

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2016 NEWSLETTER – EDITORIAL

Welcome to all SCRA Members

We continue to feature planning issues in some depth – see Planning Sub Committee Report below: the Local Plan process has now restart soon, and we have been very busy contesting the excesses of the Corinthian Land planning application.

I am also pleased that the SCRA social diary is healthy thanks to our excellent Social Sub-Committee. We print for you below the current Diary – please refer to the website for updates. The main event of the year, in some senses, ie the Little Lunch was very successful, and many thanks to all who organised and managed the event, particularly Hazel Vane Wright, and new event hosts Michael and Sara.

There is a long article below on the proposed merger: talks with OHDS continue to go well, and we set out the draft text of the new constitution. We continue to welcome any comments you may have, and you will be receiving soon formal notifications about the special meeting to be called to debate and hopefully approve the proposals including new standing orders, which will be issued in advance of the meeting.

We can include more material now that the publishing has switched to mainly electronic: as we said before, if you DO want a paper copy, or know someone else who does, please inform the Hon Sec Nick Riding, at 32 Cromwell Road. If you do not receive emailings from SCRA and you wish to, please email your current address to Nick (ncriding@gmail.com).

Other Contacts

website / email - use the contacts page

post - Nick Riding, Hon Sec, 32 Cromwell Rd Canterbury

Regards

Tim Carlyle, Chair

DIARY and SCRA Social Sub-committee

Membership is open to anyone that wants to contribute: ie, has some ideas about future, activities and is willing to help realise them, but bear in mind that if the merger goes ahead there will be quite a lot of new options to consider. If you are keen, please email Hazel Vane-Wright as below.

The next Social Committee meeting will be on Monday 8th August Nick's house, 32 Cromwell Road.

Email to hazelvanewright@btinternet.com.

- The Little Lunch was attended by approximately 35 people, which included some members of the OHDS Committee as well as SCRA members. Although those attending enjoyed the occasion (and the opportunity to talk of the Referendum results!) we are unsure whether to run this event in future – if the merger goes ahead should both the annual events run by OHDS and SCRA be held.

Perhaps you can email to indicate your preferences.

- Hilary Brian has offered to show the Social Committee around the Kent MS Therapy Centre as a possible new SCRA venue.

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

- Recipe book. Alison Culverwell has agreed to collate recipes for A SCRA recipe book and will ask those attending Tea on the Lawn for their suggestions. We will email members to inform them of our plans. None of the Committee has publishing experience but collectively we have enough talent to produce the book 'in house' and have it spiral bound locally.
- Welcome letter. All SCRA members should have received a digital copy of the new welcome letter. None of the Committee members have had any feedback as to whether it has been used.
- Tea on the Lawn will be on Sunday August 7th between 2.30-4.30 at 26 Ethelbert Road. We are considering extending an invitation for this to OHDS Members or Committee to this event.

We will advise further details in due course, including wet weather contingency. Members will be asked to bring a selection of cakes and drinks to share, and hot and cold drinks will be provided by SCRA.

We need offers of help with, garden chairs/tables/shades although SCRA will provide basics.

Walking

We are unsure how to progress these: we have suspended further walks as the last two were poorly attended. The Committee thought that the 'history walks' idea might be a more popular approach, rather than simple rambles.

What type and frequency of walks would you be interested in? Please email.

Hazel Vane-Wright

Gardening

We continue to arrange gardening activities, some with OHDS: coordinated by Sally Perkins:

SCRA Gardening Group

During this first summer of the recently formed Gardening Group, we have visited several gardens starting with Barbara and Martin's in Cromwell Road in early June. Barbara has been reworking the garden with help from Sophia the Cycling Gardener and has a lot of unusual plants. Next up was Alison and Francis' large garden in Ethelbert Road. She invited advice about how to control her weed problem and several members of the Group made suggestions. Following a visit to Gill and Brian's garden in Cromwell Road where we discussed the problems caused by a big pollarded maple tree, we went to Lee and Richard's garden in South Canterbury Road where Lee's roses were flowering spectacularly and we admired the wild area with spotted orchids growing profusely in the grass. In July, the Group visited Phil and my garden in South Canterbury Road where I have been developing an area of shade loving plants. Several of the Group have kindly offered to show their gardens and so I will arrange with them when they think would be a good time of year.

