



NEWSLETTER

1/99 JANUARY 1999

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. It is a little later than previous years as this time it is actually being written in the New Year. So perhaps a little belatedly our best wishes for 1999 to all of our readers. And, a sincere thank you to everyone who has supported us, both actively and passively during the past year.

The Society is not political but tries to be a pressure group on issues which affect us, or could affect us, locally. That means that we have dealings with the Councillors and Officers of both Bromley and Lewisham.

Some of the subjects on which we have had an input over the year are :

- Planning applications.
- Beckenham Place Park, management now and in the future.
- Roads and transport.
- Policing and crime.
- Planning to mark the millennium with a marker post on the Greenwich meridian (0°longitude).
- Tree preservation orders.

Unfortunately we have not become involved in any of the consultation processes with the Local Health Authority & Hospital Trusts, due to a lack of volunteers.

If you do not yet support us, but after reading this Newsletter you would like to, or wish to tell us which issues you think we 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 Representatives and Officers are listed on the last page of this Newsletter.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 4th March,
Annual General Meeting, 8.00pm Bromley Court Hotel

Thursday 6th May,
Members Meeting, 8.00pm Bromley Court Hotel.

Everyone is welcome at both meetings.

Peter Pain (Editor)

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

Management Plan Earlier last year an Executive Summary of the Plan was accepted by Lewisham's Leisure & Environmental Services Committee. That was followed by a period of public consultation culminating in a public meeting in May. The Plan was then revised to reflect the comments received and to take account of more up-to-date information obtained since the Plan was printed. It has now been re-submitted in full to the Leisure & Environmental Services Committee for final approval and adoption.

Future Management of the Park Currently Lewisham is trying to attract private finance to run their Leisure Centres and this includes the Park as the existing contract with David Lloyd Leisure (now owned by Whitbread plc) expires in 1999. So far Lewisham have used consultants to produce a marketing package to find out whether private finance is a viable option. The Park is being treated separately from the Leisure Centres and to date we have commented on a Draft Planning Brief for the Park. Happily without too much prodding the Draft Brief included all of the safeguards fought for at the Public Inquiry to ensure that the Park is kept as open space.

Re-introduction of Pitch Sports Lewisham is keen to bring back football, cricket and possibly other pitch sports to the area around Summerhouse Field. Long term, they have been in negotiations with the Goans aiming to use their field as well as Summerhouse Field and to extend the Goan pavilion instead of re-building on the old pavilion site. The Goan pavilion no longer exists after it had been set alight and, for safety reasons, subsequently demolished. In the short term, Lewisham has marked out 2 football pitches on the Common and intend to use the changing rooms near Old Bromley Road. Later they plan to erect temporary changing facilities on the site of the Summerhouse Field pavilion and mark out pitches in the field near the railway. That may or may not happen this season.

MERIDIAN MARKERS for the year MM (Leslie Tucker)

At the last AGM a presentation was made of various options for providing a local feature or facility designed to enhance our area and timed to mark the new millennium. As reported in the Newsletter immediately following the AGM, the decisions reached were to proceed with the proposal to erect two markers in Farnaby Road (one each side) at the point where the Greenwich Prime Meridian crosses it, and to work within a budget figure of £2,000. At every stage it has been said that no final decision would be made before the Membership as a whole had been given the opportunity to comment on the actual proposals. We have made some progress on this but, at present, we are not quite at the stage when a firm and detailed proposition can be put forward.

Competitive prices for two alternative designs of marker have been obtained from three manufacturers of special street furniture. One of the three prices for the present stainless steel design was a little below our agreed budget figure but we now have some doubts about the firm involved and as a result further prices are now being obtained and some

changes in detailed design are being explored. These do not take account of the cost of fixing them in position but we have obtained the written agreement of London Borough of Bromley that they will carry out this work and bear its cost. Bromley's Director of Heritage and Urban Design

has been very supportive of both the idea and of the detailed proposal. A formal agreement with Bromley is now being negotiated to confirm the undertakings of both parties.

In addition to the need to progress with the acquisition of the "hardware" it is recognised that the opportunity to shout about our environmental contribution must not be missed. The option of fixing them in position and slinking quietly away has not been endorsed by any so far consulted! A sub-committee has been formed to consider what form any "event" constructed round the unveiling should take and when it should happen. Subject to being able to make the arrangements with the other parties concerned, the thoughts of this group so far are that we invite the Mayor to unveil the markers, we arrange a reception, probably at the Shortlands Golf Clubhouse, and we do this in the Spring of the year 2000. A good deal more work still remains to be done before all the loose ends can be brought together but we hope to be able to report more progress at the next AGM and hopefully to be able to put firm proposals forward to all members soon after that.

