

Present: Core Group members: Chris Morley (Chair), Sandra Dunn (Secretary), Robin Britcher (Newsletter Editor), Jill Britcher, Pat Boorman, Bill Clark, Chris Took, Michelle Byrne (Ashford Borough Council)

Cllrs Philip Sims, Elizabeth Tweed and Andrew Wickham, Lee Robinson (Sure Steps Children's Centre) and Yvonne Freeman (Towers School).

Members of the community: David Chandler, Chris Jackson, Mike Paddy, M & J Perriss, Andrea Taberman, Patricia and David Mann, Joyce Lewis, Sid Marsh, Ralph Morley, Terry Cooper, Brian Lofts, Heather Silk, Ian Thomas,

2. ~~Apologies were received from Abir Bonger, Cllr Andrew Buchanan, Dag Cole, Cllr Winston Michael, Ian Milbery, Peter Newson, Geoff and Jane Stanborough, Mrs C Riddel, Jan and Peter Powell.~~
3. **Minutes of AGM held on 22 June 2010**
 - 3.1. The minutes were agreed to be a true record.
 - 3.2. ~~Matters arising:~~ planning application has been submitted for the Goat Lees school and the archaeological report has been completed.
4. **Chair's report**
 - 4.1. In her Chair's Report to the 2010 AGM Pat Boorman predicted that the Forum could look forward to another busy year – and this has indeed turned out to be true.
 - 4.2. During the year your Forum has been actively involved in many planning matters. At the strategic level we have participated in public consultations on the Urban Sites and Infrastructure Development Plan Document, and in supplementary planning documents including Landscape Character, Residential Parking and Design Guidance SPD, and Sustainable Drainage. We continue to participate in the consultation for design of the Conningbrook Lakes Park, and for the new Primary school at Goat Lees.
 - 4.3. We have put forward strong arguments against a large-scale proposal for development of 600 houses by Bovis; and have actively opposed applications for "back garden" developments which would be against the local grain of the existing built environment, taking part in appeal hearings where these have been held. We have supported other applications for housing, sport and leisure where these have seemed beneficial, not least the redevelopment of the former Golden Ball pub!
 - 4.4. The Core Group has continued with projects to improve our area, including further work on the Memorial Shelter and Garden of Remembrance, preliminary work on the Jubilee Pump House in Upper Vicarage Road, participation in the BTCV Heritage Trees project, and we have recently obtained agreement with ABC to set aside areas of Spearpoint Recreation ground for a biodiversity programme which we hope will start to take shape in the next few months.
 - 4.5. KCF is now liaising regularly with the other urban forums which jointly cover the unparished urban areas of Ashford – that is, Central Ashford, Willesborough, and

South Ashford Community Forums. We have organised a number of joint meetings between representatives of the four Forums, some of which have been attended by Paul Naylor, Deputy Chief Executive, and Kim Harlow, Voluntary Sector Manager at ABC. This week the four urban Forums will be meeting with Damian Green MP to discuss Localism. We have also participated in the ABC Localism Working Group, which is exploring policies for improving delivery of services at a localised level in the parished areas of the borough.

- 4.6. Our communication strategy has matured this year, with our quarterly Kennington News being cited in response to planning consultations, and further development of our on-line presence including our web site, Facebook page, and more recently Twitter. We had a strong showing at Kennington Fayre which provided a chance to update fairgoers on the work of the Forum.
- 4.7. Our financial strategy has also proved resilient. Although grants from ABC for ongoing costs are no longer available, we are pleased to have completed the year in a healthy position with Kennington News now at break-even and other outgoings carefully scrutinized. We were pleased to have received capital grants for projects during the year including KCC Member Grants; an ABC Community Grant; further grants from English Heritage/ War Memorials Trust; and a contribution from the Waitrose Community Matters scheme.
- 4.8. We have been privileged to have welcomed many interesting speakers at our public meetings, including Martyn Jordan from East Kent Health Walks; Simon Cole (Planning Policy Manager) and Ian Grundy (Principal Policy Planner) from Ashford Borough Council; Joel Roszman from Kent Children's Fund Network; Simon Harris, Sports Projects Manager and Active Ashford Coordinator, ABC; and Steve Parish, Project Office Engineer and Terry Jones, Nature Conservation Officer, the ABC project team for Conningbrook Lakes.
- 4.9. I would like to thank all those members of the Core Group who have given their expertise and their time to make the Forum a success during the year. A number of colleagues have decided to retire from the Core Group including Chris Took, Kelly-Marie Blundell, Barry Woolgar, Mark Baker and Bill Clark who has been with the Forum for many years; and I would especially like to thank our past Chair Pat Boorman who has been involved with the Forum since the early days.
- 4.10. The next twelve months will see some radical differences in the way we are governed, with the Localism bill expected to receive the Royal Assent later this year, and a continuing push from central government for the Big Society to make a difference. These changes will see increasing opportunities for local communities to have greater influence in the future development of their neighbourhoods, but the process of change will bring increased risks that poor decisions will be made while the new structures and strategies are implemented and matured. KCF is well placed to take an active role in shaping and implementing the Localism agenda in our area, but we do not underestimate the scale of the challenge. A strong, diverse and vibrant Core Group will be essential if we are to continue to be effective.
- 4.11. Finally, I would like to thank Michelle Byrne from ABC for her unstinting support of the Forum; our Borough and County members for their participation, advice and guidance; and especially the team at St Mary's Church and St Mary's Community Centre for allowing us to use both the Church Hall and this splendid

Community Centre and for all the additional work they do in making us feel at home here.

