

WHAT'S HAPPENED ABOUT MOORSIDE COTTAGE?

From Berni Hallam and Jill King

This question has been raised many times by Moordown residents and members of Moordown Local History Society (MLHS). It is now over a year since we started collecting signatures for our Petition to Bournemouth Council asking them to take action to preserve this Grade II listed building - Moordown's Little Gem - so we thought a summary of events might be helpful. We now have a fat file of letters, emails and press cuttings...

- JUNE/JULY 2013 Over 300 signatures collected by members of MLHS at Moordown Fete, door to door, and at retail outlets.
- OCT 2013 Petition presented to Bournemouth Council Planning Board. Party from MLHS pictured in the Echo, together with a report in which Nigel Billett - the Senior Planning Enforcement Officer - said his department would assess the site and report findings at next Planning Board meeting. A copy of this report was downloaded by us, but we thought that it was quite inadequate and missed the point about the state of the thatch, which was last renewed in 1973 - 40 years ago! Their report seemed to be mostly concerned with the dumping and burning of rubbish in the garden - a more straightforward matter to deal with.
- NOV 18 2013 several members of MLHS attended the meeting of the Planning Board at the Town Hall and Berni Hallam made a presentation, which was well received by the Councillors and they instructed a FULL SURVEY of the thatch and fabric of the cottage be carried out.
- NOV 29 2013 Wendy Prendergast, former owner of the cottage, wrote to the Echo . More pictures published together with her comments
- DEC 2013 Enforcement order made that rubbish should be cleared by Dec 12 - mostly complied with and no more fires lit.
- DEC 13 2013 Mr. Billett, the Enforcement Officer, emailed to say that he had met Mike Stokes, father of the supposed owner, together with a building surveyor, who had been instructed to make a full survey and assess work that needed to be done . A copy would be sent to Mr. Billett.

- JAN 2014 Mr. Billett replied to our enquiry that he had not yet received the survey and was chasing Mr. Stokes. If nothing was heard, the Council would inspect the roof independently.
- JAN 30 2014 Wendy Prendergast wrote again to the council.
- FEB 2014 Further enquiries by MLHS but the Council still have not seen the survey.
- MCH 5 2014 MLHS contacted the Council again to report further deposits of rubbish and to enquire about any further developments.
- MCH 6 Mr. Billett replied that he was still awaiting the survey and was making preparations to investigate further reports of dumping.
- MCH 14 **Mr.** Billett informed us that the survey had been received and had been passed to the Conservation section, but gave us no details of its contents.
(We have since been informed that we are not permitted to see this vital document that we tried so hard to get implemented)

At the end of March 2014 Nigel Billett left the department and handed the file to his successor, Sean Burke.

- APR 2014 In reply to further emails from MLHS, no further information was available, due to sickness and holidays! MLHS had requested sight or summary of the survey
- MAY 2014 Several requests made for information but received no reply from Enforcement Department.
- JUNE 3 2014 Emailed further requests for information, but received reply with more excuses for no action.
- JUNE 27 2014 Wrote to English Heritage enquiring about legal obligations for maintenance, received polite reply, but no further contact.
- JULY 18 2014 Reported more rubbish in garden and enquired about action on report, but received no reply to this email.
- AUG 29 2014 Emailed a request to meet Mr. Burke on site, or at his office.
- SEPT 2 2014 Reply from Mr. Burke asking why we wanted to see him !

- SEPT 4 2014 Replied to this email, basically asking why nothing has been done about the survey in the last 5 months.

To date - Sept 5 - there has been no further communications.

We would, however, like to receive your comments and suggestions as to any further/alternative action which could be taken in this increasing frustrating situation.

You can use the 'contact us' feedback box on any page of the MLHS website to send us your comments and suggestions..

Jill King and Berni Hallam - September 2014