



CHURCHGATE AREA ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No 47 January 2014

www.churchgateassoc.org.uk

The Association promotes the interests of all residents and businesses, not only in Churchgate Street, but also in the general area of all those streets that lead directly off it.

Welcome! Longer days are welcoming the first signs of snowdrops and spring flowers to come, and clear nights bring starry skies and frosty roofs. At the start of the year there is so much to look forward to – and so much to do. We can be more effective when working together, so do play your part on Licensing and Membership.

Bury St. Edmunds Town Council Best Residents' Association 2013

Out of 5 or 6 Residents' Associations in the town we were delighted when the Town Council decided to award the CAA the title for 2013. Jos Bird from 30 Crown Street kindly nominated the Association and I had the privilege of receiving the Award from Stefan Oliver, Chairman of the Town Council, along with many other worthy winners of many different categories.



We had enumerated the many ways in which the CAA has and still is striving to make our area a better place in which to live and, luckily, the judges agreed with us.

Onwards and upwards.

Vivien Gainsborough-Foot

Future of Bury - Public Examination this month

The St Edmundsbury plan (Vision 2031) for a 30% increase in the size of Bury will be reviewed in public by the Government's Planning Inspector this month.

The Planning Inspector has specifically decided that the CAA's concerns about the lack of any planning to control additional traffic and parking should be discussed at an open session at the Apex (free admission – no ticket required) at 2.00pm on Wednesday 30th January. The CAA published a 46 page report last year "Reducing car use in the historic Bury St Edmunds Town Centre" which has been submitted to the Inspector. Vision 2031 contained no specific commitment to address these issues . The last St Edmundsbury study on this subject was in 2006 and is now out of date.

In the same session, the Planning Inspector will review the future of the Leg of Mutton. The CAA supports the Bury Water Meadows Group who argue that this land should be designated for informal recreation only i.e woodland, meadows, and footpaths, rather than sold to a developer for a hotel, club-house or other leisure business.

Andrew Hinchley

Broadband Up-date

After a three year campaign by the CAA and our MP, David Ruffley, BT have announced that the mediaeval grid will be fully upgraded to the superfast broadband service BT Infinity. There had been concerns that without this change half the grid would increasingly find that internet and TV services would become unavailable to them, sending the grid back to its mediaeval origins!

At a visit to the CAA organised by David Ruffley, the Regional Director of BT, Annette Thorp, announced that she had secured funding for the work in the next financial year to install a new fibre optic cabinet in Hatter Street which would serve the 50% of homes and businesses in our area without the service.

The BT Infinity service is expected to double the speed available to residents and businesses, with an eventual capability of up to 50Mbps.

Andrew Hinchley

CAA Visits the Hunter Club

The CAA committee visited the Hunter Club recently after St Edmundsbury had granted licence extensions to 2am, despite an objection by the CAA which was disallowed by the St Edmundsbury Council Legal department. With 7000 square feet of space the Hunter Club at 65 Guildhall Street is the largest business in the mediaeval grid. After three years of work (and 5 applications to the Licensing Committee to change hours), the Hunter club has evolved to serve three main groups:- its bars are open 7 days a week as for a pub, with late weekend opening; a second role is to host major music events, and a third element is community events, average one per day.

Following the successful licence application to extend to 2am, the club now always opens up to this time at weekends. Andrew Hunter says that in his view, the later time actually helps local residents since customers leave in smaller groups over a much longer period of time. One or two of his bookings, such as the salsa club, do however maximise use of the new hours as they do not start until 10pm.

During the last year, the entrance in St Andrews Street North has been updated and modernised and Andrew states that it accounts for 99% of customers entering and leaving the premises. Use of the Guildhall Street entrance is limited to before 9pm and he says tends to be used only by

those attending community events. During this three year period Andrew has also tried, within the limited budget to which he is working, to improve sound insulation by constructing window blocks and bricking up or constructing plasterboard walls in areas where noise is likely to be leaking out.

Andrew says he has had very few noise complaints in the last year, but adds that his live-in manager, Nick Pooley, is always available to deal with any complaints (01284 723101).

