

April 2023
Issue 2



Welcome to our latest newsletter. 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.

RVR Society News

May members' meeting

From May this year, the format of our meetings will change. They will still be held at Bromley Court Hotel at the usual date and time, ie the first Thursday, every other month, at 8pm. The meetings will, however, be held in the William Pitt room which is on the ground floor and will therefore be accessible to members with mobility issues. The room is accessed by its own separate door to the left of the reception and restaurant entrances and on meeting days there will be a sign outside the hotel to direct RVR members to the Pitt room.

At the RVR AGM in March it was proposed and accepted that for the May and subsequent meetings refreshments will consist of jugs of water only. Members who wish to purchase tea, coffee or other drinks will be able to obtain these from the nearby bar.

Bromley Updates

ULEZ News

The High Court has granted permission to proceed with a judicial review of the Mayor's expansion of London's Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ), after five boroughs, including Bromley, lodged a judicial review with the UK's highest court to challenge the expansion on five grounds. The coalition claims TfL failed to comply with statutory requirements or consider compliance rates in outer London. Further, it is claimed there was no cost benefit analysis carried out, there was "inadequate consultation", and the proposed £110m scrappage scheme which is designed to support businesses, charities, Londoners on lower incomes and disabled Londoners to replace their old, heavily polluting vehicles with greener options, was not consulted on.

The Mayor has hit back, saying he is pleased to see the court has refused permission for the majority of the grounds and that he will continue to robustly defend his life-saving decision to expand the Ulez and continue with preparations without delay. "It is a shame that some local authorities have chosen to attempt this costly and misguided legal challenge instead of focusing on the health of those they represent."

"Around 4,000 Londoners die prematurely every year due to air pollution. This is a health emergency and the Mayor is not prepared to stand by and do nothing while Londoners are growing up with stunted lungs and are more at risk of heart disease, cancer and dementia due to our toxic air."

Further information can be found [here](#). and [here](#).

Bromley Updates

Churchill Quarter Development

Bromley Civic Society continues to campaign against the unwelcome out of proportion proposed developments in the town centre.

They have posted a number of recent updates on their website, including one which indicates that, as of 7th March 2023, the developers have withdrawn the current application. For further information see [here](#).

Waitrose Bromley South Development

John Lewis Partnership have stated that “Our vision is to improve the existing Waitrose store, public realm and pedestrian experience whilst delivering high-quality, energy-efficient build-to-rent homes in a sustainable and well-connected location.”

The second stage of public consultation has now closed. John Lewis Partnership will now review the feedback that was received before providing an update later this year with the finalised proposals and how they respond to feedback received.

You can view the current set of proposals [here](#), and can still let the team know any questions or comments that you may have by emailing Consultation@WaitroseBromley.co.uk.

Proposed Development of 1 Westmoreland Road

A planning application has been submitted to the council to redevelop the site on the corner of Westmoreland Road and Mason's Hill. This is the old DHSS offices site (currently boarded up) which was the subject of an application for a 10 storey secondary school in 2017 (thankfully refused). The new application is for a mixed residential, office and retail development. There will be 122 flats, of which only 4 will be 'affordable' (shared ownership in this case). Part of the development will be 12 storeys high, and it will impact residents of Pinewood Road particularly badly. There have been many objections already, which you can read [here](#).

Yellow Box Fines

Bromley council made over £2.5 million last year by fining drivers for stopping in yellow box junctions, with a local councillor claiming the authority sees motorists as a “cash cow”.

The council issued 25,425 fines to drivers breaking the rule across the borough, which is over ten times more than the total in 2021, when 2,427 fines were issued.

The highest number of fines was for the junction between Croydon Road and Langley Road in Elmers End, where 8,118 fines were issued in 2022. The next four highest spots were: 3,229 at the junction on Bromley Road at Shortlands station; 3,050 at the junction between the High Street and the police station at Bromley South station; Crofton Road at Orpington station and Cray Avenue and Cray Valley junction in St Mary Cray, amounting to 2,072 and 1,786 fines respectively.

Data from the council showed that of the 5,100 fines that drivers opposed, only 1,775 were scrapped.

Planning Applications

Awaiting Decision

12 Downs Hill: Demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension, replacement of carport, part infill of front porch and elevational alterations to fenestration including feature windows and shutters. Two storey rear extension with iron railing, creation of lower ground floor and addition of new patio area with steps. Addition of dormer windows to side and rear and re-tile of roof. Details [here](#).

Oak Spinney, Crab Hill: Single storey side/rear extension and first floor rear extension. Details [here](#).