5. **Treasurer's report** forward to another successful year for Kennington Community Forum.
 - 5.1. The Treasurer was pleased to report that the period has ended with a healthy balance: £6,931.34. Most of this, however, was already earmarked: £4000 for the war memorial project and £1300 for the notice board and the associated planning application. There were no financial concerns regarding the newsletter, though, as it is now self financing. As the period in question was 15 months the report covered both the 2010 and 2011 Summer Fayres. Receipts from this year's Fayre had been particularly good. She thanked those who had donated books and dvds and also those who had bought raffle tickets.
 - 5.2. She thanked the auditor, Chris Jewell, for auditing the accounts. She confirmed that he had not charged for this.
 - 5.3. Cash bought forward as at 1 June 2010 was £5,419.76. Cash carried forward as at 31 August 2011 is £4,071.16 for the war memorial and £2,860.18 for core funds.
6. **Election of Core Group**
 - 6.1. The committee stood down and Michelle Byrnes took the Chair.
 - 6.2. There was one nomination for Chair: Chris Morley. He was therefore elected.
 - 6.3. There was one nomination for Secretary: Sandra Dunn. She was therefore elected.
 - 6.4. There were no nominations for Treasurer. Chris Woolgar offered to carry on.
 - 6.5. Nominations for the core group were: Jill Britcher, Robin Britcher, Ian Milbery and Yvonne Freeman from the Towers School. As there were less than the maximum number of nominees, they were duly elected en bloc.
7. **Any other business:** there was none. The meeting closed and was immediately followed by an open meeting.

Minutes from the Kennington Community Forum open meeting held on 27 September 2011

1. **Minutes** of the meeting of 26 July 2011 were agreed to be a true record
 - 1.1. **Matters arising:**
 - 1.2. Item 4.1: the Urban Sites and Infrastructure Development Plan Document will be reported to ABC's Cabinet on 13 October. It is then expected to be published for formal consultation.
 - 1.3. Item 4.2: Fast broadband: the Chair has contacted Lyndon Gurr at KCC who has responsibility for the roll out of fast broadband. KCC is concentrating its efforts on getting broadband to the rural areas as there are many without any broadband. Mr Gurr said that the providers seemed to be aiming to get 80% coverage. If people are without fast broadband then they should register their interest so that internet service providers can judge the demand. At the moment only BT is supplying fast broadband. Other ISPs are expected to begin rolling it out soon with AOL starting in the spring.
 - 1.4. Item 4.4: 30mph signs: There are a huge number of members' highways grant applications to be processed. Cllr Tweed expects her application for 30mph signs along the Faversham Road to be processed early next year.
 - 1.5. Item 4.5: Bus stops in Bybrook Road: a meeting has taken place with Stagecoach, ABC and Kent Highways but Cllr Tweed had not been invited. They said that the

road had been narrowed because of the pedestrian crossing that had been installed with a Highways grant from Cllr Tweed. She is trying to get another site meeting organised. She thought it might be necessary to pay for improvements out of her Highways grant fund.

- 1.6. Item 6: Conningbrook Lakes proposal: The next meeting will be held on 29 September. Robin Britcher has agreed to attend to represent the Forum. It is expected that a planning application will be submitted in December.
- 1.7. Item 9.4: Heritage trees: the Festival of Britain tree has been located by Peter Huckstepp. It is being suggested that these heritage trees could be marked with brass plaques
- 1.8. Item 10.1.3: U3A. The local group covers Wye and Ashford but not Tenterden. Their autumn programme will be published on the Kennington Community Forum website.

2. **Update from PCSOs:** none received.

3. **KCF Reports**

3.1. Chairs:

1. ABC Localism Working Group: Chris attended a meeting on 6 September at which ABC's Chief Executive attended. The handyman at Aldington was proving to be a success, shortcutting bureaucracy. Other parishes may get involved next year with the full scheme being in operation in 2013. Chris suggested that it would be useful to have handymen in the urban areas as well.
2. Spearpoint
 1. Biodiversity: ABC agreed to a proposition to increase the biodiversity and are looking at which areas to be left to meadow grass. There are proposals to extend the pond which is pre. 1819. Pond Warden Heather Silk said that as it is a seasonal pond it is good for frogs. She is to advise on maintaining the pond and creating cover for wildlife around it. BTCV have been approached to advise on planting a 30 metre fruit hedge.
 2. Pavilion: The pavilion is in a bad state of decay. Michelle Byrne has suggested possible lottery grants. Two companies are being asked to quote to see if it is feasible to repair the building. It was suggested that there could be community involvement for things not covered by a grant, such as inside decoration and showers, etc., and that a community trust committee could be developed. This would give access to more funding.
Action: CM to arrange site visit with interested companies and Geoff Stanborough
 3. Jubilee tree: a site on the recreation ground for the tree has been identified by ABC's tree warden. It had been proposed that a tree costing £25 would be purchased, but it is now thought that a more mature tree should be purchased as a chestnut tree planted by ABC costing £180 has recently been broken by vandals.
 4. The M20 between junction 9 and 8 is surfaced with concrete and is causing concern with unacceptable traffic noise. An action group called M20 NAG has been set up and has arranged an open meeting at Lenham Community Centre on September 29 to discuss the issue.

