

MARGATE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FORUM

MINUTES OF FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1800hrs Thursday 5th June 2014

Foyle Room, Turner Contemporary

Present Liam Nabb (Chair) Dan Chilcott (Vice-Chair) Peter Miles (Treasurer)
Valerie Kirschner (Membership Secretary) Geoff Orton (Minutes Secretary)

Iris Johnston (Leader Thanet District Council) Mayor of Margate Cllr John Edwards
Councillors Clive Hart, Will Scobie and Rozanne Duncan together with 40 other
local citizens

Guest Speakers Robert Page RIBA Project Officer Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative
Nick Dermott RIBA IHBC AoU Heritage Advisor TDC

Apologies Sir Roger Gale MP, Laura Sandys MP

1 The Chair welcomed the meeting to MNPF's first AGM and expressed his gratitude to the Turner Contemporary for donating free use of their facilities. He asked that any Declarations of (Financial or Business) Interest be made (none were.)

2 Officers' Reports

The Chair reviewed progress : the Forum had had first to agree a Constitution and determine geographical boundaries. This had taken several forum meetings and eventually the seven Margate Wards had been determined upon with an eye to future administrative convenience when referendum(s) would be required.

Locality (an umbrella advice organization) had produced guidance on procedures and implementation which MNPF had followed.

Public consultations had been held which had indicated that 8 Working Groups should be set up on Heritage, Environment, Transport, Regeneration, Design, Active Coast, Housing and Economy. TDC had formally recognised the Forum in May which meant that applications could proceed for central government funding and work could begin on the details of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The Forum was most grateful for the keen interest and support shown by both local MPs and Thanet District Councillors and their Officers throughout the previous twelve months.

The Treasurer said that his report was necessarily brief as he had had no finances to administer as yet but now that MNPF was formally recognised application for funding could be made (up to £7,000 for the Forum and £30,000 for the Council) and reimbursement then made for the modest out-of-pocket expenses hitherto incurred. Valerie Kirschner advised that Laura Sandys had offered to arrange a

meeting with someone from the neighbourhood planning team at DCLG which would be an opportunity to receive guidance and have lots of questions answered.

The Minutes Secretary informed the meeting that both he and the Treasurer had attended a Workshop at Worth which had, after 3 years' solid work, produced a Model Neighbourhood Plan. Their rural circumstances were of course greatly different but the encouraging feature was that after initial guardedness the Parish Council and Dover & Deal District Council had settled down to a most fruitful relationship. Other 'rural' Plans were under way in Ashford and Canterbury. Several of the MNPF Committee had also attended an English Heritage Workshop and there remained a good prospect of continuing the 'Heritage At Risk/Local List' survey as an early example of Council/Voluntary mutual assistance. Finally, Canterbury Christ Church University English Department were working on a Heritage Lottery Fund Project which included a replica Bathing Machine and Punch & Judy. He rather liked 'concrete donkeys' to complement Dreamland.

3 Elections

The following were elected unanimously :

Chair	: Liam Nabb	Proposer	Iris Johnston	Second	Roxanna Tesla
Vice-Chair	: Helen Leask	Proposer	Liam Nabb	Second	Paul Messenger
Treasurer	: Peter Miles	Proposer	Liam Nabb	Second	Roxanne Tesla
Membership	: Valerie Kirschner	Proposer	Liam Nabb	Second	Peter Miles
Minutes	: Geoff Orton	Proposer	Valerie Kirschner	Second	Iris Johnston

Steering Committee

Betty Ward	Proposer	Valerie Kirschner	Second	Dan Chilcott
Roxanna Tesla	Proposer	Valerie Kirschner	Second	Helen Leask

The Chair invited interested parties to discuss further committee membership with Valerie Kirschner after the formal meeting.

4 Guest Speakers

Nick Dermott advised that he and Robert Page had been invited to speak on the Academy of Urbanism Report but this was still in draft form and had yet to be seen by Council Members. Iris Johnston as Leader of TDC said there was no objection to outlining the general framework and promised MNPF she would liaise further once the courtesies had been duly observed, she had not had an opportunity to review the Report herself as yet.

Nick Dermott said he had been long involved with Margate on the Old Town, Dreamland and sea defences for example. He referred to a 1996 proposal that the Old Town be demolished but the then Borough Council plan had fortunately been turned down and he believed that Margate may have employed the first heritage/conservation officer in the country. He and colleagues were currently working on a Design Code for Cliftonville West which comprised many remarkably intact buildings and was a good place to start. The Academy of Urbanism had recognized the Old Town's merits in 2012 and had now looked at Cliftonville. Their Report would identify both positives and negatives in the built environment and areas for change. The Lido and its Georgian underground baths was especially selected

as having major potential as a future attraction and the Report's emphasis would indeed be on the future.

