

Findings of the Public Consultation Process

Devonport Neighbourhood Team

As part of the consultation period, the Neighbourhood regeneration team offered workshops to local residents groups to help them to understand the consultation and ensure that they were able to participate should they wish to do so.

Three residents associations requested workshops: Marlborough Street, Helen Fox House and The Three Towers residents groups.

During these workshops the following points were recorded:

Marlborough Street:

- Reported daily problems with people drinking/urinating/swearing in the vicinity of the playpark and utility building on Granby Green
- Residents say that local families are reluctant to use playpark for fear that street drinkers/drug users will be there/arrive and be use foul language/urinate/defecate nearby
- Perception is that whilst this often involves 'street drinkers' there is also a small proportion of residents of Marlborough house in are involved in this activity – one example was cited of a couple who came out of the flats drunk and sat on a bench and administered intravenous drugs – and remained there for some hours in a stupor.
- Residents highlighted they felt there was a 'policy' of locating people with a drug/alcohol issue in the area
- Residents also felt that people who were accommodated in the Life house should not be permitted to buy alcohol from local shops
- Residents were angry that they were expected to write in to evidence the problem when they believe it is self-evident
- Reports of frequent problems in shop doorways and rear lanes along Marlborough Street
- Residents allege that despite the voluntary agreement to not sell single cans that both the Premier store and the Polish shop continue to sell single cans to street drinkers. This is unsubstantiated but reflects a fatigue/belief among residents that 'no-one is doing anything' and it is just being allowed to continue.

Towers:

- Residents reported a number of individuals accommodated within the blocks with alcohol and drug issues who persistently let others in, and this encourages a culture of street drinkers hanging around outside their blocks
- Residents noted that street drinkers are frequently found in the Mount Wise area and in the Cumberland St area (triangle across from the shops) – 'anywhere where there is a wall to sit on'

Helen Fox House:

- Residents reported feeling intimidated by the presence of drinkers/foul language/urinating against the wall
- Residents report actively avoiding going out if street drinkers are outside and worry about going to local shops because they do not want to encounter the above behaviour

Additionally, we received a report from a resident of Waterloo Yard flats along the perimeter of Stonehouse Creek about persistent issues with street drinkers being loud/swearing/urinating along the hedge perimeter with his garden.

Trevor Cross cited a conversation with a street drinker in April, who explained that he was currently sleeping under the tunnel below Stonehouse Street but comes up to drink/meet associates at Granby Green. Street drinking litter is frequently reported and cleansed from the Brickfields triangle also. NR team member noted frequent signs of street drinking litter along the Stonehouse Creek footpath and through the tunnel to Richmond Walk and also into Victoria Park.

The above information illustrates how habitual street drinkers migrate through the area seeking connections with others/appropriate meeting places. It is known that if they are moved on then they migrate to the next available site, which is why the wider area was identified as important to include in the DPPO area – without this, there is a high likelihood that we would just push the problem to the next street. At least by having wider areas covered, the PCSOs are able to take action if an issue arises and the street drinkers eventually adopt a more mobile habit, lingering less in one particular area (knowing they can be moved on) and therefore reducing the impact on the residents and businesses.

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