



# NEWSLETTER

4/2004

December 2004

WISHING ALL  
OUR  
READERS  
A VERY HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A PEACEFUL  
NEW YEAR



## EDITORIAL

Every year, about now, we distribute our bi-monthly newsletter to each household in the area. The intention is to get it through everyone's letter box before Christmas and the New Year. This is also a good time to thank everyone who has supported the Society - actively or passively - over the last year.

Although the name of the Society sounds wide ranging, we are in fact a Residents' Association covering an area broadly bounded by London Road, Beckenham Lane, Downs Hill/ Crab Hill and McDonalds at the end of Ashgrove Road. We aim to be a pressure group on issues which do or could affect us locally. That means that we deal with the Councillors and Officers of both Bromley and Lewisham.

There have not been any really major issues over the year but a whole series of planning and transport matters which have kept the officers and some Road Reps busy. Also, of course, Beckenham Place Park which is still ongoing with any final solution still a long way off.

Enclosed with this Newsletter for those residents who do not yet support us financially, is a green slip. If, after reading this newsletter you would like to join us, just fill in the slip and pop it through the letterbox of your Road Rep whose name and address is shown on the slip.

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005 - Members' Meeting 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel.

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2005 - Annual general Meeting, 8.00pm Bromley Court Hotel

All are welcome to attend any of our meetings, but please check the hotel "activities" board to make sure you go to the right room.

*Best Wishes for Christmas and 2005 to all our readers*

Peter Pain (Editor)

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## TRANSPORT

### Bus Stops - Route 354

Towards the end of last year we were still badgering "London Buses", (who have overall responsibility within the GLA for London's bus services) about the inappropriate, and sometimes stupid, position of some of the new fixed bus stops. Nobody ever acknowledged that they had got it wrong, but over the year various stops were repositioned and most of them in our area now seem reasonably sensibly - if not conveniently, positioned.

### Pavement Renewal

Readers will have noticed that in some roads the pavement is being replaced. In the case of our local roads these contracts were placed by Bromley Council. However, Transport for London - part of the GLA - also place contracts but these are primarily for main roads such as London Road, Bromley Hill etc.

### Parking in Oaklands Road

After the completion of the Care Home at the junction of Grasmere Road and Oaklands Road it had been hoped that the earlier parking problems would be eased. However, they did not improve. Consequently we wrote to Bromley's transport section seeking to establish the views of residents about extending the residential parking zone to include part of Oaklands Road. Bromley replied that they had no funding to extend the zone and did not wish to canvas residents' views as that could raise expectations which could not be met. We then pressed them to extend the yellow lines at the junction from Grasmere Road into Oaklands Road. Again we got the answer "no funds". It is difficult to believe that the money for some 10 feet of single yellow line could not be found if they wished. We intend to return to the attack in the New Year when they are setting their new budgets.

## **PLANNING**

### Unitary Development Plans (UDP's)

Both Bromley and Lewisham have written and updated their UDP's. These Plans take into account central government guidance and set the scene for all developments in our areas. The Plans, when approved by the Secretary of State, become statutory documents.

Lewisham - have completed the process and had a Public Inquiry and adopted the final plan in June. Unfortunately, because of alleged problems with printing, copies of the new plan are not expected to be available before the end of the year.

Bromley - has also completed the process and held their Public Inquiry. But the Inspector's full report is unlikely to be ready before next March which means that by the time it has been considered, disagreements resolved, amendments made and accepted, the new UDP will probably not be adopted before the end of 2005. This would be a year later than predicted this time last year and about five years later than originally expected when the process of revising the 1994 UDP began. The inspector has recently issued a part of his report covering Housing and Open Space policies. It bodes ill for the future as it has suggested that housing densities must be increased and parking provisions decreased in conformity with government direction and GLA decisions. Bromley are considering their response.

### The future of Local Development Plans

Central government has decided to "simplify" the system by discontinuing the use of UDP's and introducing "Local Development Frameworks" (LDF's). The work of producing these will fall on local Authorities from mid 2005. These are intended to be much shorter documents than UDP's and parts of them could be revised to meet

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future changes without throwing away the whole thing.

