



## **FEBRUARY 2012 CHAIR'S REPORT**

### **1. ONE NORBITON WORKING TOGETHER [ONWT] PROJECT**

This has been subject to quite a bit of activity over the past month - as copies from emails you have received will testify! You will already have received a copy of the draft minutes from the last meeting which outlines recent activity. There are several key areas of development:

- a) **Request for joint meeting of all 'ONWT' committees** - a major concern for many of the 'Community Working Group' [CWG] was the fact that this pilot project was advancing rapidly with no real communication between the key strategic groups - that is the 'Professionals Group' [ Police, Community Health, Voluntary Sector agencies and Kingston Chamber of Commerce for example] 'Members Group' [ The 3 Norbiton Councillors plus 3 other 'opposition' Councillors ] and the Community Working Group [CWG] - us! I may well be repeating myself but please forgive me, I am anxious to ensure that you are kept as well briefed as possible about this important project. I should add that the following are my personal views .

At the inaugural November meeting and then again at the December meeting we were asked to ratify budgets put forward via the Metropolitan Police Authority ( MPA) community fund. The way this was done raised concerns from many CWG members as the procedure seemed to be contrary to the ethos of the project. We had been told that as an 'Autonomous' group we would be given responsibility for researching the priorities of the Norbiton Community and allocating funds accordingly. Given that this would be quite a responsible role, we felt it would be sensible to organise a meeting with the other two main groups who formed part of the governance structure - namely the Professionals Working Group and the Members Group - to make sure that we are all 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.

As the minutes show, this request was initially proposed by me at the December CWG meeting but failed to be recorded in the minutes. I raised it again when the minutes were up for agreement in January and this was accepted unopposed and duly recorded in the minutes. In addition to this, all those attending the January meeting unanimously agreed that the need for a joint meeting of all 3 groups was now a priority. It was further agreed that this should be held before our next meeting with a suggested date of 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The incumbent Chair, agreed to action this. The exchange of emails following the email which suggested this meeting at such short notice record the concerns raised. Draft notes from the impromptu meeting called last Tuesday are attached. For the record , although I made every effort to attend I had a doctors appointment at 10.15am which I had already postponed once. Dr Mike also had to leave , as did Doreen who made the effort to attend briefly to offer support. The meeting did not start until 9.45am so this gave us little time to register our concerns. For the record, once we left the meeting was no longer quorate.

- b) **Community Budgets** - This was a project raised by Eleanor Jones ( Social Entrepreneur in Residence- SEIR) at the end of the January CWG meeting. Through no fault of her own, this was raised very late in the evening. It informed CWG members of this new initiative from the Local Communities and Government Group had just confirmed that Norbiton had been accepted as one of 10 areas to pilot the scheme. One of the key reasons for this seemed to be that the 'Community Budget' scheme closely echoed the 'One Norbiton...' pilot 's aims and objectives It was agreed at the meeting that I be delegated to attend on behalf of the CWG. Therefore, I attended the launch of this pilot on 2<sup>nd</sup> February with Hilary Garner ( KVA Chief Exec) Dean Tyler from RBK Strategic Business and Tony Willis - from the Community Engagement Team. You should have received a report highlighting my impressions of the day and I am assured that a

more formal version is due very soon. Meanwhile, we are working on a future plan which will hopefully guide us through the next 9 months or so - in fact Dean and I are scheduled to meet on 14<sup>th</sup> February to discuss how to incorporate this scheme with ONWT. He has also kindly agreed to attend the next CWG meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February { 6.30 for 7pm in Piper Hall for any of you who would like to be involved}

- c) **Community Engagement exercise** - this is a key part of the future plans that we have agreed for the ONWT project. It is being organised through the 'Community Engagement sub group' - The draft notes from the last meeting are attached and show how hard several people have been working to identify the genuine priorities of people in Norbiton. After some wrangling we have been granted access to a list of Norbiton residents and have invested a huge amount of time ensuring that it is usable. As with all life experience, this is not really suitable for purpose but we are determined to work as hard as is needed to create a usable list. My experiences with the other 9 groups last Thursday tell me that establishing this 'baseline data' is too important to make compromises. Every day we creep a tiny step further with this but restricted funding means that there is a real chance that you may be called upon to help distribute the survey leaflets to the randomly selected panel. I have attached the latest 'PowerPoint' presentation produced by Dr Mike to update you. As I write we are working on the wording for the introduction letter and procedures for recording the results. I would like to add that this has been done in conjunction with Tony Willis - Senior Community Development Worker for ECET. He has been a tremendous asset. I have invited him to one of our CRESt meetings to introduce you all but understand that his duties keep him very busy.