We have not objected to these as we know APCA are involved

14 Highland Road: Application for 2 four-bedroom dwellings with associated parking. Details [here](#), including our objection.

79 Coniston Road: A new application seeking to obtain a Certificate of Lawful Development for an HMO - details can be found [here](#). This application did allow us to write our shortest objection ever. We simply said 'A4D', just three characters, which the Planning Officer at LBB will understand to mean that we consider that the Article 4 Direction means that this application must fail.

Romany Ridge and 15 Hillbrow Road: We have objected to the revised application for demolition of existing dwellings at Romany Ridge and 15 Hillbrow Road and erection of part two/three storey building comprising 5 two-bedroom and 1 one-bedroom flats (6 in total) with terrace/balconies, associated parking, etc. You can view our objection, among many others, [here](#). It is the Uploaded Representation dated 14th April.

76A and 76B The Avenue: Still awaiting Appeal outcome. Details [here](#).

Determined Applications

8 Madeira Avenue: Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and erection of a four storey building comprising 4 one-bedroom and 3 three-bedroom flats with underground parking for four vehicles and one external space. **Application refused.** See [here](#). Our objection was one of the Uploaded Representations dated 21st February.

Enforcements

61 The Avenue: Failed planting scheme where about 80 shrubs have died.

Dillon Heights, 56 Foxgrove Road: Failure of planting scheme.

Environment

Street Friends (formerly Tree Friends)

Our street friends co-ordinator, Monica Wiltshire, has been recognised in Bromley's 'Environment Matters' newsletter, viz:

Street Friends are residents who care about the cleanliness and safety of the streets they live in or regularly use.

Street Friends organise community clean-ups and play an important role in our community. Bromley Council and Veolia offer support with litter pickers, hoops and purple bags. We also hold quarterly meetings with group coordinators to discuss future events, health and safety and more.

Street Friends work is invaluable and we thank them for their support in keeping Bromley clean and safe.

If you want to become a Street Friend and organise your own community litter-picking event, please visit bromley.gov.uk/streetfriends



Bromley Council and Veolia held a meeting for Street Friends on 23rd March and discussed some of the feedback we gave to Maria Kampioti during her presentation at our AGM on 2nd March. They have subsequently announced plans to run a week-long community litter-picking event with the support of Street Friends groups. This will provide the opportunity to encourage more residents to take part and help others change their behaviour about litter. The suggested date for the Beckenham event is 10am - 12noon on Monday 29th May. Further details will be circulated to RVR members when we receive them.

Recycling Roadshows



Bromley Council are holding a series of pop-up roadshows in Bromley High Street up to June 2023. These roadshows will give everyone the opportunity to ask questions about the recycling and waste collection services, bulky items collection services and more. Residents are welcome to visit Bromley High Street on the last Friday of each month, 11am - 2pm, ie Friday 26th May and Friday 30th June.

Beckenham Place Park (BPP)

Beckenham Place Park, Eastern side Archaeological Survey

Report by Beatrice Osborn - RVR Vice-chair

On Friday 10th March, James Allen, the new Beckenham Place Park Ranger at Lewisham Council, arranged for the archaeologist on site in the Eastern part of BPP to give a brief talk. I attended, along with Monica and Dave Wiltshire.

James first summarised the development that is underway. It is primarily a flood defence scheme. There will be a very large, shallow space which can hold flood water from the River Ravensbourne when required (only expected once in about 100 years). When not flooded the area is open for use. There will be one permanent habitat pond at the southern end. There will be a lot of tree planting next winter, over 2,000, so volunteers will be asked to help. The soil dug out to form the shallow area will be used to re-profile the edges.

The river course will not be changed but a number of trees have been felled, either because they were nearing the end of their natural lives or because they were shading the river too much. A healthy river has shaded and open areas. For example, kingfishers will perch on overhanging branches but fish in open water.



We found Peter and his colleague Jake, from ADAS, a consultancy firm doing the archaeological surveying, out on the windswept grass. He thanked us for showing an interest in the work.

As part of the planning process, they did a desk-based assessment, about a year ago and recommended a seven trench operation. As the site is undeveloped open grassland, it had the potential for finds from prehistory to post medieval. They used historic maps to decide where to dig the trenches.

However, they found almost nothing, because the area had been used to extract sand and gravel. The northern end was extensively quarried in the 1890s. Trench 4 was dug to look for the southern end of the quarry which they found. The quarry pits have then been back filled with a lot of rubbish. They found bricks from the London Brick Company which was founded in 1900, and a broken plate from 1908, so it seems a lot of infilling was done in the 1910s and 1920s.

