



# **NEWSLETTER**

**1 / 98**

*January 1998*

We hope that you all had a  
Happy Christmas

**We now Wish  
All our Readers  
Good Health and Happiness  
Throughout  
1998**

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## EDITORIAL

Following our usual custom, this Newsletter, is being distributed to all households in our area and not only to those who support us financially.

Although intended for distribution early in the New Year, it was actually written before Christmas. So in case some get it early, our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all of our readers. And, a sincere thank you to everyone who has supported the Society, both actively and passively over the past year.

As in other years this particular Newsletter reviews our activities during 1997, so apologies to those on the regular mailing list if some of the items covered seem familiar.

Although there are signs that property development is livening up, we are not yet seeing the mad rush of the late 80's and early 90's to (re)develop everything and anything. That has given the Society a breather and allowed other issues to be addressed. As our patch overlaps the boundary between Bromley and Lewisham we get involved with both Councils. Without enlarging on the subject, it certainly adds interest dealing with Councils of different political persuasions.

Some of the matters the Society has dealt with during the year, which will be expanded upon later, are :

- Beckenham Place Park, we serve on both the Working Party and the Management Plan Sub-Committee.
- Channel Tunnel trains, noise amelioration.
- Parks & Open Spaces Strategy for Lewisham.
- Roads and junctions.
- Policing and crime in the community.

Two subjects on which we have not made a contribution - mainly due to a lack of volunteers - are:

- Agenda 21
- Health Authority and Hospital Trusts.

The Society is strictly non-political and everyone involved is an unpaid volunteer (except for expenses). If you do not yet support us, but after

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reading this Newsletter you would like to, or wish to tell us which issues you think the Society should be addressing, just fill in the enclosed green membership slip - join for half price - and put it through the letterbox of your Road Representative. All Officers and Road Representatives are listed on the last page of this Newsletter.

### **Dates for the Diary**

Thursday 8th January '98, Members Meeting, 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel.

Thursday 5th March '98, Annual General Meeting, 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel.

Everyone is welcome at both meetings, but please check the Activities Board in the Hotel foyer to find out which room we are using.

Regarding the AGM we need suggestions for this year's guest speaker. If you have any ideas, come along to the meeting on Jan 9th or contact our Secretary on 460 4734.

**Peter Pain (Editor)**

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### **BECKENHAM PLACE PARK** **Draft Management Plan**

A year ago it was reported that a public consultation meeting on the draft Management Plan, would probably be held in the Spring of 1997. The Plan was being prepared by a sub-group of the Joint Working Party, made up of Officers and Councillors from Lewisham and Residents and other Associations with an interest in the Park, including this Society. Twelve months later, the draft Plan has had its 3rd revision and should be considered by the Leisure & Environmental Services Committee in mid-December. Inter alia the Management Plan recommended that consultants be employed to expand the section of the Plan dealing with buildings and their future uses. In particular the Mansion, Stable block and Homesteads. That meant a bid for funding to the Lottery for firstly a feasibility study which, if positive, would lead to a full scale study and a submission to the Heritage Fund.

Tenders were invited and 6 firms replied. One of them was cheapest by far and appeared to be as detailed as the more expensive tenders. However, nothing runs smoothly, the Heritage Fund expressed concern that the team

making up the winning consortium was not as strong as they would have liked. Then the lead firm of the consortium contacted Lewisham to say that the price they had quoted was too low.

We are unclear whether they are withdrawing or holding a pistol to Lewisham's head for more money. Whichever, our latest understanding is that invitations will have to be sent for fresh tenders. Six months have been lost and the end of the David Lloyd Leisure contract gets ever nearer ! Running parallel with the above frustrations are 2 more.

### **River Ravensbourne**

Earlier in the year the Environment Agency (a new Department which has taken over the National Rivers Authority and much else) thought that they had funds to naturalise the River Ravensbourne where it runs through the Park. Studies were put in hand to work up detailed schemes. There was talk of creating marshy areas and fish pools, removing the toe boards (bank protection) and reducing the steepness of the banks plus coppicing some old willows to regenerate them. However the money seems to have "drained" away. Current proposals are limited to coppicing some willows and possibly removing some toe boards with perhaps later a riffle for fish. Plans of the work can be seen at the Visitor Centre in the Homesteads near the Mansion, which is run by the Friends of Beckenham Place Park.

**Summerhouse Field** (between the railway and the river near the Ravensbourne Ave / Crab Hill entrance)

For some time there has been discussion about the concept of rebuilding the old pavilion and bringing the field back into use for pitch sports. The question was how ? Earlier proposals for a consortium of football clubs to manage the pavilion and pitch lettings fell through because they produced an unconvincing business plan. More recently a joint venture has been proposed between Lewisham and the Goan Club (the pavilion and sports field the other side of the river). The concept was to rebuild the Summerhouse Field pavilion next to the Goan pavilion giving extra facilities and changing rooms. Convert part of the Goan field to an all weather multi-function pitch and have 3 football pitches and a cricket square in Summerhouse Field. It is understood that Lewisham have called 3 meetings of interested parties. The only problem was that no-one turned up.



