



St Stephen's Residents' Association Newsletter: Spring 2017

www.ststephensra.org Facebook: St Stephen's Residents Association

Many thanks to those people who braved the very poor weather conditions to help with the St Stephen's Residents' Association district litter pick on November 20th. Reports of this event and photographs are on our website and Facebook sites. We managed to collect 16 bags of litter despite the fact that much of it was hidden beneath a thick layer of leaves blown down by the storm. Participants enjoyed refreshments organised by Sue Langdown and Sian Pettman from Market Way Residents' Association, several members of which group helped with the litter pick. There was an article about the event in the *Kentish Gazette* entitled 'Litter Angels', showing litter liaison councillor, Terry Westgate, with a litter ring halo (used to hold open the top of a refuse bag) held over his head. We are grateful to Terry for helping us with the litter pick, for making equipment available and organising opportunities for litter representatives from residents' groups across Canterbury to meet and exchange ideas for dealing with this persistent problem.

Thanks also go to members who offered at the AGM to take responsibility for **regular litter collection**. Pauline has a list of volunteers and they have established rotas in their own roads. We are aware, of course, that many people would prefer to undertake this task informally whenever they have the free time available, without participating in a rota. Please contact Pauline if you would like to join with this and have not yet expressed an interest. Pauline and Sue Langdown have kindly offered to co-ordinate all litter collecting activity on behalf of the Association and Sue organised a litter pick event to on March 4th to support the 'Great British Spring Clean Campaign'.

Annual subscriptions due

Annual subscriptions of **three pounds** are due in April and your local street rep will be collecting these over the next few weeks. These will contribute towards further improvements to the local environment that we wish to undertake over the next year as well as to fund hall hire for meetings, printing costs for the newsletter and a contribution towards maintenance of our website, as outlined in the Treasurer's report at the AGM. Other items raised at the AGM or received an update included the following:

- We thanked Graham Gibbens, our County Councillor, for the funding that we have received from his Members' Grant Fund, topped up by our funds to cover the cost of one of the two new benches that are now on St Stephen's Green and opposite the playground on St Stephen's Church Field.
- The **wall** behind the new bench in St Stephens Church Field has been **repointed** at the request of the Residents' Association following an e-mail alert from a member who noticed missing mortar and bricks.
- Unfortunately, our application for an extension of the **grass verge and footway parking ban** to The Crescent and Moorfield has been turned down as a result of objections to this proposal during the consultation period. Where there is currently a ban in place on St Stephen's Green, Hales Drive and Manwood Avenue, any problems can be reported to the parking enforcement team. (01227 862429 parking.enforcement@canterbury.gov.uk))
- The RA Committee has agreed to fund a **replacement tree on the hard-standing area at the entrance to St Stephen's Court** where a dead flowering cherry tree has been removed by KCC. After consultation, we have decided to plant a flowering hawthorn, 'Frosted Thorn', which is native to south east England and has profuse autumn berries which should attract wildlife.
- Recommendations were received from the judge of the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' scheme, in which Manwood Green was thought to be 'thriving', for types of **shrubs to be planted in front of the almshouses**. A budget of four hundred pounds has been allocated by the RA committee to cover the cost of plants and compost. Sue Langdown will co-ordinate the planting, which will take place in March, and will ask the almshouses residents if they wish to be involved. Other offers of help would be welcomed for this event.
- One of our members, Jenny Robson, has volunteered to set up a **gardening interest group** beginning in the spring of 2017. This would start in a small way and would be open to anyone living in St Stephen's, beginners or veteran gardeners. The first event is likely to be a sunflower growing competition and details of where to collect seed and register for the competition will be published on the Residents' Association website and Facebook sites.

Other news:

- We welcome a new member to the RA committee, Alan Cunningsworth.
- Residents of Moorfield held a Christmas street party at which they enjoyed mince pies and soup while singing carols led by an excellent choir conducted by one of their

members. A collection for the charity Catching Lives was made. In total, the singers raised £1,111.33p and the Moorfield event contributed to that.

- Any concerns with regard to **vegetation overhanging the pavement** can be reported to Graham Gibbens (grahamgibbens@kent.gov.uk), our County Councillor, who will pass on any comments received.
- The report on the **University of Kent's masterplan consultation** should be available on the University's website in the near future. There will be a guidance document about how the process will go forward, including a timeline, and they hope to enable more interaction with the local community to inform their thinking.
- We have a **Facebook Page**: St Stephen's Residents' Association. Please follow it for news of events and local news and let us know of anything that is happening in our area. Also, please share our page with other people as we hope to make this one of the biggest pages in the locality.

I look forward to the year ahead and the exciting events that are planned and would welcome any suggestions for future activities or information about neglected areas that you feel need brightening up.

