



Chair's Annual Report on One Norbiton

AGM Oct 4th 2016

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An AGM is always a good time to review where we have come from and where we are going.

One Norbiton is now over five years old. We started off in 2010 as a "Multi-pilot" for three local and central government endeavours. First of all to create a mutually supportive community in the most social disadvantaged part of Kingston. Secondly to explore how services and volunteering could be locally integrated. And finally to see if we could provide *ongoing* local democratic input to influence a **Notional Community Budget**. In Kingston, we were to pilot the Borough's "One Kingston scheme" and Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA), the Council and the NHS obtained a grant of over £105,000 from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to realize these joint ambitions.

At the onset, a large committee of senior officers from most of the local services assembled to set up some joint work plans. Then in 2012 we, a motley crew of assorted local volunteers were invited set up our Community Working Group to report to them. We soon formed the One Norbiton Company and informed the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that because of the, minimal administrative funding, difficulties of personalities etc. that it would take at least a decade to complete most of their aims rather than the three years allotted to the pilot.

As time has gone on this has proved prophetic, the original large committee of Local Service Leaders has now dissipated. The ideas for setting up a Notional Community Budget and for getting local integration of services has lost its impetus. We, however have remained, wading slowly through the porridge of bureaucracy

But now we are at last glimpsing the possibility of achieving some of our original aims. Our sole financial sustenance has been the remnant of the original DCLG grant, reluctantly released by RBK and KVA with the help of newly appointed Leader of the Council, Kevin Davis. Yet with this small amount of funding we have achieved quite a lot.

First but not least we have set up a viable organisation. This has been thanks to the unstinting and able administration of Jill Preston. Secondly we have an active Police

and Neighbourhood Watch group thanks first to Sheila Griffin and latterly to Elaine Kennedy and Ed Naylor.

For over two years we have been running youth clubs aimed at reducing NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training). This has involved the cooperation of many of us. First Harry Hall and then Jill with valued oversight from Clive Clarke and Helen Terry and latterly with John Trend of Oxygen. Valuable support for this and other enterprises has come from Maundy Todd. Clive Clarke and Helen Terry of Achieving for Children.

Jill and CREst are owed a debt for providing us with shared office space. Jill has also run our Food Bank and kept our Community Bank (Surrey Save) going for those needing loans at a reasonable rate of interest. Ed Naylor has also helped out with this as has Phil Hutchinson and the debt management service provided by Christians Against Poverty. (CAP)

Recently we have been helping homeless 'Street Drinkers' thanks to a working group chaired by Neville Rainsford. Our three local Councilors, Bill Brisbane, Linsey Cottington, and Sheila Griffin provided funding for the drinkers to create a Children's Memorial Garden in the cemetery.

Our three Councilors have also all been very supportive of our activities as have our other two Directors Rashid Laher and David Ryder Mills. To have achieved as much as we have, to create a supportive community, mostly through volunteer effort is very encouraging and next year we will be reporting to DCLG on some of the lessons we have learned.

But that was the past, what are we doing now? Our current urgent task is to help handle the stresses of Regeneration. Already we are working with CREst and CRERA to survey everyone on the Estate who might be affected by the RBK proposals. We are enablers rather than elected representatives. We see the task as encouraging people to work together and get more democratically involved in solving their own problems. We want to get a clear statement of intent from RBK that they will properly look after the interests of all our members who are in danger of being disadvantaged by this regeneration initiative. Everyone would welcome the change if it could bring about much needed improvement in the lives of estate residents.

This whole process, although stressful, could turn out to be real opportunity for One Norbiton to prove its worth. We are very lucky to have the help of lawyer, Emily Davey, who is volunteering to provide all the community groups with legal advice.

We are also planning 'postcode parties' to facilitate people in neighbourhoods to meet and help each other. As an integral part of this we are completing the refurbishment of our Community Hub for which we, at last, have planning permission.

Before we were overtaken by all these events, we were preparing a Community Plan. This plan must involve the whole of our ward and not just the CRE. The first draft is already on the Website and I hope that at the AGM next year we will be able to formally

approve this.

Finally, in the more distant future, we are hoping to make progress with another of our original aims: namely to pilot the integration of services. We hope to do this by inviting NHS and Social services to work with volunteer groups and residents within our refurbished Hub. Perhaps we should eventually resume exploring the idea of the Notional Community Budget and the ad hoc scrutiny of the best use of local public money.

All these plans will be facilitated if we could get the future funding of One Norbiton properly established. To this end, we are at this moment tendering as part of a Consortium, to improve RBK's Resident Engagement Services. If successful, this may provide us with adequate funding for the next five years and would be a novel way of re- defining one of the jobs of localism.

We have always hoped that at least some of the solutions we find to be effective locally might be of use elsewhere in the country. At last we are beginning to see a way we might turn this hope into a reality.

Thank you all for all your hard work and volunteer support.

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