

**This newsletter is now being published six times a year.
The next issue will be published on or about 1 June.**

The SPRA Annual General Meeting will take place at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. on Thursday 14 April

This will be held at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. in The Beerling Hall (ex-Dominican Priory) by kind permission of The King's School, the Hall's lessees. Refreshments will be provided. There are 2 or 3 parking places for blue badge holders at the end of the drive which leads to the Hall from St Peter's Lane. There is a lift which gives access to the first floor. Please see the separate sheet for the agenda. Our guest speaker will be David Lewis, sometime chairman of the Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society, who will talk to us about some aspects of the history of the St Peter's area.

Proposed changes to the Association's Constitution

In the last newsletter we said we wished to make a change to the constitution so that 7 days' notice would need to be given of the proposal and seconding of new members of the committee. We are now suggesting a further change: to allow co-opted members to be able to vote at committee meetings. These changes are set out in detail on the attached agenda. To be accepted, the changes would require a two-thirds majority at the AGM.

Membership of the Committee

A surprising number of our members have served on the committee in the past for which we're most grateful – but having given us good service we can't really expect them to offer themselves for election again. So if you've joined us in the past few years (or months) please consider offering yourselves for nomination for election at the coming AGM. We currently have three vacancies (but we can't have more than one member from the same household). You would need to come to committee meetings, which take place in the evenings roughly once a month, and to come to the social events which the association organises and help set them up. You would need to care about our environment and be observant, noticing what could be improved and be willing to discuss planning and licensing applications for our area. A particular need is for a Treasurer: Gary Edelman wishes to stand down from that post during the coming year (though he would wish to remain on the committee).

Some of our concerns . . .

- ❖ The 'No Cycling' notices at both ends of Blackfriars Street will be reinstated. KCC had been told by the contractors that the work had been done but this was not true. So a new request has been raised.
- ❖ The cul-de-sac sign for Mill Lane: if you have been following this story, which has been going on for some months, you will know that we approached the City Council for a new street sign (incorporating the cul-de-sac logo) outside The Miller's Arms, i.e. facing the direction from which most of the confused drivers come. Currently the Council are saying that the pavement is not wide enough but we have written to them again – though hope of any success is fading.
- ❖ You may have seen in the local press that at the Joint Transportation Board meeting on 23 February the councillors (KCC and CCC) voted unanimously to ban all A-boards district-wide (i.e. in the coastal towns as well as Canterbury). There may well be technical and legal problems before this can be implemented, but it is a first step – and many thanks to Martin Vye, our County Councillor, who has kept this issue alive for some years.
- ❖ This still leaves the problem of tables and chairs and other obstructions. Business premises need a licence from KCC (currently £162 p.a.) to place anything on the pavement (though it must not cause obstruction). We have written to KCC to ask them if we can see which premises in Sun Street, Orange Street and The Friars actually have licences and will be asking if the provision of these licences can be reviewed.
- ❖ Accident at 8 King Street. In January a car hit a bollard at about 11 p.m., knocked it over and forced up the concrete paving slab. Two of our members have been persuading KCC to reseat the concrete slab (and not replace it with tarmac) and to replace the bollard to match the existing bollards (not a wooden one). The bollards in this part of King Street were installed when Palace Street was pedestrianised, to meet the concerns of residents that King Street would therefore carry more traffic. The bollards do a good job of protecting pedestrians, reducing pavement parking and (as in this case) preventing damage to property.
- ❖ British Telecom and Niall McKernan have between them got the graffiti-daubed telephone cabinet in King Street repainted. Please be alert to all graffiti and ask Serco to remove it (see the phone number list on the Neighbourhood Watch section below).



The Dairy Crest site: good news

This totally inappropriate development (a student accommodation block intended to house 224 students at one end of a small residential square in a conservation area) was considered at a Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 29 March. The planning officers had suggested only minor changes to the original proposal made last October, which implied that they approved the concept, and it was no surprise when they recommended that permission should be granted. We had campaigned, along with other amenity societies, the ward councillors and very many local residents, for the refusal of planning permission, and at the meeting the Planning Committee agreed: there were 9 votes for refusal with 2 abstentions. A victory for common sense, but not achieved without a lot of effort.

Forthcoming events

We hope to arrange a barbecue this summer, now that we have the use of the Beerling Hall again, probably in July. And we shall have the Quiz Night again, in October.