## 2. ESTATE MATTERS

- a) **Madingley** - Residents from Madingley report that they are still without a gas supply. Several of them have expressed concerns to a number of CRESt members that although they have been supplied with electrically powered heaters, the cost of running these in this very cold weather is not covered by the allowance granted by RBK - as I recall from my experience last year. In addition we have received reports that there have been some new residents who appear to have had little support establishing themselves - although I should stress that this was reported via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. I have reported my concerns to Penny who acted promptly to raise concerns..
- b) **Safer Neighbourhood update** - I was lucky enough to attend a 'One Norbiton' sub group meeting with Sgt Lisa Maslen, who has recently replaced Sgt Tracy Miller on the Norbiton SNT. I was able to express our concerns about problems with younger people on the estate, the problems with police sirens, use of CCTV cameras and ,also, to follow up on use of the donated bicycles. I genuinely believe that there is a shared concern here and that we can work in partnership with the SNT to make the changes needed to improve things. In addition to this, Sheila has been to view the CCTV camera operation in Guildhall and there is an opportunity for us to arrange for the team in charge of this to speak to us - either as CRESt or as an open residents forum.
- c) **Lighting** - We have reported that there are serious problems with lighting in a number of areas on the estate. As an example we have the ongoing problem with Ely Court.( There are no electrical feeds to the lampposts!) In the same area, the alleyway between Graveley and Washington Road now has no working lights at all - neither is there lighting in the alley between Graveley and Chesterton Terrace. The last 2 are of particular concern as they are known areas for drug dealing. Again, Penny has helped and reported this.
- d) **Gardening project** - As agreed at the last meeting, Mary has written to Hilary Gander from the Gardening Group to explain that we are not in a position to hold funds on their behalf.
- e) **Play Scheme** - The last month has seen us working hard to complete the 'Knock and Drop' exercise. I send grateful thanks to the many CRESt members who have contributed to this. At the last count I believe that we have had 45 responses from residents, although I understand that there are still some areas to be consulted. Once again the latest meeting is on the same day as our meeting. I will be otherwise engaged with my brother Simon and Harry, my 5 year old nephew who seems to think it is a good idea to spend the day at 'Chessington World of Adventures' so I have tendered my apologies. Doreen and Sheila will represent CRESt and I am

sure either will be very capable of reporting on progress on Monday evening. I plan to be at our meeting, on Monday evening. In fact my brother, a solicitor of whom I am extremely proud, has agreed to bring young Harry along to QMH at 5.30pm so that I can indulge myself and show them off!

One other issue relating to the Play Scheme/Gardening Project is that we have now been informed that the group do not and never have wanted an outside water supply!