The aim of greater simplicity is somewhat overtaken by the plethora of supporting and over-riding documents which are to be introduced! These include a "Local Development Scheme" (LDS), "Local Development Documents" (LDD), "Area Action Plan" (AAP) and "Supplementary Planning Documents" (SPD). Last (as far as we know) but not least, is the "Greater London Plan" produced by the Mayor of London's GLA with which all local plans throughout London will have to comply.

The proposed system is of great concern to Bromley and other outer London boroughs as local priorities will be largely over-ridden. We are concerned by this also but, in addition, the speedier future determination processes may deny residents the opportunity to make their views fully known but will encourage developers to build higher and bigger taking less account of the surrounding characteristics.

#### Planning Applications - Bromley

4 Highland Road Having made a series of applications for demolishing this Victorian house and replacing it with a new block of, variously, 6, 7 or 9 flats, all of which were rejected. The developers have settled for modifying the original building to provide 5 flats. The work is now complete.

2 Crab Hill This property is in the Downs Hill Conservation Area. Applications have been made to Bromley for the existing bungalow to be demolished with two separate alternative schemes to replace it. One was for a block of six three bedroom apartments and the second was for ten two bedroom flats. Both schemes rose to four storeys, both have been rejected by Bromley and both are now the subject of forthcoming appeals. We have written letters of objection at the local planning stages and sent further letters of objection to the Inspector for consideration at the appeals. We consider these proposals would be highly inappropriate within this Conservation Area.

30 Downs Hill We have also sent a letter of objection to Bromley regarding a proposal to demolish the existing house on this site and replace it with a new detached eight bedroom house. This application was also rejected by the development committee.

64 Madeira Avenue Early this year we objected to an application for a "change of use" for this house to become a dental surgery for the use of a potential purchaser. The main reasons for concern were; parking problems, and loss of a convenient family home in an otherwise residential area. Although no physical alterations were proposed to the outside we pointed out that, unless some were made, the legal requirement of providing access for the disabled would not be possible. The application was refused.

96 Madeira Avenue the owner of this vacant property has erected a close boarded fence across the frontage and part of one side boundary. Near neighbours have repeatedly asked for it to be removed or modified to make it visually more acceptable - to no avail. Photographs and a letter, asking the Bromley Planning Dept to consider whether it warrants an "enforcement order"



## OLD MAPS OF OUR AREA

In last year's December issue we wrote about the history of our area and how this has influenced its present character. At the time there was insufficient space to include any of the maps which illustrate this historic background. Two are included now - one below and one on the next page..

# 1865 Map

This is essentially how the Bromley Hill Estate looked when owned by Lord Farnborough between 1801 & 1838 - remaining the same up to about 1880 when his heirs sold it to Samuel Cawston.

## Some things to note!

No roads North of Beckenham Lane between "Bromley Hill" and the river.

No Catford Loop line.

No Valley School.

- 1 Old Bromley/Lewisham boundary.
- 2 Old Bromley/Beckenham boundary.
- 3 River tributaries.
- 4 Lakes.
- 5 Greenhouses & Kitchen Gdns. (walls still exist off Warren Ave.)
- 6 Stables etc - (existing Cottage in Elstree Hill converted from these)
- 7 Lodges to estate (3)
- 8 Don't miss "Tranquil Place" & "Salubrious Range" on London Road!

# 1894 Map

Showing development of Bromley Park  
by Samuel Cawston -(began about 1880)

## Some more things to note!

Still no Calmont, Asgrove, Coniston Roads nor Warren, or Madeira Avenues. Also, what is now Farnaby Road was an un-named, unfenced and presumably, unmade track across the meadows.

Samuel Cawston had cut into the woodland off the London Road with his development of Oaklands, Spencer and Highland Roads as well as Park End and Blyth Road but had not yet spoilt the views to the north and west from Bromley Hill House where he lived.

