

CLIFTON MONTPELIER POWIS COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Management Committee Report 2008/09

Meetings and Issues

In the last twelve months we have held **five community meetings (including the AGM)** with invited speakers, the **Christmas Concert and party** and the second **Clifton Montpelier Powis Festival (4 – 20 July)**.

Our third **AGM** in April 2008, was combined with the launch party for our **second CMP Festival**. **Peter Guttridge**, former literary director of the Brighton Festival, talked on the joys of running festivals, and the **Brighton Youth Orchestra's Wind Quintet** also entertained us. At our **June** meeting, ***Living with HIV/AIDS locally and internationally***, **Andrew Powell** and **Julie Hales** described the work of **The Sussex Beacon** while **Lynette Lowndes**, programmes director of the **International HIV/AIDS Alliance**, described its growth and impact since moving to Brighton in 2001. In **September** we looked at ***Changes in how our food is grown and sold***, with **Stephen Raisey (Manager, Brighton Waitrose)**, **Caroline Townsend (Infinity Foods)** and **Adrian Halstead (Barcombe Farm)**. In **November**, the Council's Chief Conservation Officer, **Roger Dowty**, addressed, as he put it '**What you should and shouldn't do in a Conservation Area**'. Our meeting with **Cityclean**, originally scheduled for **January**, had to be postponed to **June**. In **March** we are due to look at auditing our streets for safety, convenience and design appropriate to a Conservation Area.

Community meetings provide a forum for debate and a chance for discussion on issues of concern to the local community. As in previous years, parking, waste collection, the balance between commercial activity and residential life and the future of the former children's hospital site have been constant concerns. Our detailed survey in 2007/8 of residents' views in our part of **parking** zone Z and resulting discussions and site visits with Council officials, led by John Riddington, should eventually produce more than 20 extra overnight parking places when the changes are fully implemented – though unfortunately we have since lost some others to communal bins.

Despite the Council consultation showing that many streets in the CMPCA area voted against having **communal bins**, the bins were installed. The Committee is planning to invite residents to provide feedback on waste collection and recycling for a community meeting in June with Cityclean representatives.

We have helped residents to object to new licensing and planning applications by companies that threaten their peace and quiet. The rules favour commercial development but some limitations on hours and conditions of use have been obtained.

Taylor Wimpey still pursue their development plans for the old **Royal Alex site** despite their own financial troubles, vocal opposition from conservation

groups and two rejections by the Planning Committee. After strong pressure from CMPCA and others they held a well-attended public meeting in Saint Michael's Church last May and subsequently made major modifications to the designs at the northern end of the site, to the relief of residents in Homelees House and along Clifton Road. Discussion at our community meeting in November showed a range of strongly held views. Some members believed that wholesale demolition of the existing buildings betrays the concept of a conservation area, others that the need to replace the Montpelier GP's surgery and the absence of any commercially backed alternative including conversion make the third TW plan preferable to living indefinitely alongside empty and deteriorating buildings. John Riddington reflected these divisions in his detailed letter (available on our website) to the Planning Officer. The public inquiry takes place on 12 May.

Our local **police team** attend every Community Meeting to meet residents individually, explain crime trends and hear our concerns. They dealt effectively with squatters in the former hospital and worked with us to ensure the owners secured the site more effectively. We are grateful to PCSO Bobbi King and her colleagues for their help in our community.

Community Links

Thanks to a grant from the Brunswick and Regency Neighbourhood Action Group we have commissioned four and erected three noticeboards around our area. From **4 - 20 July**, we held our second and expanded **Clifton Montpelier Powis Festival** when over one thousand people attended more than 30 family, literary and music events at **St Michael's** and **St Nicholas'** churches, including for the first time, an impromptu Sculpture Garden made from re-cycled materials in St Nick's Rest Garden. Eight brave residents opened their gardens for The Beacon's Garden Gadabout in the **Clifton Montpelier Powis Trail**, trebling last year's contribution to £3,000. In **December** we held our third Christmas Concert and Party at **St Nicholas'** with local musicians – including ABBA-solutely Fabulous - entertaining over 100 of us. Local traders' raffle prizes helped us raise £1000, of which £500 was donated to The Beacon and the remainder divided between St Nicholas and the CMPCA. Many CMPCA members have continued to work in the **St Nicholas Church Green Spaces Association (SNCGSA)** both serving on the committee and helping to restore the Rest Garden. SNCGSA has just held its first AGM and has made considerable progress in enhancing these three important green spaces for our area. We continue to benefit from the active support of **Cllrs Jason Kitcat** and **Sven Rufus**, and of **Fr Robert Chavner** of St Nicholas and **Fr Robert Fayers** of St Michael's and All Angels especially as our CMP Festival partners. We hold our community meetings at St Mary Magdalen's Community Centre.

Four issues of **CMPCAnews** have been produced by the **Newsteam** (Philippa Sankey, Judy Bow, Ann Smith and Teresa Dearlove (Design)) and distributed by our network of street representatives to every household in the area. A new website (www.cmpca.co.uk) registered to CMPCA was established in September following a majority decision by the Committee to sever links with

the previous privately-owned site. CMPCAnews and minutes of Community and Committee meetings are now available there. The website team comprises John Riddington, Judy Bow and Tony Bailey. We are hoping to make further improvements to the website this year.

Thanks to all our volunteers

The CMPCA can only operate thanks to the time and commitment not only of committee members but more importantly our forty or so street reps. It is they who distribute our newsletter, collect information for our surveys and generally help the flow of information. In addition, perhaps a further hundred local volunteers help set up our community meetings, write for CMPCAnews, help arrange our CMP Festival and run or take part in individual Festival and social events. Our activities are further supported by local businesses and the hundreds more who attend or take part in our activities: this all validates the positive role of the CMPCA at the centre of this thriving and vibrant community. Our sincere thanks to **all** who play these various roles.

Committee Membership and Procedure

The Committee met six times during 2008/9, Graham Towers resigned in May and Michael Hales stepped down for personal reasons in August. Tony Davenport was excluded by a majority vote in November until the 2009 AGM. Following the adoption in September of a policy on how to handle conflicts of interest, John Riddington has chaired all discussions on the former children's hospital site.

Adam Jones (Chair)
John Riddington (Vice-Chair)
Philippa Sankey (Secretary)
Peter Freeman (Treasurer)

Management Committee members 2008/9

Corinne Attwood
Judy Bow
Roz Charters
Tony Davenport (excluded Nov 08)
Jane Gray
Michael Hales (resigned Aug 08)
Aidan Lunn
Pauline Messum
Graham Towers (resigned May 08)
Nick von Tunzelmann