

COLDEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING FORUM  
MINUTES OF THE FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held

8<sup>th</sup> December 2022, St Mary Magdalen Church Hall, Coldean  
at 7:30 pm

Present: Anant Suchak, Anna De Wit, Annemarie Frank, Arthur Elsey, Ashley Frank, Carol Bryan, Deborah Yuill, Eileen Jenkins, Merrie Pryor, Patrick Lowe Philip Jenkins.

Apologies: Cllr Zoe John, Mick Baker, Kara Ward, Russell Smith, John Furnell, Deborah Annells

1. Chairperson's report

Patrick Lowe explained that the Forum had been established on 30 July 2021 and had obtained designation from both Brighton and Hove City Council and South Downs National Park Authority by 24 December 2021. This was remarkable as most Forums took a longer time to acquire designation.

Since then, the work of the Forum committee had been to find solutions rather than focus on processes. In November 2021 we had our first Vision meeting. This identified that Open spaces and HMOs were the top priorities for members. With this we produced two reports on HMOs and an Environment Report.<sup>1</sup>

In April and May we launched a campaign together with Coldean Community Organisation to remove Site 21c (Ancient Grass Downland) from Issue 7 of City Plan 2 (Urban fringe designated housing development sites). This involved Emailing all City Councillors a copy of the Biological Report for the site<sup>2</sup>. He said that this had been a positive partnership and that the Forum looked forward to further partnership projects with all groups in Coldean.

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<sup>1</sup> Available on our website: [cnpf.co.uk](http://cnpf.co.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Available on our website: [cnpf.co.uk](http://cnpf.co.uk)

During this time we have also obtained a grant and set-up a limited company to administer these funds with a bank account. We needed a Special General meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September to authorise a company limited by guarantee to administer the grant.

We instructed Andrew Metcalf of Squires Planning Ltd to act as our planning consultant. Together we have produced a Consultation Strategy which is crucial for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Andrew will continue to assist us with our Neighbourhood Plan,

In November this year we arranged for two vision meetings, one in the evening and one in the morning. For this we produced leaflets that were delivered to all dwellings and businesses in Coldean.

We now have a Facebook page and our website ([cnpf.co.uk](http://cnpf.co.uk)) is now live.

He reported that our membership continues to grow and now stands at 60. Seven people have joined in the last two months

He observed that the number of HMOs had reduced from 98 to an estimated 94.

## 2. Treasurer's Report

Anant Suchak reported that the Forum obtained £9,690 government funding and so far we have spent £1,200 on professional fees, hiring rooms, social media, leaflet printing and distribution.

He explained that obtaining funding was a very complicated process as each item had to be budgeted and forecasts costs were not permitted.

All this required a professional skills and he could report that the Forum's financial affairs were in order and legal

Once the funding was confirmed, "Groundworks", who administer government grants, advised us to set-up a company limited by guarantee to protect the Forum membership from financial claims. This we did; but it entailed creating a new bank account.

Anant observed that the Forum committee comprised of two chartered accountants, a chartered surveyor, a professional editor, and an academic doctor. But we are still looking for more committee members.

### 3. Election of Committee for the coming year.

Annemarie Frank, as Membership Secretary, reported that she had received nominations for the following posts and that all nominees had confirmed their acceptance

#### **Chairperson.**

PATRICK LOWE. Proposed by Ashley Frank and Seconded by Annemarie Frank.

#### **Secretary.**

DEBORAH ANNELLS Proposed by Patrick Lowe and Seconded by Ashley Frank

#### **Treasurer.**

ANANT SUCHAK Proposed by Debbie Annells and Seconded by Patrick Lowe

#### **Membership Secretary.**

ANNEMARIE FRANK Proposed by Patrick Lowe and Seconded by Ashley Frank

#### **Environment Representative**

DEBORAH YUILL Proposed by Patrick Lowe and Seconded by Ashley Frank

#### **Locality Representative**

ASHLEY FRANK Proposed by Patrick Lowe, Seconded by Anant Suchak

Nominations for the following posts have not been received and these posts remain vacant

- Business Representative
- Residential Representative
- Press, Publicity and Media Secretary

As signatory to the Forum's constitution, she confirmed that she received no other nominations within or outside of the time limit.

**All nominees were elected unopposed.**

#### 4. Planning Applications

Ashley Frank explained that the Forum was entitled to receive immediate notification of any planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area. He congratulated Patrick Lowe on establishing this with Brighton and Hove City Council. It had been a difficult process with many obstacles, but Patrick had persevered, and we now receive copies of applications in the Neighbourhood Area

#### 5. Current Status.

The following policy documents have been sent to Andrew Metcalf for review. We propose to publish these documents after his review.

- HMO policy
- Housing Policy
- Neighbourhood Improvement
- Neighbourhood Development Order
- Environment Statement

Patrick said that new concerns would probably need working groups to develop specific policy.

## 6. “Visions of Coldean”

Deborah Yuill presented her synopsis of the recent “Vision of Coldean” meetings.<sup>3</sup> She noted that the few members had attended either meetings.

However, at the most recent events, the Environment (26% overall and 25% ranked in 1 or 2) and Housing (21% overall and 30% placing it in rank 1 or 2) were the highest priorities again. These two areas need to be top of the list for preparing and finalising our policies.

New priorities emerged: Vehicles (19% overall and 16% ranking it as 1 or 2) and Community Facilities (86% overall; no one ranked it as 1 or 2). (Bear in mind that the categories themselves may be narrower or wider and this can explain the percentage differences.)

Appearance was another new category (68% overall; no one ranked it 1 or 2). These newly raised issues could be tied into emerging priorities, particularly Environment: for example, reducing vehicle usage could be tied to aims to improve air quality; development requirements could specify retrofitting and sustainable materials, and so on.

She added that, in her opinion, the Environmental agenda can and should drive all areas of the Plan.

Deborah also suggested that we ask B&HCC to consult on a residents’ parking scheme. It is a simple first step to see whether it is what people want.

She then referred to the need for further consultation and suggested that we should continue to consult until no new concerns arise. Suggested methods of consultation could include, Email questionnaire, Facebook poll, Janes Walks, instructing a professional events consultant and run local events. She suggested that consultations need to ask for people’s solutions, as well as their complaints.

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<sup>3</sup> Available on our website: [cnpf.co.uk](http://cnpf.co.uk)

## Discussion

Traffic, speeding and traffic management plan for Bluebell Heights were the main topics discussed. Anna De Wit said that the Residents' Association had raised concerns about this.

It was proposed to explore whether a joint working group with the Residents' Association could be set-up. Patrick emphasised that for the Planning Forum it would need to focus on any planning matters.

The appearance of Coldean was also discussed. Arthur and Anna both felt that Coldean had been neglected by the Council

Meeting ended 8:50 pm