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## ENVIRONMENT

### Fly Tipping

We have had reports of fly tipping on some of the unmade roads in our area. Firstly fly tipping is illegal and anyone caught doing it can be prosecuted. Although the police will act, it is usually the Environment Agency who lead in these matters. Indeed at the present time they intend to prosecute someone caught fly tipping in the unmade section of Ravensbourne Ave/Crab Hill.

Anyone seeing fly tipping taking place should note as many details as possible and inform Bromley's Environment Services on the Litter Helpline 0181-313 4510. They will take it on from there.

Now comes the problem of clearing the rubbish :

If it is on a made up road (ie adopted) the Council will arrange clearance at no cost to the frontagers.

If it is on an unmade road (ie unadopted) the Council will only arrange clearance at no charge if it is blocking the route for ambulances or fire engines. They will charge the frontagers or who ever else will pay if it is on the verges of the road. However, if a hazardous waste such as asbestos or chemicals has been dumped the Environment Agency will clear it and charge the cost to a central fund.

If the dumping is on a private road then it the responsibility of the frontagers to get it removed.

### Wildlife

Bromley is seeking information on sightings of bats, blue butterflies, stag beetles, hedgehogs and ancient trees in the borough. This is not casual curiosity. Bromley has over one third of London's ancient woodlands and chalk grasslands as well as heathland and wildlife rich hedgerows. To preserve as much as possible for current and future generations, they need to record what exists and where. To progress that aim they have formed a partnership with English Nature, Kent Wildlife Trust, London Wildlife Trust and the Orpington Field Club.

If you feel you can help or just want to know more, contact ; Alister Hayes, Environmental Services, Bromley on 0181-313 4665.

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## **Local Agenda 21** (a local plan to conserve/improve the local environment)

Previous Newsletters have carried various reports on LA21. The study was carried out with the involvement of many members of the public.

The result is a document "Blueprint for a Better Bromley" and this has been adopted by the Council's Environmental Services Committee as its Environment Strategy. In parallel the Policy & Resources Committee has approved an initial allocation of £25000 as a community action support grant. One off grants of up to £500 are available to individuals or local groups proposing a project which contributes to local sustainable development. Further information on LA21 or the action support grant, can be obtained from either John Street or Mike Ibbot at Bromley Civic Centre on 0181-313 4520.

### **Saving Energy**

Not all properties have full loft insulation (8") or cavity wall insulation or even energy efficient heating controls. Grants of up to £300 are available from Bromley Council. There is a leaflet describing the grant scheme and who qualifies, plus several others on energy saving in the home. If you want to know more contact Bromley's Energy Manager on 0181-313 4560.

### **Lewisham's Parks & Open Spaces Strategy**

Lewisham have embarked upon a survey of all of their parks and open spaces and have produced a Consultation Draft Strategy. Because of our involvement with Beckenham Place Park we, as well as others, have been invited to comment. In general it is a commendable document which reviews current provision & practice; external influences and the roles of the different providers of open space ie Council, sports clubs & schools. It goes on to examine key issues and opportunities and ends with objectives and courses of action.

We have not yet submitted all of our comments, but one obvious issue it misses is just how bad Lewisham is at providing or even retaining its public open spaces. Of all the London Councils, Lewisham ranks 24th out of 33 for open space. Even of the Inner London boroughs it only ranks 9th out of 15. Furthermore, it now has less public open space than it did 25 years ago and is one of the 3 Inner London boroughs that failed to increase its public open space over that period. So it is clear that they have a lot of leeway to make up.

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Lewisham's Development Plan recognises that parts of the borough are deficient in open space and identifies them. However, the Draft Strategy fails to highlight this problem or to propose remedies. To our mind it should and we shall be making our views known both formally and informally.

## **PLANNING**

Several of the issues mentioned last year are still live. To grossly misquote a past Prime Minister "A year is a short time in planning matters".

### **Unitary Development Plans (UDP)**

Bromley are reviewing their existing Plan to take account of changes in guidance and circumstances generally. Their aim is to produce a Deposit Draft, consider objections and modifications, hold a Public Inquiry and issue an approved Plan by the year 2000. To achieve that they have issued a steady stream of Review Papers. Seventeen so far with more to come. A working party in the Society has been studying these papers and helping Leslie Tucker our Planning Officer for Bromley to prepare considered responses. Details of the subjects covered and our responses are available on request. Meantime in Lewisham, all is quiet on the UDP front. They have now printed and issued their first UDP and it is too early to start a review process.

