

**This newsletter is published six times each year.  
The next issue will be published on or about 1 August.**

### The Annual General Meeting

This took place on 7 April at The Beerling Hall, by kind permission of The King's School, who lease the hall from the Cantiacorum Trust. The Chairman welcomed the 40 members present and was glad to be able to say that on the planning front we had some successes recently, particularly with proposals by the Millers Arms and The Parrot to extend their drinking areas.

Draft minutes of the meeting are attached or enclosed.

### SPRA Summer Event

Members will already have received notice (and the flyer is again attached) that this will take place at The Beerling Hall on Thursday 13 July, at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. The party will take place in the garden which lies between the river and Victoria Walk, if fine, and inside if it is damp or cold. Please support this event and bring your friends: for this sort of event to be successful people need to come and join us.

### Kent County Council

Our streets in the Canterbury City North division are Broad Street, Northgate, St Radigund's Street, St Radigund's Place, Duck Lane and St John's Place. We congratulate Graham Gibbens (Conservative) on his re-election for the former, and Ida Linfield (Liberal Democrat Focus Team) on her election for the latter. She succeeds Martin Vye who has retired after 28 years as a councillor, including a year as Lord Mayor and 16 years as a city councillor. We thank Martin for all his work on our behalf.

### Planning applications

#### Dairy Crest site: 57-61 Military Road

The closing date for comments was 20 April and by that stage there had been 53 letters of objection, including one from the SPRA. There had also been 33 one- or two-line comments in support, apparently all from students who thought it would be nice to live near the shops or the campus, and who had not considered the implications of having this student block in a quiet residential conservation area. On the other hand, the letters of objection were lengthy and well-argued and expressed the deep concern of residents about the devastating effect that this development would have on their lives. The developers subsequently submitted revised plans

because KCC Highways had asked for more drop-off spaces for students arriving and leaving. Their revised plan provides only half the spaces KCC want, so KCC Highways have asked again. These revisions are of course totally irrelevant to the objections which have been made to the plans – which are to do with the overbearing nature of the proposed block. We have been told that the original objections may still be treated as being relevant and we have written to the planning department to say that we assume that the planning officer will do that.

Meanwhile the developers have lodged an appeal against the rejection of their original application of 29 October 2015. Although this was recommended for grant by the planning officer, it was decisively rejected (9-0 with three abstentions) by the councillors on the Planning Committee. The appeal will be decided after an informal hearing and site visit by an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The date of the hearing has not yet been announced.

### **28-30 St Peter's Street: Barretts showroom development**

This proposal is for an accommodation block for 132 students, and shops and offices, to replace the existing car showroom. The St Peter's Street frontage would be retained for the shops and offices, and there would be a three-storey development along Pound Lane. But at the heart of the development will be a flat-roofed four-storey block. We have objected on the grounds that there would be (a) a very great input of people into an already busy area; (b) that the height of the Pound Lane building would be excessive and create a canyon effect in a narrow street; (c) that the view of the city, and particularly the cathedral, from the Westgate Towers, at present across tiled pitched roofs, will be obstructed and diminished by the four-storey flat roof top; (d) there will be greatly increased traffic in Pound Lane (which is already a difficult and dangerous road) which will effectively be the only route by which this development can be serviced.

There is the argument that building student accommodation blocks releases houses for local residents and that would restore a sense of community and remove the noise and disturbance which sometimes accompanies students. But just as more roads mean more cars and no less congestion, more student accommodation may mean more students and no less pressure on housing stock –at least until we know whether the universities have any plans to restrain their expansion.

### **Punting Platform by The Friars Bridge**

There was an application (from the Council itself) to create a punting platform jutting out into the river, accessed from the open space next to the Marlowe Theatre. This has been withdrawn. We would have objected, and will still object if the plan is revived, on the grounds that it would introduce commercialisation into our residential area (there would probably need to be a kiosk, and touting activities) and there was no indication of how the operation would be managed. We have also alerted the Environment Agency and the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership who will, we think, have environmental concerns.

## **Solly's Orchard gates**

There had been sightings of a rough sleeper in Solly's Orchard recently, leading to fears that the gates were being left unlocked again, but we have been assured that at present they are still being locked, and the apparent breach is being investigated. The Council has not yet come to a decision about whether the gates will continue to be locked at night.

## Thefts of lead from roofs

There is a history of lead being stolen from our roofs and there were two more incidents recently, on the night of 18-19 May: in one case the thieves were successful (the property was unoccupied), but in the other they were disturbed. These are distressing and expensive crimes. As some of you know, we have been in touch with the police who suggest the use of a marking fluid called Smartwater. As this is something which can be sprayed on to a large surface it would presumably be more effective than the usual marking pen. If anyone has any experience of using this or something similar, please let us know. Scrapyards do (or are supposed to) check for markings which enables stolen lead to be tracked if it is offered for sale. The police pay regular visits to scrapyards.