Jennifer Holland

Treasurer's Report

The annual subscription for membership of the Alliance of Canterbury Residents' Associations, printing costs for the newsletter and invoices for payment of hire of St Stephen's Church Hall have been paid since the Treasurer's Report at the AGM in November 2016. Other funding has been allocated for the purchase of shrubs and seeds for both environmental improvements and the proposed sunflower growing competition. With no other known expenses anticipated it seems appropriate to maintain the annual subscription rate at £3.00 per household which, when collected, should restore the Residents' Association funds to approximately the same amount held in the bank account at the beginning of the year.

Terry Patten

Kingsmead field

- There is going to be considerable upheaval on the field this year, as we continue with our programme of enhancements. The updated timetable for the works is as follows...
- The completion of the footpath around the field will begin in May / June and will probably take 6 - 8 weeks.
- The toddler's play area and table tennis table will be installed at the end of the summer and will take 3 - 4 weeks.
- The creation of a 2-stage channel in the river to improve it as a habitat for wildlife will begin in September, undertaken by the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership in conjunction with the Environment Agency, and will involve local volunteers, especially with planting in a newly created wetland area.
- We will be planning an event to celebrate the completion of these enhancements in late autumn and then look forward to tree planting on the field next winter.
- We expect that a planning application for development on the back 20% of the field will be submitted within the next couple of months. We will let you know as soon as details of the application are available as many of you might also wish to comment.

Kingsmead Field 200 Club

We hope to increase membership of our 200 Club over the coming year, as it is a great way of raising funds for enhancements to the field. As a result of the 200 Club, we were able to contribute to the installation of two picnic tables last autumn and will help purchase the table tennis table later this year. We would like to thank KCC Councillor Graham Gibbens for giving us substantial grants towards the total cost of both these projects. Monthly draws take place for a winner and a runner up. The more members we have, the greater the amount of prize money. If you would like to join the 200 Club, please apply to Di Baldock at: kf200@dibaldock.uk

Sue Langdown

Friends of the Riverside group

Two main topics were on the agenda of the most recent meeting of the group. The first discussed was a proposed water feature/sculpture for Abbott's Mill Square. William Pye, a renowned sculptor, has been approached, and he is to provide details of three

designs to illustrate the area's historic past. The final design selected will be funded by public donations.

The second main item was a presentation of the proposed enhancement of 'The Arrowhead', a section of land on the approach to Abbott's Mill Bridge. There are extensive plans for this site. It is to be cleared of all debris and replanted with native species of trees. There are also plans to build a learning centre and a vegan cafe, all serviced by renewable energy; the clearing work will begin in the spring.

Ron Waters

Open Gardens 2017

On June 25th this year, we are planning an Open Garden Day so we are asking residents in Moorfield, The Terrace, Manwood Avenue, Orchard Close and The Crescent to open their gardens from 11 am until 5pm. Participants may have a stall in their gardens and afternoon teas will be available.

Next year, we intend to run the event again, this time asking householders in St Stephen's Road, Hill, Green, Close and Court, Tyler Close and Hales Drive to take part.

Tickets will be on sale from some Street Reps and, we hope, in Porter's but we will let you know nearer the time via email or on the website. If you do not have internet access, please phone 01227 766331 for details.

We will need cakes so do let us know if you are willing to bake for us, and we also require at least one more household to provide teas. Graham Gibbens, our County Councillor, has already offered garden teas for the afternoon!

This will be a lovely event and we look forward to seeing many of our residents enjoying a day together in June.

Hat heaven is here!

Go to our website and you will find photos of hats that members are willing to lend for that very special occasion so, if you would like to borrow or try on one of the hats, just contact the web manager or Pauline, giving your name and address. If you are happy to lend a hat, please send Pauline a photo of the hat and your name and address.

Membership Report

Thank you to all the people that I meet around St Stephen's who tell me that they enjoy receiving my emails. I'm so pleased that you find them useful and informative. This year, apart from local history information, lectures and coffee mornings, I have sent out details of recitals, offers of unwanted items from a Dyson to a cabin bed and a Cathedral garden ticket, surveys, cleaners, scams, [of course] free flu inoculations and photos..

Thank you to all those residents who paid their subs last year and who have given me their email addresses. It has become clear that this is a quick and efficient way of sharing news and information in our community. Please do consider sending me your email address when you fill in your subscription form and give it to your street rep. I send out my news using bcc so no one else has the information and I do not give your email to anyone else.

Special thanks go to the street reps. who are the backbone of the Association and are always willing to help, to deliver newsletters and to email me with ideas and solutions.

Remember, if you want a list of tradesmen recommended by your neighbours, just email me and finally, for all the news and information you could ever need about St Stephen's, go to our website. Thank you, Ian Hancock, for running the site, which I hope you all consult for news and events.

Pauline Walters

Subscriptions are now due for 2017-2018.

The subscription is set at a minimum of £3. Please complete this form and return it with your subscription to your street representative who is:

_____ at _____

YOUR NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE [optional] _____

Email address _____

Any comments about the Residents' Association?