Summary Report of the Wincheap Society Meeting 17th August 2026 – Worthgate Scout Hall

The **Wincheap Society** met to discuss revitalising the organisation and forming a new committee.

Present

Mike Ebbs
Jonathan Hill
Steve Williams
Helen French
Hilary Jarman
Bill Newland
Grace Cooper
Lois And Hamai Sandhu
Peter Campbell
Caroline Galbraith
Dane Buckman
Sharon ?
David Ireland
Jim Hawkins
Barney Parsons
John Osborne

Organisational Revitalisation

Barney outlined the need to reboot the **Wincheap Society**, moving it from a small group managed by one or two people towards a broader community network. The current purpose of the Wincheap Society is to represent residents and small businesses, preserving the area's character. A function of a revitalised society should include engagement with local groups like the allotments, scouts, and groups running various planning campaigns. This would mean the group could also act as a forum.

Committee Requirements A new committee structure is being sought to fill critical ownership gaps in several areas:

- **Communications**: Managing social media, a **Facebook** group, perhaps, and website improvements. WhatsApp (a closed group) to be set up for the committee.
- **Administration**: Handling minute-taking, membership records, and subscriptions.
- **Events**: Organising community activities such as quizzes or picnics.
- **Specialisations**: Roles for a chair, treasurer, secretary, and media coordinator.

Members indicated their interest in these roles via sign-in sheets.

Peter and **Dane**, representing local council interests, are able attend meetings as ex-officio members but should not hold formal committee positions due to the society's non-political nature. Six or possibly seven of those present offered areas of expertise and showed that they would like to be part of a revitalised committee. **Barney** will contact these attendees to see if they are still interested and will attempt to fix up a Zoom meeting to discuss committee roles.

Local Planning Issues

The discussion focused heavily on upcoming challenges regarding land use and local government changes. The revitalised society could aim to act as an umbrella organisation for various single-issue groups, such as the **Save the Orchards and Fields** campaign.

Planning Concerns Discussion turned to how recent changes might affect community influence over developments. Key topics included:

- The impact of larger developments (over 150 units) where council planning officers may have more decision-making power.
- Specific infrastructure projects including the gyratory system, the 4th slip road, Merton Park development, and data centres regarding water usage impacts.

Governance Changes A major upcoming priority is understanding local government reorganisation (**LGR**) and its implications for future decision-making in Canterbury. There was also an exploration of whether establishing a **Wincheap Parish Council** would provide more localised control over minor planning applications or environmental issues.

Future Meetings

The group tentatively scheduled its next meeting for **Tuesday 29th September** to formalise the new committee and hold an informal **AGM** where a new committee would be ratified.

The meeting intends to invite **David Wilson** (or another qualified person) to present on **LGR** and explain how this could affect the local area.

Participants raised questions regarding whether a name change from **Wincheap Society** to something like **Wincheap Forum** would improve accessibility or if it would create unnecessary administrative hurdles involving bank accounts and rebranding. This topic was saved for another day!

Action Items

- **Peter Campbell** - Attend the Canterbury City Council full council meeting on Wednesday 16th discussing local government reorganisation and report back key points to the Wincheap Society committee.
- To set up a closed WhatsApp group for Wincheap Society committee members (modelled on the existing Save the Orchards WhatsApp) to provide a direct communication channel between meetings. **Caroline** said she would do this. It is important that all committee members should have a mobile number.
- Send all attendees a written summary of this meeting, including the agreed date for the next committee meeting and a breakdown of the main committee posts and responsibilities discussed**. (Barney)**
- Organise an open AGM-style meeting at the Scout Hut, provisionally on Tuesday 29 September, inviting interested residents and past members of the society. It was hoped that David Wilson (or another suitable LGR expert) would be available to speak on local government reorganisation and potential parish council options, alongside formalising the new committee and collecting subscriptions. **(Barney, Caroline and others)**
- Visit a meeting of Thanington Parish Council in the coming weeks to observe its workings and speak with councillors about how it operates, to inform future parish council proposals for Wincheap.

The meeting closed at approximately 2030.