### **Planning Applications**

Christ Church, Highland Rd The approval for a flank extension is still valid and our understanding is that they are still fund raising.

The Synagogue, Highland Rd Having received earlier approval for a flank extension, they have now made a fresh application to erect a temporary building on the site and to convert the garages for occupation. Both requests are to create space for study rooms. Our main concern is that the temporary building does not become permanent.

Hill House, Beckenham Lane An earlier application to refurbish the vacant Hill House and convert it into flats has been approved. Also approved was the demolition of the adjacent industrial building, which would then be rebuilt to provide more flats. Giving a total of 39 flats on the complex.

Laundry site, St Martins Rd/Station Rd A planning application for the redevelopment of this site has been refused. The application comprised

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building a 3 storey block on about half of the site with 10 bedsitting rooms for the homeless. There was also space for offices, a laundry and a meeting room. the formal reasons for the refusal were that it was an over development of the site in that the car parking provision was not to the standard in the UDP and the extra street parking would be detrimental to traffic flow.

Although the next item is not strictly within our area, we have been keeping a watching brief, as the outcome could affect local residents when travelling in the direction of Park Langley.

Langley Court, South Eden Park Rd This is the Glaxo Wellcome site near the Chinese Garage at Park Langley. Following the take-over of Burroughs Wellcome by Glaxo, it was decided to scale down the chemical research operations at Langley Court. There was no obvious solution for the reuse of the redundant building and land. After more than a year examining the problem and consulting with the Council and local groups, the following proposal has recently been approved by Bromley's Planning Committee.

However because there is a variance between the proposals and the Council's UDP, the scheme has had to be referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment for approval as a variation to the UDP.

The site covers 107 acres. Glaxo Wellcome will retain 21 acres for biotechnology research. Fourteen acres will be released to become a Business Park. Twenty one acres will be released for some 208 houses, A further 29 acres go to Bromley, some of which will be used to expand adjacent schools and some, plus the 22 acres left will be left as open space. There are still concerns about housing density, additional traffic and pressures on local schools. But, this looks to be the most viable proposal so far.

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## TRANSPORT

### RAIL

#### Channel Tunnel Rail Link

For nearly 10 years this Society has been involved, together with Bromley and other affected Residents' Associations, in Channel Tunnel Rail Link protests and debates. Now that the last section of sound barriers has been erected, all the locomotives are electric rather than diesel and a new high speed link that avoids Bromley has been approved, it looks as though this issue is behind us. The committees which were set up to co-ordinate action have been wound up and our representative for rail matters wishes to stand down. The logic is

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impeccable, he is retired and no longer commutes. With rail privatisation, future debates are likely to be about time-tables, fares and quality of service. We need a volunteer who either commutes or uses the railway fairly regularly, so that they can speak with some authority. If anyone is prepared to take on the job, would they please contact our Secretary on 460 7417.

### **Station Security**

Connex are proposing to install CCTV on many of their stations. We understand that Shortlands and Ravensbourne stations are included.

### **ROAD**

Over the past year we have made representations to Bromley about:

- Yellow lines at the junction of Grasmere and Oaklands Roads to preserve the lines of sight.
- Improving the signage at the crossroads of Bromley and Madeira Avenues.
- Improving the sequencing of traffic lights at the junction of Ravensbourne Ave/Station Rd/Beckenham Lane.
- Improving pedestrian facilities at Shortlands near the station.

The first 2 items are still on Bromley's list for attention. Item 3 has been dealt with insofar as the requirement to give priority to buses allows. On item 4 however, our hopes that at least an island would be provided were dashed when Metrobus started using longer and lower buses on the 358 route, with a consequent increase to their turning radius. Bromley say that they have not closed the file and are continuing to seek acceptable means of improving pedestrian facilities. But — — —.

### **Bus Stops**

It has been rumoured that Metrobus want to change the hail & stop arrangements in Downs Hill, Ravensbourne Ave & Farnaby Rd to a fixed stop system. The rumour is true, Metrobus have applied for the change to Central London Transport who not only approve such changes but also pay for them. As Central London Transport, have no cash to spare the change is unlikely in the near future.

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## **Bus Lanes**

Readers may like to be alerted to the fact that Bromley is taking part in a London-wide bus lane enforcement campaign. This coincides with the introduction of kerbside and bus mounted cameras, which will be used to identify vehicles infringing the regulations. It is also intended to deploy extra parking attendant patrols to keep bus lanes clear.

## **Car Theft**

Local police report that car thefts and thefts from cars has increased. Their advice is to always close the windows, lock all of the car doors and never leave anything visible in the car which might tempt a thief. Local police stations have available a possible deterrent to car theft, it is a sticky label with the number 25 on it. If they see a car being driven by someone who looks under 25 years old, they will stop it.

