

St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward Forum

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2017

Finance Report. See attached

Constitution, approved at EGM Nov 16. No further changes have been suggested.

Forum quarterly meetings for 2017 are: February 8; May 10; August 9 (also AGM) and November 15.

May 10 meeting. Veronica Sekules owner of the Groundwork Gallery, Purfleet Place, styled as writer, art historian, curator and educator, will give an overview of the role of gallery and comment on aspects of the town.

South Quay Regeneration. A copy of the forum's response to the public consultation has been forwarded to Peter Gidney, (PG) chairman of the Regeneration and Development Panel. The forum committee agreed to send comments on two further elements of the project: loss of **parking on Boal Quay** and the **barriers along the river frontage**. (Letter attached).

New funding of £10,000 has been allocated to Lynn to develop an economic plan that will make the most of the town's heritage and waterfront location. This is in addition to the present regeneration scheme. A **Coastal Community Team** composed of a partnership of public and private sector agencies including business leaders, retailers, educators, innovators, tourism and heritage experts is to be established to will also review all the existing plans and bring them together under their umbrella where appropriate, to make sure a joined-up approach is being taken and opportunities are not being missed. A full presentation is planned for the August forum meeting.

Friars Walk I have concerns over the protection of a) the archaeological and b) wildlife and environment aspects of this area and the need to protect it from development. It also has links with Sir Guy Dawber, the founder of the CPRE who was born and bred at the Minster vicarage. The forum intends to make known these concerns with a view to their protection.

Parking review. Phil Reilly, NCC Highways reports that the legal order for the charging changes on South Quay is about to be advertised. This will be for 21 days, and if there are no objections a swift delivery should be possible, then there will be only the notes on the machines to change. The whole 'could all be done and dusted by end March.'

In a renewed effort to achieve residents' parking – and to highlight the difficulties residents face - the forum has written to the county and borough leaders and chief executives to ask that they work together to tackle the problem (Letter attached), with copies sent to councillors and to the MP.

Ugly parking signs, no less than five on horrid galvanised posts have been installed over a very short distance in King Street, part of the conservation area (CA). They are precisely the kind of unsympathetic – and unnecessary – street furniture that is despoiling period settings and the forum wrote in protest to NCC Highways, the perpetrator. In response Sally Bettinson, Highway Engineer sent this explanation: 'The reason there are so many of them is because, to make them legally enforceable, they have to be a certain size, distance apart or attributable to certain bays. So the five (in King Street) is the legal requirement and cannot be changed. Unfortunately the

posts that have been replaced should have been black not grey as this is a conservation area, I will get them changed in due course.' We have suggested that there should be dispensations for a CA and asked her to look into it.

Dazzling pavement lights outside the Town Hall. We first took this up last autumn, and have now received a reply from Chris Bamfield, borough chief executive for commercial services. 'Unfortunately we are unable to programme the lights for individual evenings so we have taken the decision to use an outdoor mat to cover the lights on those evenings when functions are taking place. The mat was ordered last year but due to the lead time of receiving it we temporarily used a smaller mat which was taped to the pavement to try to prevent it from being a trip hazard. The proper mat has now been received and will be implemented from January 18, 2017 when the first evening function of this year takes place and will continue to be used for evening functions to alleviate the dazzle issue.'

We have now written suggesting that in addition there should be notices at the top of the staircase warning of the hazard and directing people, the elderly and infirm especially, to the other stairs or the lift, which will bring them to the alternative entrance. We advise forum members to take this route and be aware of the dazzle at all times, even when only passing the building.

St James Medical Practice. (SJMP) Sadly we learn that the practice remains determined to move and is now assessing an alternative site on land opposite Kilhams Way on the west side of John Kennedy Road (JKR) approximately where or near the metal installations are sited. This will be every bit as bad for those who are not blessed with their own transport and will have to use the bus – if indeed a service *IS* provided as was suggested when the proposal was first mooted – because they will have to cross the busy thoroughfare that is JKR. The forum is writing to SJMP and the regional NHS, but holds out little hope that this flawed proposal will not go ahead, nor that an in-town presence can be retained.

Street names and premises numbering. All properties have a legal obligation to display the correct street number, but hardly any of the shops in the Vancouver Shopping Centre and the High Street have complied, especially the more prominent high street chains. Numbering is necessary for the convenience of the public, the emergency services, mail and goods delivery, utility companies and taxis. A recent count has shown that less than 10% of the High Street premises display their street number. Believe it or not, the borough council has guide-lines in the regulations (in a colourful pamphlet) relating to the design and colour of street numbers, the size of the numerals and their position on the building (nor more than 2.5m above ground).

Of equal importance are street signs, so many of which were removed when buildings were demolished and not replaced. Visitors to Lynn wishing to locate New Conduit Street or Broad Street are unable to do so as there are no signs for those thoroughfares, and the situation is worse in the Vancouver Shopping Centre,

The forum contacted the BCKLWN Address Management Team in September 2016 over these two issues but, to date, has yet to receive an acknowledgement let alone a reply. Now that the tourist season is approaching, the forum sub-committee is asking for your support. Would you like the forum to take this issue under its wing and seek the co-operation of the team to replace the missing street signs and to remind business premises of their obligation to display their street number?

St George's Guildhall and Arts Centre. Sally attended a meeting of user groups just before Christmas. But although all were agreed *something* needs to be done, quite what and how to achieve it, is the problem. The main thrust is the need for a dynamic person to revive the arts

centre and get it off the ground – but where to find such a person and, more important, the money to employ them, remains the imponderable. We are maintaining a watching brief.

Some good things... Scaffolding on Wennis and the former Courts building is a sign that improvements are on their way.

Julian Litten, chairman
January 2017