

November 2024  
Issue 4



Welcome to our latest newsletter, the last one of 2024. If you are reading a printed copy and wish to follow the underlined web links you will have to download the PDF from our website download page.

## Bromley Updates

### Churchill Library and Theatre

Bromley Council has agreed to accept an offer from a developer for the leasehold of the Churchill Theatre site. The developer's proposals include a commitment to work with Trafalgar Group to ensure the theatre remains in the current building, by making it structurally sound and refurbishing it, giving Trafalgar the assurances they need to keep the theatre in its present home.



## Crystal Palace Updates

### Crystal Palace Subway Restoration

The historic [Grade II\\* listed Crystal Palace Subway](#) is set to reopen following major restoration work, in time for its 160th anniversary in 2025. A new roof over the East Courtyard and extensive repairs to the walls, floor, steps and entrances have breathed new life into the Victorian subway. The structure dates from 1865 and is the most substantial survivor of the huge Crystal Palace complex which was dramatically lost to fire in 1936. See this link for more details: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/news/article/723/crystal-palace-subway-restoration-revealed?s=09>

The subway's restoration is a key element of Bromley Council's wider [Regeneration Plan for Crystal Palace Park](#) which can be viewed at the above link

An interesting activity has been highlighted by our Chair - *Memories of Crystal Palace: A Tour Through Time*. This is a VoiceMap audio tour app that can be purchased to inform a walk around Crystal Palace, highlighting points of interest along the route and taking one back in time (historically speaking!). For more information and purchase of the app, please see <https://voicemap.me/tour/london/memories-of-crystal-palace-a-tour-through-time>

## Beckenham Updates

### Sale of the Beckenham Public Hall



The Council is still in negotiations with a second bidder for the building. It is anticipated there will be more news in November when the sale is put to a Council Committee meeting. The Council is intent on selling it as it cannot afford the hefty cost of repairs to the building.

## Kelsey Park Improvements

The Council's contractor, Idverde, has so far completed the following:

- replanting of all the memorial flowerbeds;
- replanting of memorial containers;
- adjustments to the grass cutting regime to create naturalised grass areas for benefits to biodiversity;
- working with the Friends of Kelsey Park on the recent installation of a new duck feeder;
- continued progress on the programme of refurbishment of memorial benches, with two new benches recently installed;
- installation of a new Eco Green Dog waste dispenser at the northern side of the park, increasing the total to two.

A Bromley Brush Up Event that was held in June 2024 also saw painting of the playground equipment and continuation of painting the entrance gates at Stone Park Avenue.

A further £2.5 million of investment for Kelsey Park will see both the park's larger footbridge replaced, and the lakes desilted. The Friends of Kelsey Park are also set to create a community garden in a disused yard within the park, further improving one of the borough's flagship parks, with funding from the council's Platinum Jubilee Parks Fund.



The bridge replacement – awarded to **B&M McHugh Ltd.** – is in its initial stages. Although designs are still being fine-tuned, work is set to begin in 2025, with hopes that the new bridge will be ready to debut by **Autumn 2025**.

The investment promises long-term benefits but the price tag has sparked some debate within the community.

The **Lake Desilting Project** contract has also been recently awarded. Land and Water Limited, who were involved in the initial survey and scoping stage of the project, will be undertaking the desilting. The work will occur in stages, thereby ensuring there will be water available for the wildlife that needs it. Work will begin at the Silt Trap, followed by the Upper Lake, and then finally the Lower Lake. A waterbody will remain accessible for the park's wildfowl and other water reliant species at each stage of the project, with lakes continually holding water throughout, to ensure that they remain habitable for wildlife. The works are estimated to be completed by June 2025.





## Street Friends' Activities

### Recognition

Our long-term Street Friends coordinator, Monica Wiltshire, recently stood down from the role, after 11 years, and handed it over to Nigel Foster. As a fitting recognition of Monica's efforts she has been nominated for a Street Friends Award by Bromley residents as a result of an invitation from Veolia to residents via Environment Matters. Monica's award will be presented at a ceremony to be held on 18th December and will be accepted by Nigel as Monica unfortunately will be away on that day.