### 3. EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- a) **Choir** - I am sure that you will have already read the email from the 'Euphonix Choir' telling us that they will no longer be operating from Queen Mary's Hall. This is a great shame given that they had recruited some 24 plus members and had been a triumph at the Mince Pie munch. This is an agenda item for 13<sup>th</sup> which will allow us to debate a way forwards
- b) **Cook and Eat** - As agreed, I have invited Harman to attend our meeting so that we can discuss this project. She has just responded to say she plans to attend. I am hopeful that we will then have the information we need to make a decision about this - especially as we have already discussed our commitment to improving the level of Child Poverty on the CRE.
- c) **Cycling** - I have been in contact with Helen Terry from RBK Youth Services and provided her with the details of the people who so successfully ran the bicycle workshops at last year's Fun Day. We hope that this will result in a new project for the young on CREs
- d) **Drama** - This has been reported in our Newsletter and is now an active project. I have sent Jim Reynolds an invitation to our meeting so that we can assist with any last minute problems, if necessary. ( Update is at the end of this report)
- e) **Zumba** - Thanks to everyone who braved the cold to deliver our latest Newsletter on time. As a result Veronica has received a number of bookings from families who wish to take part in this course. Personally, I confess that I am chuffed that residents are reading our Newsletter!
- f) **Obesity Workshop** - I am very grateful to Veronica Storey for representing CREst at this event to discuss what is an ever growing problem.
- g) **Mental Health 'drop in'** I attended the Local Integration Team (LIT) meeting for Mental Health as a representative of the 'Community Wellbeing Group'. As a resident representative I reported on the sterling efforts of Joan and Brendan running the Piper Hall drop in on Tuesday mornings. As part of this I made a plea for the group to be given some method of contacting the previous members who moved to the Fircroft Centre after the changes. Again, this is something to be discussed on 13<sup>th</sup>
- h) **Mental Health First Aid** - I have invited Jo Gikuyu from ECET to our meeting as she has offered to speak with us about this subject - although I believe that the timings may not work for her. You may recall at our previous meeting we discussed the Community Wellbeing Group's plans to send several delegates on a course so that they can be trained up to then train others about 'Mental Health First Aid'. As a group we agreed that we would not pursue this but Jo has been keen to encourage to reconsider. In an attempt at a compromise, I have attached for you details of a place called the 'Recovery College' run from St Georges Hospital [www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk). They offer local courses free of charge ( I have attached a list a prospectus) Some of them seem to be just what we have been looking for. They are frequently half day sessions and cover a broad range of topics from 'Mental Health Myths & Realities' to 'Managing a Housing Tenancy'. I would appreciate your thoughts on this, please.
- i) **Fun Day** - The first planning meeting for the 2012 Fun Day is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> February in Tadlow - agendas have been circulated. For the 2012 event we are planning to organise the event in a slightly different way. We will of course agree the framework for the event at the Fun Day planning group. However, the idea is that we will form informal 'sub groups' with resident volunteers for areas such as the Tombola, Raffle, Refreshments, etc. The hope is that we can encourage more residents to help without frightening them with too much committee work and responsibility.
- j) **Soroptimist's Raffle.** - Sheila has been President of the Soroptimists for the 2011-2012 year. As such she has been allowed to specify the beneficiary of Charitable funds raised throughout the year - and she kindly chose CREst! One of the main fund raising projects is a Raffle which is scheduled to be drawn in March. If you think you may be able to sell ( or buy!) some tickets please get in touch with Sheila. The funds will be allocated to the Fun Day budget.

- k) **Ticket costs for Coach trips and events** - This is a matter which I know Doreen is keen to resolve at our next meeting. The irony is that we have become so successful we need to set ground rules for who pays what now that so many people from outside CRE attend - we also need to discuss the way tickets for events are allocated to ensure that CRE residents are given preference in areas where we have been funded specifically for the benefit of CRE residents. Perhaps we could deal with this at the same time as we confirm events diary for 2012?

#### 4. ACCOUNTS

As promised, I have been in touch with Loraine Shale who has confirmed that her husband is willing to audit our accounts in time for our April 14<sup>th</sup> AGM. He has simply requested a donation to the Princess Alice Hospice in payment.

Kayhan and I have spent an afternoon going through the accounts and working out the best way to handover - with your agreement this will be at the AGM. In addition I have been in touch with Sanja at KVA and have a meeting with her next Wednesday to discuss Accountancy training and, in addition to this we will discuss a possible date when Sanja can talk us through the responsibilities of Trustees

#### 5. LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

As a group, we have been contacted more and more by various agencies or individuals keen to work with us. As an example I met a lady who is part of the group who represents Kingston Hospital patients recently. She has since been in touch to ask if it would be possible to work with us as a means of seeking the views of CRE residents who are hospital patients. I have arranged for her to have a 'slot' at our March meeting. You will know that when we have had the odd approach in the past I frequently invite guests to our meetings. However, now that it seems to be happening more frequently I would like to be sure that you are happy for me to continue in this way, or if there is a better way for us to work? In the same way, we receive requests from an increasing number of University students keen to ask for CREst's help when researching for various projects.

I find it slightly ironic that CREst have strengthened our links with, Kingston Voluntary Action, Youth and Activity services, Norbiton SNT our Norbiton Councillors and AFC Wimbledon and forged new bonds with the University and Family Services - even our MP, Edward Davey has found time in his busy schedule to sit and talk with us yet the departments who are supposed to actively engage with us such as the Resident Participation Team ( RPT), Housing and the Equalities and Community Engagement Team ( ECET) seem to have fallen by the wayside. With the exception of Sue McAuley who has been a great help, the others have shown little or no interest in either supporting us or engaging with us - indeed the representatives from Housing and the RPT who are invited to all of our meetings no longer even extend the courtesy of sending apologies. My hope is that this is simply the result of heavy work schedules and not part of a pre-planned policy choice. What do you think?

