



**Minutes of the North Laine Community Association residents' meeting
on 18^h July 2017**

Present: Francis Clark-Lowes, Julia Wilde, Sandy Crowhurst, Barry Leigh, Roy Skam, Ruth Goodall, Jonathan Bromburg, Peter Fuller, Ninka Willcock, Jackie Fuller, Clifford Jaques, Catherine Clement, Lyn Turpin, Kim Curran, Michael Remington, Terry Etherton, Peter Crowhurst, Sarah Dunsmure, Clive Brimmell, Lizzie Deane, Laura Elliott, Paul Elliott, Geoffrey Mead, Eric James (24) *Around 10 additional residents came for the speaker only.*

Before the meeting our guest speakers, Tracey Hill, Lead Councillor for Private Rented Sector Housing and her colleague Diane in Licensing, gave a talk on HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation). Following this was a question & answer session. During this, the majority of questions related to 'party houses' that North Laine suffers from. Unfortunately the newly proposed regulations do not cover party houses, holiday lets, Airbnb or Uber lets. What is needed is Government legislation to enable them to be included in the private rented sector. Attached with these minutes is a PDF of a bulletin with useful contacts for HMO tenants and neighbours on the reverse.

Please note there are two current consultations on improving housing quality in privately rented homes. One is the Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller HMOs and the other is the Selective Licensing Scheme for other private sector rented homes where evidence demonstrates a clear link between poor property conditions and anti-social behaviour. Residents were encouraged to respond, and the deadline is Sunday 10 September. Links to each consultation are below:

Citywide Additional Licensing Scheme consultation

http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/public/bhcc/housing/psh/licensing/additional/private_renting_housing_-_citywide_additional_licensing_scheme_consultation

Selective Licensing Scheme consultation

http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/public/bhcc/housing/psh/licensing/selective/private_renting_housing_-_selective_licensing_scheme_consultation

1. Apologies for absence

Richard Carter, Brian and Bobbie Cheesman, Kathy Spencer, Jane Griffiths, Chris Hayes

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June – Approved

3. Chair's summary for June - July 2017

- The website group held a meeting at which Jane Griffiths, the new web coordinator, presented her initial thoughts on the way forward. She later reported back to the group with a PowerPoint presentation with the options highlighted.
- The Management Committee held an informal get-together at Francis's house on 21st June, and a formal meeting at the Skiff on 13th July.
- Francis was glad to note we finally have new communal refuse bins in many locations, though some of the worst in the North Laine await replacement. These include those on Frederick Street and Queens Gardens.
- Francis welcomed Clifford Jacques back following his recent illness.
- The Chair reminded everyone that when he accepted his nomination to remain in position, that he would review this in July. He had now done so, and stated he was prepared to stay on until the next AGM. However as it is his firm intention to stand down at that point, we need to actively look for a new Chair.

4. Treasurer's report

Peter Fuller announced that we currently have £7,400 in the bank. However, of this £2,500 is for advertisements that have been paid for in advance. Therefore the more accurate figure is £5,000 so our bank balance is stable and rising. This is thanks to the more economical printing of our newsletter. Peter also stated that reminders have been sent out for the Friends scheme, and he had just submitted a claim for Gift Aid. He had been on holiday, but it appears that only two or three copies of *The North Laine Book* had been sold this month. However he plans to take copies to the Pavilion Gardens fundraising event on Saturday 22nd July. He was complimented on doing a good job as Treasurer and keeping everything in such good order.

5. Social committee report

In the absence of Kathy Spencer, Kim Curran was glad to collect tombola prizes donated by many residents for the community day on Saturday 22nd at the Pavilion Gardens where the NLCA has a fund raising stall. She thanked all those who had contributed. It was reported that the recent pub quiz had made £63 – and special thanks went to Mitch Egan, Paul and Kathy for their hard work.

The next big social event is the comedy night at Komedia on September 26th.

A resident commented that the pub quiz had been very poorly supported by local residents, with only four people attending who were not members of the management committee or social sub-committee. This was despite a very high level of organisation, of publicity, and with excellent prizes. A debate followed as to why this might be. Comments included that summer was not a good time as many people are away on holiday, or wish to be outdoors; that another society had put on a quiz and again people didn't attend, so perhaps they are going out of fashion; and a suggestion was made to sell tickets in advance – or ask people to RSVP.

6. Local action team issues

Sandy Crowhurst now attends the Chairs of LATs (Local Action Team) meetings on behalf of Francis. There were not so many people in attendance as she had expected and there was a short agenda with limited time to speak. So while Sandy had come prepared with seven subjects, she was only allowed to air one. She chose Deliveroo

and Uber who compete with Amazon and Just Eat for deliveries, as we have so many restaurants and cafes in the North Laine so close to the town centre. Where they congregate they cause antisocial behaviour by revving their motorbike engines and shouting. Known hotspots are Spring Gardens, Regent Street, Church Street and Windsor Street. Inspector Brian McCarthy acknowledges it's a growing problem. One other resident mentioned anti-social behaviour in Norfolk Square.