Before handing over to Nigel, Monica was instrumental, in cooperation with Glendale, the contractors for London Borough of Lewisham, in planning and organising a bulb planting session following a suggestion by one of our members, Anne Lancaster.

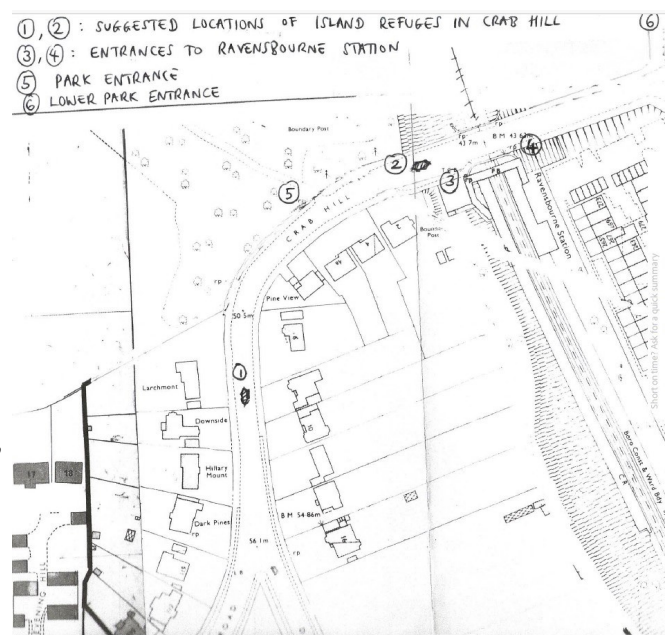
The sites selected for the planting, the pathway in Warren Avenue playing fields near the Elstree Hill entrance and the bed at the end of Warren Avenue, were planted up on 12th November with bulbs supplied by Linda Müller.



## Roads and Traffic

### Crab Hill Safety

Following representations from residents, Councillor Michael Tickner has submitted to Angus Culverwell, Assistant Director, Traffic and Parking, L.B.Bromley, suggestions where two pedestrian refuges [see (1) and (2)] could conveniently be installed in order to slow traffic and make crossing Crab Hill safer for the increasing number of pedestrians. He has asked when an initial assessment for such a scheme could be scheduled, with a view to putting in a bid for funding.



## Planning Applications

Further details of all the following are on the Planning section of our website at [ravensbournevalley.org/planning-applications.php](https://ravensbournevalley.org/planning-applications.php)

Thanks to our planning officer, Clive Lees, for posting the information and pictures on the website.

**75 Downs Hill:** A recent planning application for retrospective permission for a front wall and gates has just been refused. An appeal is possible but highly unlikely to succeed in our view.

**18 Hillbrow Road:** Although this property has been granted permission for development into two flats, it has recently been up for auction as three separate flats. L.B.Lewisham are investigating any possible breach of planning control.

**19 Ullswater Close:** The application to demolish an existing conservatory, construct a rear extension and convert the three bedroom house to a four bedroom House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) was refused earlier this year. The applicant has appealed the decision.

**60 Beckenham Lane:** Click and Collect lockers have been installed outside the shop at this address but because it is in a Conservation Area these lockers cannot be installed without formal planning permission and until this is granted they remain 'unauthorised'.

**61 The Avenue:** An enforcement order has been issued requiring the developer of the flats to replace, in the next planting season, with others of similar size and species, all trees, hedges and plants which have died, were removed or have become seriously damaged or diseased.

**18 Ravensbourne Avenue:** A revision to an approved planning application has been made retrospectively to now include alterations to main front door, garage doors, bi-folding doors and glazed panels. Our planning officer has submitted an objection on behalf of RVR.

**The Chalet, Kirkstone Way:** Following the owner's failure to comply with an Enforcement Order, which is a criminal offence, we await tougher action from the Council. This could include criminal prosecution and/or sending the Council's own contractors to tidy the site, at the owner's expense. We await developments with interest.

**100 Ravensbourne Avenue:** A planning application for a half hip roof was recently refused, which means that the constructed gable addition remains without authorisation. A new application has recently been submitted including roof and window alterations and tile replacement. It may not succeed.

**87 and 87c Beckenham Lane:** Work to repair the damaged windows and replace the external shutters with internal ones seems to have begun. This should deal with the concerns raised in an earlier Enforcement case.