PLANNING

Unitary Development Plans(UDPs) Bromley has now finished the initial stage of their review. They have issued 18 discussion papers to which we have responded. They have also held 4 open meetings, which we attended on specific subjects which are likely to generate changes in the UDP. They were housing, transport, the environment and economy & community. Of those subjects the one most likely to impact on this area was housing. A summary of the possibilities expressed at the meeting appears later on in this Newsletter. Lewisham has also issued discussion papers. We responded to the first 3 but somehow Lewisham failed to send us the rest. However they have apologised for the oversight and have promised to send us the missing ones and our comments will be given due weight as though they had been submitted to time. For both Councils the next step is to produce a revised UDP which is termed the 'Deposit Draft'. Objections will be invited and the responses will constitute 'Pre Inquiry' changes or in some cases they may not. Then follows the Public Inquiry where any objectors who feel that their earlier

responses to the Deposit Draft were ignored or not given due weight, may argue their case before the DoE Inspector. In due course the Inspector will produce his findings and normally the Council will incorporate them in the final version which then has to be approved by the Secretary of State. The new UDP then becomes a statutory document affecting all planning activity in the borough.

Planning Applications

Christ Church, Highland Rd Work has started on the flank extension. Our understanding is that the work will be phased to match the funds available.

The Synagogue, Highland Rd Having received earlier approval for a flank extension and as an interim a temporary building on the site, they are now working on plans for a complete rebuild. Our current understanding is that the proposed new building will be wider but no higher than the present one.

Laundry Site, St Martins Rd/Station Rd Following the failure of an earlier planning application for homeless accommodation, a fresh one was submitted for 6 two bedroom flats which was agreed. These were not intended for the homeless.

9 Spencer Rd This is quite a fine Victorian house on the corner with Oaklands Rd. Following the death of the owner, it has been put on the market. Planning permission is now being sought for 6 town houses. From our initial view of the plans it looks as though they are within the density requirements and meet the parking standards in the UDP. However the living rooms which will be on the 1st floor will overlook adjacent properties. That will require closer inspection, but is likely to be the basis of any objection.

58/60 Coniston Rd A planning application for a single detached house at the end of the gardens has not yet been approved. The frontage of the proposed house will be in Hillbrow.

Public Participation at Planning Committees In the past anyone wanting

to support or object to a planning application at a Bromley Planning Committee meeting had to do so using their local Councillor as their spokesman. Bromley are now running a trial whereby one member of the public can speak for and one against a planning application. They will be allowed only 3 minutes each. If several people with similar views wish to speak, they will have to nominate one spokesperson to represent them. This is similar to the arrangements already in place in Lewisham and in our experience it can have disadvantages. We shall have to see how the Bromley variant works in practice.

Bromley UDP Review Public Meeting on Housing (Paul Bennet)

The case for relaxing standards in the current UDP for housing densities was put forward by the five speakers at this meeting. Cllr. Paul Booth opened the meeting and he kept it moving at a brisk pace. The presentations were in two halves:

Housing Supply

- John Lett of the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) presented the strategic position with a host of statistics which in summary said that London's population was growing and there is a requirement for some 600,000 new households between 1991 and 2016. Of this, some 13,000 are required in Bromley, which equates to about 520 households p.a.. Currently, Bromley is on target, but he doubted that current trends would continue to meet future needs. He emphasised that LPAC guidance was a minimum. Future capacity would come from much higher densities near good transport nodes. He assured us that the Green Belt (and presumably Metropolitan Open Land) would not be compromised.
- Kevin Wilcox of Crest Homes put the housebuilder's case and he reiterated the points made before with specific examples such as the Bromley Hospital site. He suggested a much higher density of housing should have been approved instead of the 59 units / acre in the Barratt's scheme. He then said we should consider greenfield sites

near transport nodes for housing development such as the field by Chelsfield Station. New housing will be town houses and flats to supply the increasing number of single households caused by marriage split-ups and the ageing population. The properties will have less parking facilities and will be near to town centres. To counter the negative concerns of higher densities he said that there had to be improvements to housing design layouts.

- Mike Ibbott of the Bromley Planning Dept. then spoke of accommodating housing locally. He continued the theme of the previous speakers, introducing the term "ped-sheds" which are areas within 800 metres (half a mile or ten minutes walk) from a good transport node. He doubted whether Bromley North qualified. In the "ped-shed", housing densities will be allowed to increase to the expense of off-street parking facilities. He also said we should consider backland development.

Affordable Housing

- John Lett presented the strategic position and indicated that one-third of new housing should be 'subsidised' housing and on windfall sites this should comprise 50% of new housing.
- The local position was put forward by David Gibson of Bromley Social Services and Housing Dept. He painted a grim picture of the backlog of housing problems in London and condemned the "right-to-buy" scheme that had halved the supply of social housing over the past ten years. He estimates that we should be providing double the amount of rented accommodation being built.
- Bob Brown of Broomleigh H.A., which took control of Bromley's
- council property in 1992, gave the housing association view. He said that local authorities no longer built social housing as this was now provided by the private sector. From subsequent questions we learnt that 47% of h.a. building costs are provided by local authorities which is then refunded by Central Government and also that housing

associations can get favourable long-term borrowing. Even so, the requirement for affordable housing is on the increase when the market rate for a 3-bedroom house is £80 per week.

To summarise the meeting, it would appear that we can expect a new zoning ("ped-sheds") near major transport nodes where higher housing densities will be allowed with lower off-road parking provision. Windfall sites, such as the conversion of offices to housing, will have to provide a high proportion of affordable housing. Our concerns regarding M.O.L. appear to continue to be safeguarded. We need to be watchful on where the line is drawn for the Bromley Town Centre "ped-shed" and the possibility of relaxing the rules for backland development.