Before he died in 1913 he had moved away and Warren and Madeira Avenues and Calmont and Coniston Roads had been laid out but not all the building plots on these roads were taken until the 1930's.

Samuel Cawston built Christ Church for the use of his family and estate workers. He continued to pay for its upkeep and running costs until the turn of the century.

The map now shows the Catford Loop Line, Downs Hill and Ravensbourne Avenue (then called Ravensbourne Road). Notice that there was only one house built in this road at the time and none in Downs Hill.

Bromley Avenue was then only a spur running down the hill from Grasmere Road to serve a gamekeeper's cottage which survived until about 30 years ago when it was demolished and a new house (no.12) was built in its place.

The river and lakes had changed little since the earlier map although Shortlands Village and Valley School had arrived as had Christ Church and its Sunday School building in Highland Road.





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being issued, has been sent.

Telecommunication masts - Shortlands Golf Course There were originally two applications, one by Vodafone followed by one from T-Mobile. Both proposals were for masts to be disguised as fir trees and both required their own equipment buildings. Bromley refused both applications but Vodafone appealed against their decision and won. Their mast is now in position in the golf course just off Farnaby Road. Spurred on by their competitor's success, T-Mobile have now lodged an appeal which has yet to be heard. Their mast would be slightly higher than the one already erected. There would have been an option for them to share one mast and this is usually the preferred choice. In this case however, it would have meant that the combined "tree" would have had to be significantly higher than the present one and of the existing surrounding trees. The planners decided that the lesser of two evils would be two shorter masts. We wrote to Bromley when they were considering both applications and have written to both inspectors objecting to the fact that these masts and their buildings will compromise the designation of this area as "Metropolitan Open Land". In the case of the second appeal we echo Bromley's concern about the proliferation of these structures in this area.

#### Planning Applications - Lewisham

Beckenham Place Park A planning application has been made by the Ilderton Project to convert the changing room block near the Old Bromley Road entrance to the park. Nearby there are; a children's play area (recently refurbished), an "Under 5's" Club, a paddling pool and a car park. The Ilderton Project runs junior citizen activities and is supported by the police, the fire brigade and local councils. They create areas illustrating potential hazards and teach organised groups of children to recognise and cope with them. They also address outdoor activities such as road safety, both as pedestrians and potential drivers using go-karts on a track. All activities will be supervised.

The application seeks approval to refurbish the changing rooms and public toilets and includes the construction of an additional storey above the existing building. The whole to provide changing rooms, toilets, classrooms, offices, workshop, garage, tuckshop, café, balcony, plant room and stores. It also proposes alterations to the elevations and the landscaping of the surrounding area. But most contentious is the open air go-kart track.

We were aware of the Ilderton's interest in the site from our involvement in the Beckenham Place Park Working Party which had had a presentation by the project's officers. After giving due weight to the sensitivity of the park's previous history and its designation as Metropolitan Open Land, the Working Party had given a conditional approval to the concept - subject to a satisfactory, independent environmental impact assessment and the opportunity to see further details at the planning application stage.

We have made our own (for RVPS) response to Lewisham's planners we accepted that the intentions were worthy but emphasised two main points. Firstly: the extension to the changing rooms would double their area and therefore could not be considered as minor and would conflict with policies for MOL in the council's

UDP. Secondly: the go-kart track, although intended for electric karts, disadvantages the near neighbours because of the increase in activity and consequent noise. Neither is there any commitment not to change to the more usual, noisier and cheaper option of petrol engines in the future or not to relax the promised high levels of supervision in the future. No decisions have yet been made.

## **BECKENHAM PLACE PARK**

This time last year, we were still at the stage of having a preferred tenderer to manage the park, its buildings and facilities. Despite the fact that the tenderer had been selected some two years earlier, no decision had been made. During that period the tenderer had introduced several unacceptable features over and above his "best and final offer". They were, a 200 seat conference centre, a 50 bay driving range and the extension of the golf course into the Common to make up for the holes lost to the driving range.

