



## **NEWSLETTER MARCH 2014**

**Our AGM** in November was well attended and reports were given on the Association's various activities throughout the year. We were pleased to welcome Mr Michael Walter, Secretary to the Friends of Hambrook Marshes, who gave an up to date account of the group's efforts to both enhance the area, and ensure that it will remain open for the public to enjoy.

**Annual subscription** to the Residents' Association. It was agreed at the AGM to keep the subscription to £2 per household. I hope you will agree that this is a very modest amount, which covers such things as our Neighbourhood Watch scheme, printing and efforts to enhance our area, such as bulb planting. We also produce a 'Welcome to St Stephens' booklet for newcomers to our area. This is currently being updated, so if you know of a service or activity you wish to see included, please let us know.

Quite simply, our role is to act when requested as the voice for people living in the St Stephens area on matters which concern our community. We aim to improve our local environment through regular liaison with district and county councillors, and represent our community in meetings with other resident associations and community groups. We also aim to keep you informed about local issues which may either be of interest, or are likely to impact upon us in St Stephens.

Until now, we have produced three hard copy newsletters a year, delivered to your door by our wonderful street reps, who also collect your subs and maintain the link between you and the committee. At the AGM it was agreed that we should try replacing two of the newsletters with more regular bulletins by email, and simply retain the March/April newsletter in paper form. We recognise that this will present problems for people who do not use email, and if this applies to you, please let your street rep know, and we will deliver any news in printed form.

### **NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Boundary Commission Review.** The Commission's recommendation on new wards is expected to appear on their website <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/canterbury-fer> in March 2014. There will then be an opportunity for any fine tuning which may be needed before the final document is published in August 2014.

**Canterbury City Council Draft Local Plan.** The submissions and conclusions from the consultation last year may now be seen on the council website. <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/> Residents are invited to comment. The timetable of meetings, preparatory to implementation has now been announced:

- March 25<sup>th</sup> Joint Transportation Board. The Guildhall 7 pm
- April 2<sup>nd</sup> Overview committee The Guildhall 7 pm
- April 10<sup>th</sup> Executive committee The Guildhall 6.30 pm
- April 24<sup>th</sup> Full Council The Guildhall 7 pm

**Kingsmead Field** Although Cllr Gilbey has announced that in his view, the field should not now be developed, he has yet to obtain the agreement of the full council. To this end, reports will be provided by Officers. In the meantime, discussions will take place between representatives of residents and community groups most closely affected and Council Officers.

**Alliance of Canterbury Residents Associations (ACRA)** On November 19<sup>th</sup> 2013, representatives from over 20 Residents Associations met formally to endorse the creation of ACRA. This represented the consolidation of existing groups, the North Canterbury Forum (NCFRA) the South Canterbury Alliance (SCARA) a number of City Centre Resident Associations and some outlying groups. ACRA is intended as a coordinating body which will effectively project the views of resident groups to the press, public and politicians. It will ensure that one part of the city will not be played off against another.

**Campaign for Democracy in Canterbury District (CDCD)** has been set up by a broad coalition of groups in the Canterbury District who are concerned that the Council's current system of decision-making is flawed, and wish to explore alternatives. The coalition includes community groups and Resident Associations from Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay, as well as a number of Parish Councils. A petition which will lead to a referendum in 2015, was launched last month. Please take the time to find out about this campaign by looking at their website [cdcd@gmail.com](mailto:cdcd@gmail.com) Offers of help will be welcomed.

**Residents' concerns, parking and traffic** Residents continue to express concern about parking and problems associated with children being dropped off and picked up from school. Your committee has been in discussion with county and city councillors, representatives from the Highways dept., KCC, our local schools, Stagecoach officials and traffic enforcement. While there is general agreement that our concerns are legitimate, it mainly comes down to lack of money to effect any changes to the current road layout. Both schools were asked whether they will look at ways to achieve students being delivered to and picked up within the school grounds. We have been told that this is not possible. We will continue to keep all these matters under review, as well as the need for schools to provide parking for all their staff on school premises.

If you wish to receive updates on local news, events of interest or concern, please make sure that we have your email address.

In the meantime, let us know your concerns, and what you would like to see your committee tackling this year.

With all good wishes for a Happy Easter

*Sue Langdown*

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