Andrew states that in order to run as a successful business, he must always be ready to change to meet public demand, which accounts for his licence applications and some of the changes he has been making.. A recent regular booking is for music students from West Suffolk College to practice each day on the main stage. He also takes bookings for christenings, second weddings and wakes, but is not chasing the main weddings market, due to the level of resources needed on the day.

Andrew suggests a regular get-together with the CAA to review problems and be aware of any new changes planned. Details of the Hunter Club current programme can be found , together with this article on the web

at www.churchgateassoc.co.uk.

Membership Renewals

A gentle reminder to members who haven't yet renewed this year, that membership subscriptions of £3 per person are now due. The membership year runs from October 1st. If you would like to renew, please send cash or a cheque, payable to Churchgate Area Association, to the Membership Secretary, 25 Guildhall Street, IP33 1QD. Please enclose a note of your name and address with your subscription. Your membership card will then be delivered to you. Thank you.

New neighbours

New residents and businesses are very welcome to join the Association. We have two free social events each year with a speaker. The Newsletter and our website keep you in touch with issues in our area. Membership only £3 per person per year. I have standing order forms available too if you would like to pay in that way.

Judy Broadway, Membership Secretary, 25 Guildhall Street, Tel: 724034, email judy@jbbroadway.co.uk

CAA New Treasurer

We are exceedingly grateful to Robin Geach for his long term as our Treasurer. Following Robin's retirement at the AGM, we welcome Nick Moon into this role.

Nicholas Moon has accepted the role of Treasurer of the Churchgate Area Association with effect from October 2013. Nick has been a property lawyer for the past 25 years and has run his own business for the last eight years.

Nick has worked in Whiting Street for about three years and he and his partner Alison have recently moved into College Street. They are both pleased to be part of the local community.

Improved Street View

Have you noticed the telephone exchange in its new Spring colours? A pleasing paint job finishing off renovation of the reinforced concrete walling.

Licensing

CAA committee members Vivien Gainsborough-Foot and Cathy Friel and Councillors Paul Farmer and Jo Rayner met Tom Wright, Business Regulation and Licensing Manager at the Council Offices on 8th November. We brought to his attention our concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour affecting Churchgate Area residents. As individual residents we are aware of incidents of anti-social behaviour and this is confirmed by police statistics about recorded crime which can be found by postcode on www.police.uk website.

Tom Wright informed us that when the Licensing Policy document was last updated it was stated that the Special Area/Cumulative Impact Policy would be effective until 4th January 2014. The Policy would then have to be reviewed and a Public Consultation held. The Licensing Committee apparently would prefer not to reinstate it, therefore it is important that residents respond to the consultation, as they did in 2011. The support then was impressive. Fifty-four (54) households responded in support of reinstating the Special Area Policy.

The Public Consultation has not yet been advertised. Information should be available on www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk in the 'Business' section under Licensing.

When responding, bear in mind the Licensing Objectives i.e.

- * the prevention of crime and disorder,
- * public safety,
- * the prevention of public nuisance and
- * the protection of children from harm.

The fact is that more Councils nationally are adopting Cumulative Impact Policies. On the 31st March 2010 there were 134 in England and Wales. On 31/3/2013 there were 175.

Cathy Friel

What's Happening at Our PictureHouse?

A new owner for the Picturehouse cinema in Hatter Street is expected to be announced later this month. Both Aberdeen and Bury St Edmunds cinemas are being sold, with the Cambridge PictureHouse also an option. The current owners, Cineworld, could choose to sell their other Cambridge cinema instead. There were seven bidders for the Hatter Street Picturehouse including a bid led by Pat Church, the manager, who has promised to keep the same range of programming that the cinema currently enjoys.

The decision by the Competition Commission that these cinemas should be sold raised substantial opposition last year. The Director of Bridget Jones, Beban Kidron, spoke in the House of Lords opposing the sale. Fourteen thousand (14000) Cambridge residents objected and in Bury the CAA, many local residents and MP David Ruffley strongly opposed the sale. The Competition Commission defended its decision to rule that each PictureHouse had been previously competing directly with the local Cineworld multi-screen cinema, and therefore competition rules should be triggered. They stated that both in Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge, about one-third of Picturehouse customers had been to Cineworld in the last 12 months and Picturehouse received over half its revenue from films also shown at Cineworld.

Andrew Hinchley

Your Committee 2014

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