Early in 2004 Lewisham finally realised that the negotiations had reached deadlock and decided to terminate them. Officially the reason given for breaking off the talks was that they were not satisfied that the tenderer would be able to meet the required financial commitment. Doubtless the introduction of the additional features which would have been unacceptable on Metropolitan Open Land, and the six-plus years delay before work started on the refurbishment of the Mansion and Homesteads, must also have played a part in the final decision.

We, and the rest of the Working Party were glad that Lewisham had at last bitten the bullet, even if it meant that we were back to where we had been twelve years ago! The increasingly controversial proposals by the preferred tenderer were causing considerable concern.

The present position is that Lewisham are still managing the park although some elements, such as the golf course and maintenance, have been contracted out. To help them decide on the best way forward for the future of the park, Lewisham have produced a "Consultants' Brief" and intend to commission one or more responding companies for a report. Whilst that was going on a small group within the Working Party (led by the RVPS representatives), prepared their own "vision" for the park. That document has been sent to Lewisham and circulated to the rest of the Working Party. Coincidentally a copy of the Consultants' Brief came to hand at the same time and generally it seems as though the thoughts of the Working Party and Lewisham are in accord. Not a frequent occurrence.

## **COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

### Valley School

For several years now we have been helping to fund environmental projects at the Valley School. This time last year we had to report that the horse chestnut tree just inside the school grounds next to the entrance, had to be felled for safety reasons

but proved to be too decayed for part of its trunk to be used to make a "Story-Telling Chair" as intended. It took until after the summer holidays for a suitable replacement to be found and carved. The completed chair now stands in the school orchard as our most recent contribution.

At our request the school has now given us three options for future funding. They are:-

- A woodland walkway with native flowers and plants that blossom at different time of the year.
- A mini-sculpture of different types of rock under a tree where nothing will grow.
- A mural on the playground walls depicting the solar system.

We will be discussing further with the school and at our own members' meeting before making a decision.

#### A second bus stop seat in Farnaby Road

Last May we accepted the cost estimates for the provision and installation of a seat to match the one provided in 2002 and instructed Bromley to proceed. Somehow they managed to mislay the correspondence but this only became apparent when we queried why it was taking so long. We reissued our instructions in midsummer but it still took until October before the seat arrived.

The feedback is that it is welcomed by bus users going towards Beckenham. The earlier seat served those waiting for buses travelling to Bromley.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

#### Neat Streets

A year or two ago local government was rearranged so that specified Councillors had a responsibility for different aspects of Council business. Councillor George Taylor is the Environmental Portfolio holder for Bromley and he is putting great emphasis on improving the appearance and cleanliness of our streets. In support of that initiative we included a green card - "help us keep a Neat Street" with each of last year's Christmas Newsletters. We have had limited feedback about their use but we do know that at least 3 cards were sent and had a prompt response. The subjects complained about were a hole in the road near a manhole which was attended to within 2 working days and three cases of overhanging vegetation. The latter took a little longer as the owners had to be requested to take remedial action. If owners do not respond within a reasonable timescale then the Council will do the work and will send the bill to the owner. The cards which are available from the Civic Centre, cover such problems as abandoned vehicles, dumped rubbish, litter bins, street lights, road signs/markings, road drains, pavements, street trees and overhanging vegetation. The card is a simple way to report street problems but reports can be made in person at the Civic Centre or by telephone to the

Bromley call centre on 020 8313 4557 which will pass on the information to the section that is responsible. Problems can also be reported to their web site [www.bromley.gov.uk/neatstreet](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/neatstreet)

### Graffiti

Graffiti is an ever growing problem and unless tackled as soon as it occurs can lead to even more. As we all know this makes an area look rundown and can attract further problems such as fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. Bromley have a small team who will tackle graffiti if it can be seen from the road.. They also have a mobile CCTV unit that can be hidden at trouble spots to catch offenders in the act. The unit is usually deployed in conjunction with police officers. If an individual or group of people decide they would prefer to do their own clean-up, Bromley will supply them with anti-graffiti kits of paint cleaning equipment and give advice and training. If you are interested, the number to call is the Graffiti Removal group on 020 8313 4902.

