

**St Margaret's with St Nicholas Ward Forum.
Activity since the forum meeting and AGM, July 11, 2016.**

Dedicated Email Address.

Please note that to avoid confusion we have set up an email dedicated to the ward forum and for clarity and brevity we have abandoned the original name and it is now twosaintskl@gmail.com

Riverfront Regeneration Delivery Plan. Stakeholder 'consultation'.

This event was held on September 6. Julian, Brian and Sally attended representing the forum with Elizabeth in her capacity as chairman of Nelson Street Residents. We had anticipated that urbandelivery (NB correct spelling and no capital letters) which has been appointed to produce the design, would present initial proposals for us to comment upon. It transpired that matters were at a much earlier stage. We were divided into groups under various headings: 'environment, 'heritage' etc, given packs of 'post-it' notes, asked to discuss our assigned topic and to come up with various points we felt should be considered by urbandelivery: the points to be written on the aforesaid post-it notes. We were somewhat disappointed as we had not anticipated that this would be the form the consultation was to take and were no wiser at the end than we had been at the beginning, though urbandelivery did say that some of the comments were 'interesting'. We have been told that there will be a further session when this information will be vouchsafed.

We attempted to invite a representative of urbandelivery to this meeting to speak to you. But the company has informed us that the borough council officials did not wish them to attend. We have written therefore to Ostap Paparega, Regeneration and Economic Manager, regretting this stance and reiterating our invitation.

More recently we were sent a report of the meeting; this has been forwarded to members for discussion at the forum meeting on November 16.

Sites and Policy Suggestions Consultation.

A copy of a letter from the borough council is attached. It sets out what the consultation is all about and what is involved. Briefly it is to allow various categories of consultee which includes 'individuals and other interested parties' to identify and put forward sites for development. The committee wishes to hear from members of sites which could be developed – and also to be alerted to sites which should NOT under any circumstances be developed. Please forward suggestions to the ward forum secretary Sally Turff, twosaintskl@gmail.com in advance of the meeting.

Flood awareness - what next?.

Following a successful event, the Environment Agency is keen to assist the forum in setting up a community flood group to be in place to deal with flood eventualities. (Attached a document on the Riseley Flood Group to give an idea of what this entails). Community police officers, who attended the event, are also very keen to be involved and they have a dozen or so cadets they would like to be 'trained' so that they can participate. Once set up and in place commitment will not be arduous – except in the event of a flood of course. In the main it requires one or two people in each area to liaise with the authorities, know where vulnerable residents, who might require help, live and can be contacted and check them out if there is a flood.

So the question is: do forum members wish to become involved?

Two local companies, **Flood Ark and Flood Sense**, have provided literature about their services which will be available at the forum meeting. Both offer a free property assessment to advise on measures which householders can/should take.

St George's Guildhall Arts Centre.

Plans have been announced and are up for consultation. At the moment they only involve the Guildhall itself and not the rest of this very important complex of listed buildings, which form the Arts Centre. It appears that following representations from user/interest groups at a meeting with Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Health and Chris Bamfield, Executive Director, Leisure and Public Space, and further discussions thereafter, the drastic reduction in the number of seats has been abandoned. Now it is proposed that there will be a maximum of 300 seats installed on the 'moving seat' principle of the Corn Exchange to give a mix of flat and tiered seating. This would make the whole project more expensive, though. Despite the alteration which will need revision of plans, the council remains intent upon submitting an HLF bid by the end of November – an unseemly rush in the opinion of many and one which may well not allow a proper consideration of all aspects of arts provision.

Cllr Bambridge, who is co-opted to the forum committee, is making a strong case for the visual arts to be included as an important element in the arts centre complex; they do not feature in the present plans.

Other than attending the first meeting which the interest groups had with Cllr Nockolds and Mr Bamfield the committee has not become involved nor made representations (other than in a private capacity). We are maintaining contact with Ivor Rowland, who initiated the interest group meeting, and he will be providing an update on the present position for the forum meeting.

Do forum members wish the forum to take a more proactive role?

Website and Facebook.

Although he has retired from the committee, Wayne Hart agreed to continue to act as webmaster. He and Tim are working together for further fine-tuning.

Tim has put the forum on Facebook too – so we are moving into the 21st century.

Parking Review.

A meeting of the Norfolk Parking Partnership was held on September 29 and members approved, in principle, a lower overnight charge on the quay, and to extend the waiting period to accommodate the restaurant trade. This now has to be ratified, a legal procedure which will take some months – but first NCC is awaiting the results of a parking survey from the borough council. Phil Reilly NCC Highways officer has also told us that the expansion or creation of an adjacent zone to cater for ward residents will be dovetailed in with the South Quay regeneration project.* He envisaged that consultation on the changes to the parking charges and structure would begin in October.

*NB. There was no mention of this at the Riverside Regeneration Stakeholder 'consultation'; and, unsurprisingly, the South Quay is well-nigh empty of parked cars in the late evening and overnight.

Pavement lights at the doorway to the Town Hall.

Several forum members have complained that after dark these lights are so bright that they are dazzling to the extent that they pose a serious danger. This is especially so because there are no handrails at the bottom of the main staircase steps; edge of the lower one is badly eroded too. In daylight one could not imagine just how dazzling these lights are. We have written to Cllr Nockolds and Chris Bamfield; Cllr Nockolds sent a prompt reply to say the matter would be looked at without delay. Nevertheless by November 1 nothing had been done to remedy or even ameliorate the danger. We have therefore written again but with the intention of taking up the matter with the Health and Safety Executive if nothing is done.

NB At the Trafalgar Dinner the Sea Scouts laid carpet over the offending lighting as a precaution.

Forum meetings 2017 will be on Feb 8; May 10; August 9 (also AGM) and Nov 15.