Photographs from 1946 show the area as football pitches so it is not believed that any further filling happened after WWII. Another trench revealed asbestos (which has been carefully mapped for the developers), iron drums and old tyres.

Beckenham Place Park (BPP) Continued

The far southern end around the WWII anti-aircraft battery has been left untouched owing to the risk of finding unexploded ordinance.

Peter showed us an unbroken wine bottle from 1920s and an intact earthenware jar. However as these are from “made ground” they are of no archaeological interest. They were not found in a “secure context” so they could have come from anywhere.



The only item of potential interest is a sheep's tooth, but without carbon dating there is no way of knowing how old it is.

The trenches were dug to a depth of 1m, about 1.6m wide and 30m long. (Any deeper than 1m and stepped trenches are required for health and safety reasons.) At the southern end on the proposed site for the pond, Lewisham had asked them to go to a depth of 1.75m, the depth of the pond. They found a layer of peat, which shows the ground has been partially wet and partially dry for many years – typically 1m of peat takes 1000 years to form. They have taken about 50 litres of the peat for analysis.

The work finished that day and the trenches have been refilled. They will now produce a report which when approved by Lewisham will go to the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) and be published.



Beckenham Place Park (BPP) Continued - Improvement Works

East Side Development Update

Information about the planned improvement works on the east side of the park can be found [here](#). They include an artist's impression of how that part of the park will look at the conclusion of the works.

Significant tree works are included, as indicated in this report by Liz Logan - RVR BPP Officer

Planned Tree works, February 2023 onwards



The eastern side of Beckenham Place Park has many valuable trees that are of great importance and benefit the environment. These trees will be protected throughout the works. However, there are a few that are either dead or in poor health which could cause a health and safety risk. Removing or rejuvenating these trees will also help open views to the river and create space for healthy trees that have many years ahead of them.

The plans include a reduction in heavy shading and some access improvements at a few points along the river Ravensbourne as it runs through the park. This will involve a combination of coppicing, pollarding and occasional removal of mainly poorer quality trees where required as part of good tree management. Some removals are necessary to facilitate the construction of the improved facilities, but these have been carefully planned to avoid loss of high-quality trees.

Any higher-quality timber will be reused within the parkland to provide informal seating, informal play or habitat piles (hibernacula) that can support a variety of wildlife including insects and amphibians. The Council will be working with Thames 21 and volunteers throughout the works to improve the environment of the river corridor, woodlands and new pond habitats on the east side of the park.

Extensive tree planting will be carried out as part of the improvements. This will define and provide shade along key routes at the entrance from Old Bromley Road and in the new playground. Across the wider parkland, a mix of tree species will be used to add form and interest to key routes and vistas. In addition, new hedgerow areas will be introduced to help define spaces and these will provide habitat, food and nesting opportunities for birds as they mature.

Beckenham Place Park (BPP) Continued

Regular Events

Events and activities taking place in the Mansion can be viewed [here](#).

Events and activities taking place in the park can be viewed [here](#).

Scheduled Music Events, 2023

This year there will be one weekend of music festivals - Hospitality in the Woods on Saturday 19th and Cloud X on Sunday 20th August.

Information about these events is at the following websites:

Hospitality in the Woods: www.hospitalityinthewoods.com/locality

Cloud X: www.cloudxfestival.com

The licence has been transferred from Krankbrother to Hospitality themselves. Both of them and their new Production partners (www.slamminevents.com) have a very strong track record of producing safe events over the past 20 years and are fully committed, as is Lewisham Council, to work with local residents and other stakeholders to minimise disruption.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for updates about these events please send a request by email to jools@slamminevents.com



Bromley Court Hotel

Article by Linda Muller - RVR Membership Secretary

Bromley Court, just 16 miles from central London, began life in the Ravensbourne Valley as a country estate with a suburban villa constructed in Italianate style for Charles Long (1760-1838). He was a trustee of the British Museum, patron of the arts, and instrumental in founding the National Gallery. Charles Long was also an MP and a close political ally of William Pitt the Younger whose negotiations with rival Henry Addington took place at what was then called Bromley Hill Place. Charles Long became Baron Farnborough in 1826 and was a confidant of regency kings George IV and later William IV who were regular visitors. Charles Long's wife, Amelia, a well-respected amateur water-colourist, was made an honorary exhibitor at the Royal Academy from 1807-22.