### Old Vehicles

From time to time residents have an old banger that cannot be part exchanged with a dealer and nobody is likely to buy. Rather than abandon it somewhere, Bromley will take it away free of charge and deal with DVLA in Swansea regarding the registration transfer. Again the number to ring is the call centre on 020 8313 4557. They will send you a simple form which explains the procedure.

### Rubbish and Recycling Collections

From time to time when household rubbish and/or recycling boxes are emptied the contractors leave a mess behind - or leave the boxes strewn over the pavement - or even in the road. If you are minded to complain about this, the number to ring is again the call centre on 020 313 4557 - they have a computer link to all Bromley's sections. Alternatively you could call 020 8461 7930 - the Waste Section, direct. Either number will deal with missed collections.

#### **MISCELLANY - OR MORE COLLECTED RUBBISH (Culled from various sources)**

*From an over 50's life plan* - "This plan guarantees a cash sum payable on death - which can be used in any way you choose".

"Dental nurse required for Sheffield dental Practice. Experience an advantage, bust not essential".

*From a property advertisement* - "Open fireplaces, exposed beams and a fitted kitchen with a Gaga cooker".

"Due to increased demand..... this system operates on a first come, first severed basses".

## **R.V.P.S. OFFICERS (DECEMBER 2004)**

Chairman	Elizabeth Davies, 12 Ravensmead Road, BR2 0BT
Vice Chairman	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue, BR1 4AS
Secretary	Tom Griffin, 9 The Chestnuts, Oaklands Rd. BR1 3SJ
Treasurer	Brian Sanders, 41 Farnaby Road, BR1 4BL
Auditor	Wally Carlross, 28a Parkhill Road, BR2 0LF
Planning Officer-Bromley	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue, BR1 4BG
Planning Officer-Lewisham	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill, BR1 4JE
Membership Secretary	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill, BR1 4JE
Newsletter Editor	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue, BR1 4AS
Railway Rep.	George Hodson, 20 Ravensbourne Avenue
Roads & Traffic Rep.	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road, BR1 4BA
Tree Warden	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road, BR1 4BA
LBRRF Delegate	
Police Consultative Com. Rep.	Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road, BR2 0BT
BPP Joint Working Party Rep.	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue, BR1 4AS
Hon. Legal Advisor	Richard Thomas, 118 Ravensbourne Ave, BR2 0AX

## **ROAD REPRESENTATIVES**

Bromley Ave./Karen Ct./ Grasmere / Highland Rds. Brackenhill Lane	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue, BR1 4BG
Consiton Rd / Ullswater & Hawkshead Closes	Barbara Price, 85 Coniston Road, BR1 3BZ
Downs Hill / Crab Hill	Barbara Brown, 34 Downs Hill, BR3 5HB
Elstree Hill / Erin Close / Hillbrow	Roger Legg, 39 Madeira Avenue, Bromley BR1 4AP
Oaklands / Spencer Rds.	Daphne Robeson, 2 Lynton Court, London Rd.
Farnaby Rd (1-108)	Audrey Burford, 90 Farnaby Road, BR1 4BH
Farnaby Rd (109 +)	Maureen Johnson, 69 Farnaby Road, BR1 4BN
Madeira Avenue	Brian Atkinson, 94 Madeira Avenue, BR1 4AS
Ravensbourne Ave. (evens)	Ann Rowsell, 164 Ravensbourne Avenue, BR2 0AY
Ravensbourne Ave. (odds)	Ann Freiter, 128 Ravensbourne Avenue, BR2 0AX
Ravensmead Road	Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road, BR2 0BT
Warren Ave./Calmont Rd / Ashgrove Rd./Belgravia Gdns	Alan Weatherley, 50 Warren Avenue, BR1 4BS