and a quiz and asked if Ian our Chair could say a few words. Joan will contact Billie to arrange a convenient date.
- d) **Hut Decorating Weekend** This is scheduled for 9 and 10 October and offers of help and materials are all welcome. Ian is organising this day which will include refreshments for the workers. The old painted boards will be taken down at this time.
- e) **Mural Project** Gay reported that she had currently received no offers of funding for the project. The Play Rangers and (*post meeting*) Flying Start Children's Centre are keen to be involved. Two artists have submitted proposals. It was agreed that we should go ahead despite lack of funding and should try to meet this from our own funds. The hut had been booked for the

artist to work with children to produce the final work during half term on Tuesday 26 October. Someone asked if a notice board was going to be incorporated. It wasn't but it could be.

- f) **Notice Board** It was agreed that our new notice board was very difficult to put pins into and required a softer surface which we will look at.
 - g) **Winter Warmer** It was agreed that after the success of the last event we will look at another get together near Christmas. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - h) **Craft Fairs** The winter warmer may be combined with craft fair suggested by Kat Thomas.
 - i) **Proposal to purchase a freezer** This was rejected.
6. **Extra Committee Roles** It was agreed that we need a Media and Publicity Officer and a Projects Officer. Post meeting Michael Parrott has offered to fill the Media and Publicity Role which has been agreed.
7. **Involving Young People in Newtown Community Association** This started from a conversation Duncan had with a young lad who was kicking his football against the wall alongside Gordon Road. He felt that a goal wall in the park was urgently needed, suitably sited so as not to annoy residents. Cllr Westlake felt that it was important that we involved the Youth Service because they have regular contact with young people and also visit the park in their van. It was agreed that this should be looked into. There was some discussion about how this project could be funded and ECFC was suggested. Duncan will email Cllr Westlake for contacts. It had earlier been suggested that we make links with the regular groups who use the football area but it was concluded that as they were already organised they probably would not require our help. It was observed that the same few people on the committee tend to take the responsibility for organising community association events and projects. It was suggested that it would be helpful if sub committees could be set up to handle some of the issues facing the community. Duncan and Charlotte both offered to help with the question of providing services for the youth of Newtown.
8. **Newtown's Vision** Ian reported that he had had a conversation with Cllr Adrian Fulham who fully supported the replacement of our hut. Ian will speak to ECC Estates about the legal aspects as the hut would then belong to NCA as a Trust and not to ECC. It is essential that this is properly clarified as funders will not grant funding unless NCA have tenure. Ian explained the current position which is that we are currently seeking funding of about £5,000 to put together the initial proposals and drawings and have already got the agreement of architects Gale and Snowden to prepare this for us at a reduced cost. Ian has had discussions with Rob Attwater who is a Newtown resident and initiated the Vision about creating a walk through design on CAD which everyone can see.

- 9. Constitution Update** The new Constitution which was drawn up to a Charity Commission design has been on the www for comments for several months. As there have been no comments this will be adopted at the next AGM. Peter asked if insurance could be taken out against any liability residing with committee members and trustees and it was agreed that it was important to do this. As our current insurance is coming up for renewal Peter will investigate.
- 10. Community Network Meeting Report** A regular series of meetings is held at St Sidwells Centre to enable community groups to get together. This is chaired by Exeter Community Initiatives. Ian reported that the meeting had again been a useful one enabling community association representatives to share their highs and lows! The next meeting is on Wednesday 22 September at 6.30 pm at St Sidwells Centre.
- 11. Kitchen Water Heater and Legionnaires Disease** We have recently been advised that we should keep the water boiler on at all times to avoid the risk of Legionnaires Disease, which has been done. However, Peter questioned whether this was the case because of the cost of the electricity to run this. Tom had recently undertaken a similar review and said that it is not necessary to keep the heater on all the time but we should ensure that it was switched on at least 30 minutes before use. He will forward to us his information. It was agreed for this reason that the boiler would not be turned on all the time. Gay will print off a suitable set of instructions to be fixed to the boiler.
- 12. Any Other Business**

 - a) **Park Bins and Seagulls** Duncan reported that some park bins have lids and some don't. The ones without lids are a target for seagulls which make a mess. He will contact Mike Trim and Paul Faulkner to see if this can be rectified.
 - b) **Incomplete Play Equipment** It was reported that this was now finished in time for the summer holidays. Thanks to our Councillors for pushing this forward.
 - c) **Community Matters Conference** Peter had an invitation to a conference. He couldn't attend at this time but it was agreed that on future occasions expenses could be paid to any representative attending on condition that they returned with a report.
 - d) **Proposed Waitrose Store in Heavitree** Yolanda Henson explained the recent ECC refusal of the plan. However, there was now a new proposal in the pipeline and it was expected that this time planning permission would probably be granted.
- 13. Date of Next Meeting** Tuesday 19 October 2010 at 8 pm in the hut.