Community Fund 2016/17
Pumpkin Carving Competition 2016
Chandos Neighbourhood Association
INTRODUCTION

The Chandos Neighbourhood Association (CNA) was set up in 2015 in response to the need felt locally to coordinate on planning issues and to maintain the Chandos Road area as a pleasant place to live. Membership is open to all who live in the Chandos Road area. There is no charge for membership.

This particular event is one of many being organised through the year to promote a sense of community. The event was a pumpkin carving competition open to all residents in the Chandos Road area. We decided to schedule the event to coincide with Halloween and also the start of the academic year when a number of new student residents have moved into the area. Participants were encouraged to not only carve their own pumpkin but to engage with other residents by getting out to see the other displays. We also encouraged interaction on social media using the hashtag #chillingchandos.

We received £70 from the Community Fund to cover printing and prizes for the competition.

THE EVENT

The concept for the event was proposed at a regular CNA committee meeting earlier this year. A local graphic designer volunteered his time to create a poster and flyer for advertising. Posters were displayed by the majority of businesses on Chandos Road. Flyers were delivered to all local residences. The event was advertised on the CNA website (www.chandosna.wordpress.com), via our email distribution list and on Instagram. The event was highlighted at the CNA open meeting in June 2016 and also during the student welcome (where CNA members visit student residences to welcome them to the community).

A small discount on pumpkins was negotiated with the local greengrocers (Mabel’s Greengrocers, Chandos Road) to encourage support of local businesses.

A local artist volunteered to be an independent judge for the competition.
Participation was good with approximately 40 entries. Entries were a good mix of local businesses, student and non-student residences. Approximately a third of the entries were from students. The majority of student residents in this area attend the University of Bristol.
OUTCOME

The uptake of the event overall was higher than expected. Entries were of a high standard and many participants had made displays using several pumpkins.

Use of the hashtag was quite low but CNA’s presence on social media (Instagram and Facebook) is small and relatively recent. We hope to increase our presence over the coming year by increasing the use of social media to engage with residents.

The event was a relatively simple one to run and the consensus of the CNA committee is that we would like to make this an annual event. Next year the event will be run over a longer period of time, it was only 2 hours this year, to give more time for the judging and for residents to view their neighbours’ displays. Residents said:

“An incredibly high standard, lots of variety, what a fantastic event”. “I’d never carved a pumpkin before. It was great fun and I’ll certainly be doing it again”

LOOKING FORWARD

The event was a relatively simple one to run and the consensus of the CNA committee is that we would like run this event again next year as part of the committee’s timetable of community engagement events.

The next event will be run over a longer period of time, it was only 2 hours this year, to give more time for the judging and for residents to view their neighbours’ displays.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mary Bishop (for judging the pumpkins), Martin Rieser (for designing a striking poster), Mabel’s Greengrocer (who gave a discount on pumpkins to participants), to all those who helped with flyer distribution including the Chandos Neighbourhood Association committee, and the residents of the Chandos Road area for designing some amazing pumpkins.