The Chair agreed that MNPF would be bound to take into account the Academy's contributions together with all other archived material and did not see the immediate unavailability of the latest Report as anything of a tragedy given the time horizons involved.

Robert Page explained that he was employed to the end of 2017 with his colleague Tanya Carr 100% on the Townscape Heritage Initiative Project in Cliftonville West. They were looking to restore facades so that buildings looked as they were meant to be – no more uPVC. There were 3 or 4 major sub-schemes to put back into full use underused resources and a project in conjunction with KCC to develop a 'climate change adapted 3 generational' house to mitigate future risks. 'Retro-fits' were not really understood and the University of Kent was also involved in what was to be a 'real life' situation with findings, eventually to be disseminated via a 'heritage development toolkit' which preserved architectural integrity and could be used throughout coastal environments.

The overall aim was to make a far more sympathetic environment using Dalby Square as the focus and in that context an event was planned for Saturday 13th September to celebrate the history of the formal gardens and a further event in November to give the Heritage Advisor the opportunity to update on the Cliftonville West Design Code of which more anon in due course. The Design Code was an essential part of the total scenario.

The subject of the Bowling Alley was raised from the floor: how to blend it into the existing context? The new owners, it was stated, would be most willing to accommodate ideas. This was welcomed and Robert Page said how staggered he had been by the number of existing period features in Cliftonville and the marked change in perceptions and new 'can do' attitudes he had witnessed over the last two years.

Concern was raised over potential tenant types and Robert Page did not share the concern; the buildings were originally guest houses rather than for nuclear families and it was desirable to make them habitable for families. It was pointed out that 'loneliness' was a real killer so there was a pressing need to identify the potential for inter-generational interaction. Iris Johnston agreed that there was a fresh 'landlord outlook' developing and cited a specific example where an HMO had become 'family orientated.'

The Chair appreciated the debate and stated this was all part of the scope for the various Working Groups to address. Robert Page reassured the meeting that there were absolutely no preconceptions.

5 Vice – Chair : Presentation on the Formation of 8 Topic Working Groups

Helen Leask detailed how the Topic Working Groups had been formed. The Forum had looked at Local Plans and other Neighbourhood Plans and conducted initial exercises on likes/dislikes. Turn out and feedback at the St Paul's Community Centre public consultation had been most helpful and encouraging and out of all this preliminary work had risen the proposed 8 Working Groups which the audience were welcome to join according to their special interests. Factfinding was the Key First Stage and there was a huge database to be reviewed within the context of course of National Frameworks and Local Plans. She had produced an admittedly highly speculative Timeline but at the end of it would be the Neighbourhood Plan (or Plans) and Referendum (or Referendums.)

There was a reference from the floor to the Cliftonville Partnership and the Chair replied that MNPF would of necessity consult and hopefully involve any willing group.

Nick Dermott stressed that 'thermal efficiency' and associated fuel poverty was going to be a major consideration and advised that TDC have now appointed a full time Conservation Officer who would start Monday next.

Councillor Clive Hart inquired about areas such as Palm Bay which did not obviously fall into 'conservation/heritage' categories. The Chair replied that the variety of environments was acknowledged and the Forum intention was to organize public consultations accordingly. There was no competition with the Local Plan and MNPF sought to complement it and would not necessarily have the same depth throughout in its Plan. The Forum wanted to give local people an opportunity to express their general will. Dan Chilcott gave an example of 'youth facilities' between the Millmead Estate and the Coast and the need for 'joined up thinking' rather than strict compartmentalisation. It was agreed that the Forum would not seek to re-invent the wheel and that TDC and its officers had much experience on which to draw.

6 Summary

The Chair in winding up said that MNPF would now start the detailed work and plan for more dispersed consultations. It had now entered a New Phase.

A suggestion that the Public Library might hold all reference material in easily accessible hard copy form was a good one and would be investigated.

7 Other Previously Notified Business

Valerie Kirschner referred to the Margate Caves and an archival requirement there and went on to announce their success at the First Stage of the Big Lottery application which included a badly needed Community/Visitor Centre as part of the £500,000 proposal. The initial tranche of development funds had now been awarded and Friends of Margate Caves was now part of a registered charitable Trust. She enjoined the meeting to complete the online survey on their website www.margatecaves.co.uk to evidence widespread community support for their Stage 2 Big Lottery Fund application.

Iris Johnston called for a round of applause in recognition of the Forum's achievements to date.

Meeting adjourned at 1930 hrs.

06/06/2014