Simon Bannister, the convenor, suggested LATs become independent. Sandy sees the disadvantages to this as the police might no longer turn up and the onus would be on LAT Chairs (or their reps) to set the agenda, create a Terms of Reference or Constitution, organise the room and send out emails. She felt the desire to do this stemmed from cuts in resources. The next Chair of LATs meeting will be in October.

7. Planning

Barry Leigh highlighted a planning submission to which the NLCA had objected. This was a large 2-storey extension to the rear of 8 Marlborough Place. We supported a neighbour in their objection as the size of it means they will be overlooked and overshadowed.

8. Licensing

Roy Skam reported on four main licensing applications that the NLCA is dealing with.

- Coffeetzar in Trafalgar Street/corner of Pelham Street applied for a café bar license. We objected and they did not display the statutory blue notice to tell the public they were applying. As a result they had to reapply but we later heard they have withdrawn their application.
- Le Baobob Cuisine, a restaurant at 8 Trafalgar Street applied for a restaurant license that is allowed in the Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ). However their blue notice was torn and white, not blue. This made it difficult to read. They want to use the Pelham Square side of the premises for tables and chairs, which means drinking outside. The NLCA objected to this and alerted the police who also objected. The police have promised to keep us informed after they have spoken to the applicants about drinking outside. Roy will also mention to the police and environmental health the issue over the blue notice.
- Platform Nine (on floor 6) at Tower Point (near Brighthelm) had applied for an alcohol license. It is unusual as there are no employees, the company lets out rooms and 'hot' desks. This means there is no accountability. They told us there would be security, but it was very easy to get in and wander around the building. The police are going to object and so is the NLCA. They had not displayed their blue notice, either, so the consultation was extended and now ends on 6th August.
- Franco Manca, a pizza restaurant in Church Street on the corner of Regent Street, would like to have alcohol included in their take aways. However they have no off sales licence. The CIZ (Cumulative Impact Zone) specifies no off sales. As the police and environmental health have objected, so have we. Strict conditions were later applied to the proposed license and the police agreed to it and withdrew their opposition. The problem foreseen is that the delivery driver gets the person at the door to sign for the alcohol, but the people drinking it could be anyone. This means it's not enforceable. The police asked if the restaurant would use their own delivery

people but they are going to use Deliveroo and Uber. We will still object at the hearing on 27th July as if Franco Manca gets a license other restaurants might apply. We see it as a way of getting round the CIZ. It's the thin edge of the wedge. There is a licensing strategy meeting at the Town Hall coming up on Monday 24th July and Peter Crowhurst will attend on Roy's behalf. We have managed to get this issue on the agenda.

A resident brought up concerns of another contravention of the license at the Prince George with people drinking outside on the narrow pavement. This meant pedestrians had to walk into the road to get passed – and on one occasion it was staff who were standing there. Roy encouraged everyone to get to know the manager of your local pub and talk to them in the first instance to iron out any problems.

Peter Crowhurst stated that there are too many licenses already at the bottom of Trafalgar Street, and requested that the issue of Prince George be put in writing to help strengthen our case against Baobab and their license application.

9. Other environmental matters

A resident mentioned that the new bin in Pelham Square already had graffiti on it and looked unsightly. As a result they had written to Damian Marmura from CityClean, but had not received a response. Another resident mentioned seeing Coffeetzar staff putting commercial waste in the communal bins. Another resident mentioned the problem with tagging and graffiti. He had just paid a large amount of money to have his house renovated and painted, and the paintwork had been tagged within hours. He had subsequently overpainted the tagging, yet it had happened again and again – four times in as many weeks.

10. Newsletter

Kim announced that there was still time, until the weekend, to submit any urgent items for the newsletter. The next edition would be available for distribution on Monday August 7th.

11. Residents' concerns, comments, announcements

Sarah Dunsmure had announced that the speaker for September would be David Sewell from Pavilion Gardens Café. He would talk about the café, the Pavilion Estate, and being a North Laine trader.

We are awaiting the police to get back to us with their preferred date for a talk either in October or November. Sarah has also got a music talk lined up for us, and Geoffrey Mead had suggested a local company that is recycling bagels into beer as a speaker.

Peter Crowhurst announced that he is holding a fundraising North Laine walk at 6pm from the Brighton Museum the following evening, with two more dates scheduled for 20th and 27th August at 11am (Sundays).

The meeting closed at 21:32