Alison and I did a scout of Derrydown Lavender nursery near Tonbridge and Broadview Gardens and garden centre at Hadlow College with a view to perhaps arranging a Group visit in the future. Over the winter months we will explore other ideas for Group visits.

If you are interested in joining the SCRA Gardening Group, then please contact Sally (sally@perkinsnet.plus.com) or Alison (culverwell@greenf.fsnet.co.uk). Email addresses will be shared amongst members of the Group and with the SCRA Social Committee.

Sally Perkins
SCRA Gardening Group Coordinator

Residents who are interested in community gardening should contact Sophie Scott (sophie01@btinternet.com), the Oaten Hill Society representative in the Group; we will be part of the

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Oaten Hill submission for the RHS 'It's Your Neighbourhood' campaign (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/communities/campaigns/it-s-your-neighbourhood>).

A NOTE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

As usual, there are a number of households whose 2015-16 subscription is still outstanding. If you are not sure if you have paid, feel free to email Alison Culverwell to ask: culverwell@greenf.fnet.co.uk

PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE

The Draft Local Plan - Examination in Public (EIP)

See website (SCRA and CCC) for details: Hearings recommenced 19 20 21 July at the Franciscan Study Centre. Other dates in September yet to be confirmed.

- SCRA (TC) made representations on the final topic for the morning session 19th July on the 5 Year Land Supply –this relates to Ridlands Farm which we made representations on.

- Dick VW is making representations for ACRA in the September sessions, on Employment / Tourism.

We are writing to the Inspector to be allowed to debate the Transport Strategy in the light of the Railton Report, on the day in September set aside for Matter B - Infrastructure in September – we are not optimistic that he will allow it but will do our best.

Planning Application for South Canterbury

This was lodged at the beginning of April, and commented on by many RAs, including SCRA, at the end of May.

Our approach has always been that we support house building, but in the right numbers and in the right place – trying to minimise the blight of congestion, caused by 4000 – 6000 newcars.

As you know, we were sufficiently alarmed by the Transport Assessment that we ran a campaign with OHDS to raise money for a resident's report, that was submitted as part of our comments, and this was featured in the Kent Gazette. Corinthian Land commented briefly and very negatively on it, attempting to dismiss it out of hand.

We have attended two meetings on the transport aspects of the application, with KCC, and with Corinthian Land.

Both concentrated on showing how the increased traffic could most quickly be got away from the site and put onto the ring road, which will be done by reducing local parking, and changing junction design to limit access for cars onto to Old and New Dover Roads. By doing this, Corinthian seems to think that they have solved the problem, but they of course have not. The congestion on the ring road will rise by at least approximately 50%.

Their only other idea is that we/the new residents will take to walking cycling and buses in a big way, but they grossly exaggerate this effect. Achieving that sort of change is left to others – ie the community or CCC, and there is no evidence of how or why residents will change their behaviour in such large numbers.

A quite separate major issue is the impact on the city and the setting of World Heritage Site of Canterbury Cathedral of 21m high housing blocks, on the skyline.

The final major issue raised was of course the effect on air quality and health of the increased congestion.

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

We will issue further specific reports on how the application is progressing: the next step is that many individuals and bodies have objected to various parts, and CCC have asked Corinthian to submit new information in response. We will comment on that. The Planning Committee will probably hear the application in mid October.

THE CASE FOR A MERGER BETWEEN OHDS AND SCRA

Introduction

The question is often asked, “Why do we have two residents groups in South Canterbury?”