The Westgate Hall and the City Sound Project

Many of our members will remember the disturbance caused by the City Sound Project which used the Westgate Hall as one of its venues last Spring Bank Holiday. There are plans to use it again this year, on 30 April and 1 May, but the event will start later and end (at the Westgate Hall) at 11 p.m., which is much earlier than last year. In consultation with the Council a new sound limiter has been installed and new limits have been set after testing. The Hall will be doing a letter drop to local residents with more information, including contact numbers.

Seat sculptures again



Before



After

A correction: in the last newsletter we described the seat in the Abbot's Mill garden as having been made from oak. It was in fact carved from the trunk of a sweet chestnut tree and one of the two photos shows it in its original state. The designer was pleasantly surprised to find such a large piece of timber without knots, shakes or rot. We think of sweet chestnut as being a coppice tree, especially here in Kent, but in past centuries chestnuts must have been grown as standards, as chestnut was used for the columns dividing nave from aisles in St Mary's, Wingham and in St Mary's, Sandwich.

The Miller's Field seat was awarded a 'Canterbury Design Award for 2016 prize' on 23 March by the Canterbury Society.

Work by the riverside



Opposite Sainsbury's car park



Alongside The Causeway

You may have noticed that some work has been done in clearing trees and vegetation at two sites along the river in our area. Opposite Sainsbury's car park the intention is to let more light reach the ground (which at

present is bare and muddy) and the river, enabling vegetation to grow and improve the health of the river. Grass seeds and ivy will be planted behind a temporary fence at a later date. Some work has also been done on the river bank where the river runs alongside The Causeway. We quote 'The idea with the tree felling near the Causeway is to allow more light to reach the bank and more vegetation to grow at the margins of the river. It's important to have plants growing in, out of and next to the water to provide good habitat for fish, invertebrates and other wildlife. Unfortunately, the tendency with urban rivers has been to reinforce banks with brick, wood and concrete, making it difficult for plants to get established.'

The work has been carried out by volunteers from the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP) and was approved by the Environment Agency and CCC. This is all part of the River Restoration Plan funded by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency has also been clearing fallen trees and material likely to impede flow in the river all the way from Chartham down through Canterbury. There will be more about KSCP and its role in nature conservation in our next newsletter.



We get daily reports of crimes in East Kent: those relevant to our area would be listed below. We are glad to say that there was only one reported crime in our area in February and March, and **none from domestic property**. Elsewhere most thefts seem to be opportunistic, with thieves picking up something they see lying around, or making use of unlocked doors, unlocked garages and unsecured windows. There is a message for all of us here.

There are also distraction crimes: i.e., two people approach you and one asks directions, or to change some money, while the other commits the crime.

There continue to be many warnings about fraud of different types: cold callers on your doorstep or on your phone, internet scams etc.

We have a copy of a very comprehensive document just produced by Neighbourhood Watch entitled '**Scams, Cold Callers and E-mail Fraud**'. If you ask the Secretary he can email it to you as an attachment, or if you do not have an internet connection you could collect one from him at 6 King Street (but please phone him first so that he can print a copy).

Date	Time	Premises	Crime
10-11 February	1800 to 0600	Lighthouse shop in Palace Street	About a dozen items stolen

Useful contact numbers

Bin collections, rubbish on streets and paths, dog fouling, fly-tipping, graffiti	Serco	08000 319 091
Abandoned vehicles	City Council	01227 862 203
Street lighting, potholes, anything related to roads or footpaths	Kent Highways	03000 418 181
Reporting a crime taking place	Police	999
Reporting other crime, including anti-social behaviour	Police	101
For anonymous calls with information about crime	Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Environmental river problems, e.g. pollution, fish in distress, illegal fishing	Environment Agency	0800 80 70 60

SPRA Committee 2015-16 and contact information

Richard Parkinson	Chairman	07764 775 672
Andrew Kerin	Vice-Chairman	01227 456 618
Chris Millar	Secretary	01227 766 790
Gary Edelman	Treasurer	01227 788 267
Clive Bowley	Planning consultant	
Gillian Rushton	Events organiser	
Kevin Porée		

You can contact the Secretary on all matters including those relating to this newsletter by phone or by e-mail: spra.newsletter@gmail.com

Our website address is: www.stpetersassociation.co.uk and there is an email address for related issues: spa@stpetersassociation.co.uk