## **Light Controlled Pedestrian Crossings**

Some readers may have noticed that at some of these crossings the "green man" appears for less time. Bromley have confirmed that this is so and conforms to the latest Ministry of Transport guidelines. But, they state categorically that the timing of the red light to vehicles has not been changed.

## **HGV Alternative Route Signs**

The rail bridge at Shortlands is not passable to many high-sided lorries but despite warning signs a few attempt it. In order to face the way they have come, an escape route is indicated up Ravensbourne Ave and Farnaby Rd to Beckenham Lane. The signs indicating that route were few and unclear. After representation Bromley have increased and improved the signage.

## **Road Humps - Downs Hill**

Some vehicles, particularly motor cycles, seem to be taking the Ravensbourne Ave / Downs Hill junction at excessive speed. An approach to Bromley Highways Dept was received sympathetically and has been included on their list for future action. At present it has low priority compared to other traffic black spots in the borough, bearing in mind finite resources. It is also worth bearing in mind that recent studies have shown that road humps can increase traffic noise. This is particularly noticeable with large vehicles such as buses

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and lorries, but it also applies to cars.

### **Uneven or Broken Pavements and Failed or Obscured Street Lights**

Sometimes lorries run over pavements and break them up or contractors lift them to access services and fail to follow up the temporary reinstatement with a permanent one. Anyone aware of such problems should report it to the Bromley Highways Department on 0181-313 4598 or 4621. The same telephone number will also accept reports of street lights which have failed or are obscured by trees etc.

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### **GENERAL**

#### **Visitor's Guide to Bromley**

Bromley have produced a Visitor's Guide which is free and available from libraries and Council offices. If you have not yet already done so, it is well worth while visiting the reception at Bromley Civic Centre in Stockwell Close. There you will find a wealth of useful information and guidance. Most of it is free. The Civic Centre is only a 5 minutes walk from the Glades and it would be surprising if you did not pick up at least one leaflet of interest.

#### **Local Council Elections and Referendum**

Readers are reminded that Local Council elections are scheduled to be held next May. As we are a non-political Society, how people vote is their concern. However, there is one aspect of these elections which will be different. As well as voting for the Councillor(s) of your choice, you will also be asked to vote in a referendum on whether you want a Mayor and Assembly for London - two questions but only one answer. The Assembly would be an additional authority between central government and local councils. The Consultation Green Paper has already been issued and closed last October. In January, a White Paper indicating plans for a new Greater London Authority will be published. Then in March the Referendum Act will be promulgated.

This referendum could have far reaching consequences for residents in London. The Mayor and Assembly could be just a figurehead body, or at the other extreme, it could become a resurrected GLC. We all ought to be interested in this and find out as much as possible about the implications. Whatever considered opinion you finally form, it is important to vote. The Scottish decision was fairly clear cut, but Wales found itself with an Assembly based on only 25% of the potential voters.

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## **R.V.P.S OFFICERS (DECEMBER 1997)**

Chairman	Elizabeth Davies, 12 Ravensmead Road
Vice Chairman	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Secretary	Roy McCarthy, 16 Ravensmead Road
Treasurer	Brian Sanders, 41 Farnaby Road
Auditor	Wally Carlross, 28a Parkhill Road
Planning Officer-Bromley	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Planning Officer-Lewisham	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Membership Secretary	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Newsletter Editor	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Railway Rep.	
Roads & Traffic Rep.	David Young, 101 Coniston Road
Tree Warden	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road
LBBRF Delegate	David Young, 101 Coniston Road
Police Consultative Committee Rep.	Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road
BPP Joint Working Party Rep.	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Hon Legal Adviser	Richard Thomas, 118 Ravensbourne Avenue

## **ROAD REPRESENTATIVES**

Bromley Ave./ Karen Ct. / Grasmere / Highland Rds.	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Coniston Rd / Ullswater & Hawkshead Closes	Barbara Price, 85 Coniston Road
Downs Hill / Crab Hill	Barbara Brown, 34 Downs Hill
Elstree Hill / Hillbrow / Oaklands / Spencer Rds.	Daphne Robeson, 2 Lynton Court, London Rd
Farnaby Rd (1-108)	Audrey Burford, 90 Farnaby Road
Farnaby Rd (109 +)	Maureen Johnson, 69 Farnaby Road
Madeira Avenue	Ray Terrett, 70 Madeira Avenue
Ravensbourne Ave. (evens)	Ann Rowswell, 164 Ravensbourne Avenue
Ravensbourne Ave. (odds)	Ann Huntley, 155 Ravensbourne Avenue
Ravensmead Rd	Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road
Warren Ave./Calmont Rd.	Alan Weatherley, 50 Warren Avenue