Almost all the households (1000+) covered by SCRA fall within the larger area (2000+ households) covered by OHDS. The two associations have very different origins: OHDS was established over 40 years ago as a society for people interested in local history and urban conservation, whereas SCRA was founded less than a decade ago to combat conversion of adjacent council-owned green-field land into a commercial sports complex, with the expectation of going on to campaign for local amenity improvements.

Over the period of existence of SCRA the two groups have converged in their interests and preoccupations: OHDS has become more concerned with improvements as well as conservation, while SCRA has taken on a more society-like role with respect to community activities. Both groups now face a new kind of challenge – the massive housing developments expected to go ahead on adjacent lands at Barton, Nackington and Ridlands.

Given this convergence of interests, together with an increasing difficulty both groups have experienced in forming large enough committees not only necessary for self-maintenance, but also to tackle the larger and more complex planning and environmental issues at stake, a possible merger of the two groups is something that it is only sensible to consider. This need has been recognised by both organisations.

Thus, over the past six months, a small steering group comprising David Kemsley and Chris Tucker (for OHDS) and Tim Carlyle and Alison Culverwell (for SCRA) has met several times (under the chairmanship of Dick Vane-Wright, a member of both associations), in an attempt to explore the benefits, disadvantages and logistics of a possible merger. The following is a summary of their deliberations to date.

Advantages

There are several immediate as well as potential longer term advantages from a merger, including:

- Greater mobilisation of available expertise – desperately needed given the scale of issues raised by the Local Plan
- Improved administrative efficiency and sustainability – not least by avoiding duplication of work across two organisations serving the same area
- Greater influence and local engagement through a larger, single association
- Elimination of confusion regarding which organisation to support
- Potential to create a wider range of events and special interest groups, and improve communication
- Potential for greater appeal to younger people
- Disadvantages
- There seem to be relatively few disadvantages, most of which could be overcome; the possible disadvantages including:
 - Larger group potentially more unwieldy
 - Possible disengagement of active members when faced with change or new procedures
 - Possible loss of local identity or weakening of special interest groups
 - Potential reduction in total income although if managed well, income could be more optimally utilised.

Logistics

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

If a merger were to go ahead, there are issues concerning the aims and objectives of the new organisation (leading to a new constitution), winding up one or both of the existing organisations, formation of a new committee, and joint assets and future financial procedures, all to be addressed. A new association name to embrace both groups would be needed. All these requirements have been discussed by the working group with the proposal that a merged organisation be called Oaten Hill and South Canterbury Association (OHSCA). A document describing the aims together with a draft constitution would be circulated to all members prior to an EGM (extraordinary general meeting) for each group in early October. At these meetings the membership will be invited to debate the proposal to merge and, if agreed, to adopt the new constitution. They would also be asked to delegate to their current committee the executive powers to wind up their organisation in its current form (conditional on the other organisation also agreeing to merge). OHDS would need a technical agreement to delay their AGM until early November when an AGM for the new merged organisation would be held at which the new committee could be elected.

It is proposed that the new committee would comprise 12–15 members of which there would be 8 “officers” and 5–7 additional individuals with specific roles. The “officers” would comprise Chair, Vice-Chair, Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary, Membership Secretary, Minutes Secretary, Planning lead and Social events lead. Additional roles/ reporting responsibilities would include Communications (including IT manager), Newsletter Editor, History group, Environment group, Community support group, and Tree Officer. It is proposed that a flexible structure is adopted to allow evolution of procedures and that it would not be sensible to be over-prescriptive from the start. It is acknowledged that some aspects of each organisations activity may wholly merge whereas others may operate in tandem maintaining their individual flavours.

Conclusions and recommendation

The conclusion of the working group is that the demonstrable advantages of a merger considerably outweigh all potential disadvantages and that, if accepted by both separate memberships, the new association could come into existence by the end of this calendar year.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD TO DEBATE AND VOTE ON THE ISSUE ON
10th OCTOBER at 7.30pm, Venue TBA.