## DRAMA GROUP UPDATE FROM JIM REYNOLDS

Dear Jill,

- > Here are some more details about the proposed Drama project with KU - I'm sending to all for convenience, not sure if it will make sense to all though! Here goes...
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- > The project will run on Wednesday evenings, from five until eight, and will take place next year in the Studio at the Rose Theatre in Kingston.
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- > The Wednesday dates proposed are as follows:
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- > 1. March 7
- > 2. March 14
- > 3. March 21
- > 4. March 28
- > 5. April 25
- > 6. May 2
- >
- > The first four sessions will be creative workshops with myself and four MA Drama students. Because of Easter and our reading week, there is a long gap between sessions four and five.
- >
- > The MA students will continue to work on the material in the gap between sessions four and five, returning to work with the group practically in sessions five and six.
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- > In those final sessions, the group will put together a work in progress performance, to be shared with a small audience at the end of session 6, at 7.30.
- > After this stage of the project, there is the possibility of taking the work forward to the International Youth Arts Festival. We are prepared to book and pay for a slot at the Festival, and work with the group to develop the project into a public performance.
- >
- > The follow-on project may be directed by one or two of the MA students, and it could also be supported by students from the second year of the undergraduate Drama programme at Kingston.
- >
- > All the students involved will be CRB checked.
- >
- > If examination-age children are involved, then they may not wish to take part in the second element of the project, because it will clash with revision etc. However, they are the people most likely to be able to benefit from such a project - we are imagining that the age range will cover the secondary school bracket.
- >
- > Not necessarily however -- it could be that there is a group of young people who you wish to target this towards, or a particular focus that you wish to suggest. Either way, at some point we would need to discuss a poster, signing up etc.
- >
- > I have been thinking in terms of a community play, and these are normally based on everyday life -- perhaps a working title could be What Estate We're in, which would suggest basing it on the experiences of young people on the estate.
- >
- > I need to get some more background on The Cambridge Estate and the work the committee does, find out which age range you want to target the project towards, and any particular subject that needs to be addressed. I imagine you and the committee will have questions as well, so I will be there on Monday to see if I can answer them, and see if we can take another step forward in making this happen.
- >
- > SYS, best,
- >
- > Jim
- >

## COMMUNITY WELLBEING GROUP

### PROJECT UPDATE FROM CREST

As a means of identifying how CREST has performed against the original Aims and Outcomes agreed last year I have highlighted on the original document projects actions that CREST have become involved in:

- To improve awareness of local services available we have included contact details and information both our Newsletter and on our website - [www.e-voice.org.uk/crest](http://www.e-voice.org.uk/crest)
- In addition we have run a feature in both our Autumn 2011 and Winter 2012 Newsletter highlighting the 'Mental Health Drop-In' held every Tuesday morning in Piper Hall. To our knowledge this is the only non-referral drop-in held during the day within RBK.
- Also featured in our Newsletter was an item highlighting the facilities available for both Carers and 'Young Carers'.
- CREST have 'adopted' the above drop in to offer them support with admin, publicity and finance ( we donated £100 from the Community Well Being grant to fund their group - given that the organisers, Joan and Brendan, were funding the group from their own pockets)
- We have invited Joan and Brendan to attend CREST meetings, which we are pleased to report they have been doing since last October.
- CREST have organised several activities for the local community both as one off events and longer terms projects - for example, we have a family Zumba course starting in February. We have ensured that those attending the Mental Health drop in and those not yet brave enough to do so are kept informed of these events. We were lucky enough to have 3 or 4 of the membership attend our Christmas Mince Pie and Tree lighting event.
- CREST have discussed, and sought advice on, the possibility of training members in 'Mental Health Awareness' and have concluded that any in depth training could cause more problems than it resolves. The fear is that it may give our members a false confidence when dealing with matters that should be best left to professionals. However, we do have a professional who has expressed a willingness to offer a general overview, highlighting for us ways to identify when to seek professional help and where to seek it.