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THG-B01-S2

## Coach House future under investigation

THE leaseholder of the Coach House at Northdown Park faced a barrage of accusations during an investigation into the building's use.

Peter Miles took over The Coach House in 1986. Under an agreement with Thanet council he was to reopen it as a museum.

At a meeting of the Coach House Working Party on Tuesday Will Friend, whose family owned Northdown Estate, said: "The leaseholder was to carry out the works within a year or so and then open the building as a museum for at least 100 days a year thereafter.

"The museum has never been opened, and the flat has been sub-let to a series of tenants, from whom Mr Miles has presumably received rent up until a couple of years ago."

The committee heard from Ramsgate resident Carol Russell, who used the Freedom of Information Act to get a copy of the lease between Thanet council and Mr Miles.

She said: "Thanet council failed to make the leaseholder repair the building and open it as a museum. It should be turned over and handed to a new tenant who will care for it."

Mr Miles declined to put his side of the argument or answer questions from the committee indicating he was considering legal action.

Councillor Martin Wise and former Thanet council leader Sandy Ezekiel both declared an interest in proceedings. Mr Wise said he was a friend of Mr Miles and Mr Ezekiel that he knew him through the Conservative party.

The committee is expected to make its recommendation on the future of the Coach House in coming weeks.