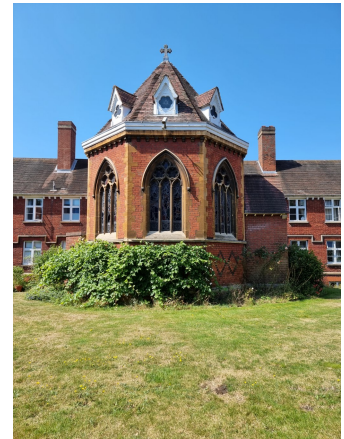
**Matilda House, Hillbrow Road:** The Council has refused the latest attempt by the developers to wiggle out of their commitment to plant 2 trees and implement other landscaping conditions.

## RVR Social Events and Meetings

### Tour of Bromley College

On 12th August, a group of RVR members were given a guided tour of Bromley College and were told of its history. The college was founded in 1666 by the Will of John Warner, Bishop of Rochester, to provide housing for "twenty poore widowes of orthodoxe and loyall clergiemmen.", and was supported by his estate at Swaton. Details of the history can be found at the Wikipedia article at the following link: [Link to Wikipedia Article](#).

Here are some photographs taken on the day:



### Members' Meetings

The members' meeting in September was attended by five of our councillors:

Felicity Bainbridge, Adam Grant, Gemma Turrell, Julie Ireland, and Michael Tickner

Contributions they made to the meeting as well as the rest of the proceedings can be seen in the minutes, which you can download from our website.



### RVR Communications

We are moving to Bluesky, a better alternative to Twitter in our opinion. Over a million accounts are being added daily to Bluesky. You can find us on Bluesky at @rvresidents <https://bsky.app/profile/rvresidents.bsky.social>. And don't forget our revamped website Ravensbourne Valley Residents <https://www.ravensbournevalley.org/>.

I strongly urge you to sign up to Bluesky and follow Ravensbourne Valley Residents. You will receive notification of the many posts our Planning Officer and others submit and you will be able to post items that you think may be of interest to other residents,



## Beckenham Place Park

### Music Festival

This year's music festival took place on 16th and 17th August - pictures courtesy of two members who bravely attended to bring you an impression of what ensued:



*Two of the events on the main stage during Friday 17th Ibiza Classics*



*Two of the four different stages during Saturday 18th Drum'n'Bass*

### East Side Opening Ceremony

On 21st September, a picnic and river blessing was held to celebrate the official opening of the East Side improvements. The event included a "duck race" along the river followed by donations to form a floating tribute, which was sent on its way down stream after a blessing by Dr Michelle Yaa Asantewa (the lady in the yellow outfit in the middle picture below) You can read about the nature of her blessing at this link: <https://www.thames21.org.uk/2023/08/river-deities-explained/>



### Lewisham's London in Bloom 2024 winning parks

Beckenham Place Park has been named among some of the best in the capital in the London in Bloom awards 2024.

Details at <https://www.newsshopper.co.uk/news/24660618.lewishams-london-bloom-2024-winning-parks-greenspaces/> and <https://lewisham.gov.uk/articles/news/lewisham-parks-win-gold-again>

## RVR Subscription Increase

Following the recent email circular announcing the increase in the subscription to £10 per annum, a number of members have requested justification of the increased sum.

Costs have risen sharply in the last 18 months. Until 2022, Bromley Court Hotel provided a room for our bi-monthly meetings free of charge. We now pay a discounted amount of £960 per annum to Shortlands Golf Club (£160 per meeting) - less than Bromley Court Hotel quoted. In addition, the cost of printing the newsletter has risen significantly - partly because we now provide a printed copy of each newsletter to all members in addition to the digital version and partly because of the increase in paper costs, even though we have switched to recycled paper. Printing costs are expected to exceed £1500 in 2025 – approximately 37p per newsletter. Other costs have also risen recently including: office supplies; insurance; social events for members; website maintenance; etc.