5. KCC have grants available for community activities. Central Ashford Forum took advantage of a grant and arranged a community event in Queen Mother Park which included carving benches from logs. Ideas for other events, and people to run them would be welcomed.
 6. Volunteer Ashford has been approached for volunteers to work in the memorial garden. Only one family from South Willesborough has volunteered.
 7. Damian Green opened the Ramsey Centre at The Towers on 16 September. It is an impressive community facility for sport, drama, etc.
- 3.2. Newsletter: this has received favourable comments and advertisements now pay for its printing. The next edition will be available on 20 October. Robin thanked those who have helped delivery in the past, but he said that more help will be required for delivery, especially in Little Burton Farm. We are now on twitter: [twitter@kenningtonnews](https://twitter.com/kenningtonnews).

3.3. Planning applications:

1. Rosedene, Grosvenor Road: CM attended the appeal hearing. The appeal was dismissed and the inspector's turned it down stating that its appearance out of character with its surroundings. Also new parking regulation state that there should be two parking places per property, but this would cause a loss of green space.
2. Little Acre, 80 The Street. Appeal to be held on 13 December at 10am in the Civic Centre. Result should be known in 6 – 8 weeks.
3. Kingsmead, Bockhanger Lane: This application site is behind Gerlach House. Although the number of dwellings has increased by one it did not warrant an objection. However it has been noticed that planning permissions do not normally refer to ABC's Code of Practice for Construction Sites with respect to hours of work. In writing to ABC about this application reference to this was made so that, if permission is to be granted, conditions can be imposed. Decision should be made in early October.
4. We are waiting to see the outcome on an application for a certificate of lawful development for the conversion of 5-bedroomed flat into a care home in The Street.
5. The Post Office application has been withdrawn.

3.4. Memorial Shelter

1. Phase II is almost complete. A grant of £2144 has been accepted after a compromise agreement was reached with English Heritage. Two quotes are being obtained, then there will be a four-week delay while English Heritage decide if they wish to publicise the work
2. Phase III, the memorial gardens. Some work has already been done. We are delighted that we have received £482 from the Waitrose Community Matters collection. This will be used for sample planting. There is also a large hedge to go in.

4. Updates from Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council members

4.1. Cllr Tweed:

1. Snow clearance was discussed at a recent Highways meeting. It was confirmed that the extra salt bins she had had put in will be replenished with salt, and schools will be able to have salt bins. She will use some of her grant money for that. She will also enquire whether it would be feasible to put salt bins on cycle routes.
2. A consultation into the Kent Youth Service closes on 29 October. It is proposed that the North School will become a hub and Marie Boniface will stay as youth tutor at The Towers and will cover the whole of Ashford.

4.2. Cllr Wickham:

1. There are parking and gridlock issues outside Kennington Junior School. The zig-zag line is not enforceable. There are no funds available for the £1500 that would be needed for a traffic regulation order and extra would be needed to cover the costs of signs and painting lines. Cllr Wickham said that if it were possible to get a single order to cover all the school sites in Ashford, then he would use his grant money to pay for it. Cllr Sims said that he had photos of the parking problems outside Downs View school.

4.3. Cllr Sims

1. Cllr Sims said that he had put in objections for the Rosedene appeal and had objected to planning applications including Little Acre.
2. He was looking for sponsorship so that wooden benches could be replaced. He would like to have a plaque put on one in honour of the late Cllr John Kemp.
3. He is on seven committees including the Environment Task Group. They are getting PV solar panels put on council buildings and are also looking into getting woodchip boilers installed; the Government is offering rebates to switch from oil to woodchip.
4. He will be attending a Local Government training sessions on best use of electronic communications and localism and will feed back information from these to the forum.

5. Any other business;

- 5.1. Robin Britcher reported that there is a delay in the conversion work on The Old Mill (ex. Golden Ball pub). It is now not expected to be open until March 2012. There is no movement on the sale of the ex. servicemen's club.
- 5.2. David Chandler was concerned about the lack of visible signs to tell cyclists to dismount when crossing the motorway bridge.
- 5.3. Patricia Mann was concerned at the smells at Little Burton Farm coming from the sewage works. Cllr Sims said that he would take the matter up. He also suggested that she should make a note of when it happened.
- 5.4. There were concerns that there were no buses travelling directly from Kennington to the hospital (along the Willesborough Road). It was thought that this could well be improved once the Julie Rose development had taken place. There is also the

problem of buses no longer going to Sainsbury's. Cllr Tweed said she would make enquiries.

6. **Next meeting.** The next open meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 29 November 2011 at St Mary's Church Hall, Kennington.