DRAFT SECTION OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION FOR A MERGED OATEN HILL AND SOUTH CANTERBURY ASSOCIATION ('OHSCA')

Please note our SCRA constitution is at <http://www.southcanterburyresidents.com/constitution.html> and that the current OHDS constitution is on their website at <http://www.oatenhill.org.uk/constitution.shtml> and note that the defined geographical area will include at least all of the streets currently covered by OHDS, see the current map on the OHDS home page at <http://www.oatenhill.org.uk/index.shtml>

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 OHSCA is a non-party-political voluntary group constituted to represent, promote and protect the interests of all those who live and work in the areas of Canterbury broadly described as Oaten Hill and South Canterbury, the streets defined above in section 1.

(Note that this defined area includes all the streets currently covered by OHDS, see the map on our home page at <http://www.oatenhill.org.uk/index.shtml>)

2.2 Our aim is to support and improve the quality of life of our community.

2.3 Our interests include, but are not limited to the following:

- Encouraging a community spirit, and promoting cultural and educational activities e.g Local History Group
- Maintaining the balance between residential, business and educational interests
- The quality of housing and the built environment
- Conservation and extension of green spaces
- Improved recreational facilities

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

- Safer travel for all road and pavement users, and sustainable transport availability
- Monitoring the quality and impact of our physical environment, balancing current and future needs, encouraging improvements, resisting deteriorations

2.4 The means we aim to use to represent, promote and protect these interests include:

- Providing a forum for residents through newsletters, meetings and social activities
- Encouraging all residents within our area to become members of the Association.
- Consulting and informing members about our activities
- Alerting residents to and investigating any proposed developments and/or licensing applications in our area that could have a significant local impact
- Encouraging and, where appropriate, initiating proposals that could enhance the amenity value of the area including gardening and tree planting initiatives
- Engaging constructively with Canterbury City Council, other local bodies and like-minded groups, with the aim of enhancing quality of life in our area
- Providing support, including professional advice where available, to street-based residents groups that may arise in our area from-time-to-time, because of specific issue(s) affecting a particular street.

A REPORT FROM THE HE & FE IMPACT REVIEW

(Student Impact Review (SIR))

Your committee attended the second conference on 13 June to review interim findings and begin to formulate conclusions, and formulate final questionnaires to clarify satisfaction or complaint levels.

Good work has been done and much interesting information gathered, However, awkward questions begin to arise:

- what resources are there to employ on change?
- Who are the providers/funders?
- What are they willing to fund?

Results from Theme groups

Economy

- CCC GDP approx £4B
 - UKC/CCU/UCA annual turnover (all campuses) approx £450M (ie 10% of GDP)
 - Scale of housing rents contribution to C/B economy approx £65M pa.
 - Number of HMOs in CCC area – approx 3,800
- Scale of maintenance activity etc approx £2M

Greater clarity needed on how these figures are built up, geographical distribution etc.

Social

Main emphasis – noise and anti social behaviour, and impact of functioning of the Street Marshalls Scheme.

- Reported reductions in nuisance in two hot spots

Some outline data of graduate employment, undergraduate employment, u/g placements.

SOUTH CANTERBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

More data needed on degree and types of benefits to the C/B population eg – free use of the libraries, law clinic, and how these benefits can be increased/publicised.

69% of local population do not feel part the area, where the numbers of student HMOs is high.

Physical

CB has lowest national percentage for home ownership, highest percentage for renting.

Total no of students in CB -
- 31,464 (not 40,000) (?evidence base)

Numbers of students accommodated

– 7,300 in HMOs

- 400-600 live at home

- 5700 in PBSA for 2013-2014 (4,800 in 2014-15)

- Rents - similar for PBSA or private – between £90 – 160 p/wk

Cleaning and physical environment - relatively high levels of satisfaction (approx 70%)

As part of the social theme, the performance of the **Street Marshalls Scheme** was discussed

It is up for review shortly – UKC/CCCU are apparently agreeable to fund for another year. They should be asked to increase the scope: ie the areas/streets covered.