We have also increased our contributions to community projects, viz:

- £150 contribution to Jubilee street parties
- £500 towards the cost of a defibrillator at AFC Shortlands Pavilion
- £500 towards the Queensmead Playground Regeneration Project

Further contributions planned for 2025 include:

- £500 to Shortlands Parade Grant to improve sociability facilities in Shortlands Village
- £1500 (approx.) for a memorial bench in Beckenham Place Park East Side (in memory of founding member Leslie Tucker), in an area where there are currently no benches
- A contribution towards the cost of room hire for Safer Neighbourhood Watch Panel meetings

A snapshot of RVR finances is presented at each bi-monthly meeting. The minutes are circulated by email and can be downloaded from our website. A full report of RVR finances is presented at the AGM in March.

The subscription increase was voted through by the attendees at the September members' meeting and remarkably is the first increase in 37 years!

Suggestions for contributions to community projects can be made at any of our bi-monthly meetings and are voted on by those present. Please come to the meetings at Shortlands Golf Club and get involved.

Even at £10, the committee believes the subscription is remarkably good value. As well as the contributions made, as shown above, here are some of the other activities undertaken by RVR committee members and volunteers:

- Many reports to the council about potholes, graffiti, street cleaning, etc
- Oversight of planning issues including direct support to members and the community through education / information about planning
- Regular newsletters to inform the membership and community about us and events in the area
- Social events
- Financial support by members to the community, for example to the arson victims in Shortlands Village
- Support for Bromley Foodbank and Street Pastors
- Cleaning and tidying of our area, pruning of overgrowth and snow clearing by regular meetings of our street friends and snow friends

I hope this has persuaded you that £10 per annum is a bargain.

## RVR Subscriptions

Cash subscriptions are normally collected during delivery of the annual roundup newsletter in the summer, but we much prefer members to pay by Standing Order. Your Road Rep can advise the information to be provided on the mandate.

## Meeting Dates

Forthcoming meetings are as follows:-

Members' meeting - Thursday 9th January, 2025; **NB this is the second Thursday in January.**

Annual General meeting - Thursday 6th March, 2025;

Members' meeting - Thursday 1st May, 2025.

The meetings will be held at 7:30pm at Shortlands Golf Club unless advised otherwise.

## Society Officers and Road Representatives

There have been a number of changes recently. Please note the contact details below.

The most up-to-date list can always be viewed on our website.

### Officers

Chair	Margaret Brearley	chair.rvr@outlook.com
Vice Chair	Beatrice Osborn	vicechairman.rvr@outlook.com
Secretary	Jacqueline St Quinton	secretary.rvr@outlook.com
Treasurer	Sharon Richardson	treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
Planning Officer	Clive Lees	planning.rvr@outlook.com
Membership Secretary	Alastair Holmes	membership.secretary.rvr@outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Euan McMaster	editor.rvr@outlook.com
Roads and Traffic	Andrew Lancaster	roadsandtransport.rvr@outlook.com
Street Friends	Nigel Foster	trees.rvr@outlook.com
BPP Rep	Liz Logan	bpp.rvr@outlook.com
Webmaster	Vacant	webmaster.rvr@outlook.com
Social Secretary	Vacant	
Hon. Legal Advisor	Richard Thomas	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com
Auditor	Jayne Nickalls	contact - treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
LBBR Delegate	Vacant	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com

### Road Representatives

Bracken Hill Lane and Close / Highland Road	Vacant
Bromley Ave / Grasmere Road	Philip Wolfson
Calmont & Ashgrove Roads / Belgravia Gardens	Rita Smith
Coniston Road / Ullswater Close	Jane Doherty
Foxgrove Road / Crab Hill	Gonul Hodgkiss
Downs Hill / Downs Bridge Road	Vacant
Elstree Hill / Erin Close / Hillbrow Road	Nicki Martin
Farnaby Road (1-81)	Jaki Moody
Farnaby Road (82-194)	Rosamond Eele
Madeira Avenue (Evens)	Judy Adcock
Madeira Avenue (Odds)	Anne Lancaster
Oaklands Road / Spencer Road / Hawkshead Close /	
Lullington Garth	
Ravensbourne Ave. (Evens)	Stephen Edwards
Ravensbourne Ave. (Odds)	Monica Wiltshire
Ravensmead Road	David MacKenzie
Warren Avenue	Peter Saunders
	Clive Lees

If you wish to contact your road representative please email the RVR Secretary or write to:

RVR Secretary  
35 Downs Hill  
Beckenham  
BR3 5ET