POLICE AND THE COMMUNITY

Last year Bromley Police produced their report on crime and disorder for the year 97/8. It showed that Bromley is one of London's safest boroughs. But, in common with other Outer London boroughs the highest volume of crimes were car crime, burglary and criminal damage. With town centres becoming the focus for disorder and anti-social behaviour. The highest levels of crime, disorder and offenders' home addresses tended to be in the regenerative areas of Crystal Palace and the Cray Valley plus the social housing estates at Bromley Common. Of the arrests made 40% were of people under 20. At the time of the report the priorities were; targeting high crime areas, continuing to address safety in town centres, and seeking new initiatives to reduce crime by young people, particularly drug and alcohol related crime. Since then there has been a net reduction to Bromley's Police budget. To find out if they were still on the right track they have sent out a questionnaire seeking views. Our response broadly supported the previous strategy.

ROADS & TRANSPORT

Parking Bromley is considering a possible extension to the Residents' Permit Parking scheme. In essence the Inner Zone which covers an area just south of Bromley South station to just north of Bromley North station will

remain unchanged. But, the Outer Zones may be enlarged, subject to support from residents.

The Zone which impacts on our area is Zone B (Outer North). At present this includes: Blythe Road, part of Beckenham Lane, all of Park End and that part of Highland Road from Christ Church to London Road. The scheme allows only permit holders to park between 11am and 12 noon, effectively stopping all day parking by non-residents. We are beginning to see the effect of this as displaced vehicles are starting to park in Bromley Avenue and Madeira Avenue. Most households adjacent to the boundary of these Zones will have received a consultation document with a questionnaire. If you think you may be affected but have not yet received the document, please contact the Transport Planning Division at the Civic Centre, telephone number 0181-464 3333.

Integrated Transport Policy Bromley is developing an Integrated Transport Strategy. In reality their powers are limited. They can and intend to expand the cycle networks and to develop a pedestrian strategy covering town centres, walking routes to schools and access to public transport. Further than that they have to depend on liaising with train and bus operators for new services, sensible interchange scheduling and better information. One matter which is bound to cause controversy, is a permanent Park & Ride system, mainly because all of the suitable sites are designated Open Space (such as Norman Park) and in many cases are actually in the Green Belt.

Road Safety

Last year Bromley ran courses on 'The Driver Theory Test'- for learner drivers, 'Safe Cycling' - for children over 10, and 'Better Parking' - for any driver who needs to improve their reversing skills or is unhappy manoeuvring in confined spaces. For the dates of 1999 courses, contact the Road Safety Helpline on 0181-313 4546.

ENVIRONMENT

Graffiti In an effort to keep Bromley clean, the Council has opened a Graffiti Removal Line. Anyone observing or suffering from graffiti should call 0181-313 4510.

Wetlands Have you noticed the loss of a pond? Have you witnessed dying frogs on your lawn? Are you concerned about dropping water levels in Bromley's rivers? Would you like to attract dragonflies to your garden pond? If so, Bromley Council's "Wetlands for Wildlife" will interest you. The Borough has a diverse range of wetlands including open water habitats such as rivers, ponds and lakes plus associated habitats such as carr (wet) woodlands, acid bog and wet grassland. Obvious examples are Keston Ponds, Orpington Priory Gardens, Kelsey Park and the Riverside Gardens at St Mary Cray. However, there are many more less well known examples all of which help those species which are dependent on water. They are easily threatened by pollution or abstraction of water. The strategy document proposes actions and guidelines which aim to help protect, manage and create wetlands for this wildlife and forms one of the actions in the Bromley Biodiversity Action Plan "The Future of Darwin's Wildlife in Bromley". If you want to know more or want copies of the Plans contact 0181-313 4665. Alternatively there should be a reference copy in the local library.

Fly Tipping Last year following a spate of fly tipping we included some notes on what can be done to either combat it or to have it removed. Although not as prevalent, there are still instances so the gist of the notes is reproduced below. 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. Anyone seeing fly tipping should note as many details as possible and inform the Litter Helpline 0181-313 4510. They will take it from there. If the rubbish is on a made up road (i.e. adopted) the Council will arrange clearance at no cost. If it is on an unmade road (i.e. unadopted) the Council will arrange clearance if it is blocking the path for ambulances or fire engines. If it is on the verges the Council will raise a charge to the frontagers unless the waste is hazardous i.e. asbestos or chemicals.

A ROUND TUIT

At long last
we have obtained a
sufficient quantity of Round Tuits
for each of you to have your very own.
Guard it with your life. These Tuits have been
hard to come by; especially the round ones.
It is an indispensable item which will help you become
more efficient. For years we have heard people say
"I'll do it as soon as I get a Round Tuit"
Well now you have a Round Tuit of your
own and there is one less
excuse for not keeping
your New Year
resolutions.

R.V.P.S OFFICERS (JANUARY 1999)

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 Carloss, 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.	
Tree Warden	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road
LBBRF Delegate	
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