We have no experience of using this product and this is not an endorsement, but we feel we ought to bring it to your attention. The fluid, each bottle of which has a unique and traceable formulation, could be used to mark anything else in our homes, of course, not just lead on roofs. This is a link to the website: <https://www.smartwater.com/>

## The City Sound Project: 29-30 April

This was certainly not as well managed as last year: there seemed to be a failure to steward the departure of customers leaving The Westgate Hall and as a result there was a lot of noise and all the usual nuisances from drunken people. There is always the incessant and penetrating 'bass beat' noise throughout the day which is not prevented by sound limiters or having doors kept shut. We have written to the Environmental Health department and have been told that 'the council and police will be meeting with organisers shortly to discuss the operation of the event and expectations in the future'. We will be advised of the outcome.

## The positive . . . and the negative



**Hedging plants flourishing on Miller's Field: planted by a dozen volunteers from the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership last November**



**Damaged wall of St Peter's Church, and graffiti in St Peter's Lane, after the City Sound Project event on 29 April**

## Weeds

It is well-known that one person's wild flower is another's weed, and vice-versa. Our pavements are looking rather untidy at the moment, with quite a lot of what most people would call weeds growing at the bases of walls. Here is an excerpt from Kent County Council's website:

We spray weeds on roads and pavements once a year between mid-May and end of July. The timing depends on weather conditions. The chemical we use is Glyphosate. It is the most commonly used weed killer and is marketed as safe to its users and the public. It is suitable for use on and around roads.

Pulling or hoeing young weeds would save us using weed-killer. It is best to wear gloves when touching any plant you are unfamiliar with in case you have a reaction to the sap or prickles. The weed-killer we use may remain in the plant system for 6 weeks or more so you should not put sprayed weeds into your compost or into your green waste collection.

However, no one could think of Ivy-leaved Toadflax, seen here in one of several clumps growing on a wall at 6 The Friars (the Friends' Meeting House) as a weed. It is a relative of the snapdragons we may have in our gardens. In flower its flower stems bend towards the light: when the seeds develop, the stems bend back so that the seeds are more likely to be deposited in cracks in the mortar.



## Neighbourhood Watch



We get daily reports of crimes in East Kent and so far we have passed these on to you in a table under the headings Date|Time|Premises|Crime. In future we shall copy some of the relevant messages and print them below – the information is too varied to fit into the format we have been using so far.

Here are some of the messages we have received from Neighbourhood Watch recently:

For your information there have been a number of scam text messages being sent recently. Below are a number of examples of the messages being sent. Do not under any circumstances reply to or follow the links contained within any such messages. Your Bank or other financial institutions will never contact you in this way so please do not divulge any of your personal information. Examples:

1. Your tax refund of 727.12 GBP is pending to proceed. Please follow our secure link below. Your bank may require online verification.
2. Your Apple ID has been locked for security. Please go to \*\*\*\*\* to unlock your account"
3. We have identified some unusual activity on line on your online banking. Please log in to \*\*\*\*\* to secure your account.

Crime reports ZY/020949/17, ZY/020873/17, ZY/020945/17, ZY/020916/17 refer to garages that have been broken into recently in the Northgate area of Canterbury.

Crime prevention- Always have good locks on your garage. There is always a possibility to have the garages alarmed. Check your garage regularly. If you see someone suspicious call the police and report it on 101. If you see a crime in progress dial 999. It is possible this crime series may migrate to other areas so be on the lookout.

## BURGLARY AND THEFT

Between 1430 and 1450 on 25/4 Computer equipment was stolen from a property in Pound Lane. Burglars forced the front door. Crime Report No; ZY/016534/17

A car was stolen from a car park that is opposite Northgate Medical Practice on Northgate between 14:40 and 15:30 on 20th April 2017. The index of the Car is GL63 EAE a Black Landrover Freelander. If you notice any vehicles fitting this description parked near your street, please dial 101 and quote YZ/015538/17. If you are a car owner, consider having a tracking device fitted. These devices will help in getting your property back if it is stolen. It may also reduce your insurance costs.

## 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 2017-18 and contact information

Richard Parkinson	Chairman	07764 775 672
Andrew Kerin	Vice-Chairman	01227 456 618
Chris Millar	Secretary	01227 766 790
Alan Turner	Treasurer	01227 451 217
Clive Bowley	Planning consultant	
Gillian Rushton	Events organiser	
Kevin Porée		
Tania Hoser		

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

Our website address is: [www.stpetersassociation.co.uk](http://www.stpetersassociation.co.uk) and there is an email address for related issues: [spa@stpetersassociation.co.uk](mailto:spa@stpetersassociation.co.uk)