The two acre grounds of Bromley Court extended northwards to the Garden Gate (now McDonalds) and south to Beckenham Lane whilst its east and west boundaries were London Road and the Ravensbourne River. Much of the land was retained as woodland but picturesque, landscaped gardens were also established, largely by Amelia Long, with stunning views over what was then rural south London and the Kent countryside.

The villa became a convalescence hospital housing Canadian soldiers from the battlefields of France during WWI and was converted to a hotel in 1931 by businessman Leon Frenkel. It has been independently owned by this family until the present date. Although many decorative features of the original core of the house remain intact, various extensions have been added over the years. Interesting to remember that in 1963, the hotel opened what would become known as The Bromel Club, where many top British bands and artists of the day were early performers. Among them were The Who, David Bowie, Eric Clapton, Pink Floyd and Jimi Hendrix who started his tour at the hotel before playing Chislehurst Caves.

The 117 bedroom Hotel was refurbished in 2016. Meeting rooms, capable of hosting up to 190 guests, were renamed after famous historic guests, including the William Pitt, the Macmillan, the David Bowie and the Jimi Hendrix rooms. The Leona Room was named after Leona Frankel, former manager and late aunt of the current chairman; she was our benefactress and generously offered to provide a room for regular members' meetings of the RVR.



Last month, the hotel was awarded 4-star accreditation by the AA Hotel Scheme. We wish them well and look forward to our relationship progressing long into the future.

Crime Update

A local resident had their front doorstep potted plants moved overnight from the side to the middle of their doorstep. A real possible ruse by meandering burglars to establish occupancy if the pots were not moved back by the residents (which they were).

Police Warning to residents after series of delivery scams

Police are warning residents to stay vigilant following a number of reports of people receiving unexpected packages from couriers.

Victims have received packages that were addressed to them but contained items that they had not ordered. A short while later a woman wearing a DPD courier uniform has arrived to collect the packages, claiming they had been delivered to the wrong address. In the reported instances the packages have contained either iPhones or laptops and have been despatched by AO.

Crime prevention advice:

- If possible, do not accept or sign for parcels you haven't ordered.
- If a parcel you have received is not something you have ordered, you should not hand the parcel over to someone calling at your door unless you have made a prior arrangement for its collection and you are able to check the identity of the caller.
- If you realise a parcel you have received is something you have not ordered, you should immediately contact the company to arrange for its collection. Remember to ask how to ensure the identity of the person collecting it.
- If you have already handed over a package in the circumstances described contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via www.actionfraud.police.uk. (right click and open link).

Safer Neighbourhood Board Public Meeting

Bromley Safer Neighbourhood Board will hold its next Public Meeting at The Warren, Croydon Road, Hayes, Bromley, BR2 7AL on 18 May 2023.

Doors open at **18:00** to view the various 'Stands' and Presentations will start at 18:45.

A full Agenda is still being prepared but we can confirm speakers will include:

- Sharon Baldwin (Chair of the Safer Neighbourhood Board)
- Luke Baldock (BCU Commander & Superintendent for Bromley)

Entry is, of course, free to all, so if you don't book your place in advance, you, your neighbours, family and friends will still be welcome at the door.

To confirm your attendance please follow this link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/603809990937>

The booking process is only there so that the Board can estimate the likely number of attendees so that sufficient refreshments are available.

Roads and Traffic

Potholes

Our Planning Officer sent a note to our councillors asking that they comment, among other things, on why our roads are in such poor condition at the moment.

However, they are not as bad as the one repaired in Canning Town after residents had complained about it for more than two years. The pothole recently developed into a 5ft-deep sink hole as you can see in the graphic photograph in the article [here](#).

Park Road, Southend Road, Foxgrove Road Junction

The original scheme which proposed closing Park Road was scrapped in April 2022. A new scheme has been agreed by Bromley Council in March. A mini-roundabout will be installed at the junction, with two pedestrian crossings over Southend Road to its north and south.

Copers Cope Road, Southend Road, The Avenue Junction

Following pressure from our councillors to prioritise making improvements at this junction, the Council have put in a bid to TfL to look at options.

Nature Friendly Verges Trial



Bromley Council is trialling a new, nature friendly, management regime for grass verges at 11 sites across the borough, one of which is in our area, viz. Downs Hill / Ravensbourne Avenue.

These nature friendly verges will receive only one annual cut, either in September or October and will be left to grow throughout the rest of the year with other maintenance activities continuing.

By allowing verges to grow, the council expects to improve biodiversity in the borough, increase natural carbon storage and support reducing the impacts of pollution. Grass verges can act as wildlife corridors connecting habitats and greenspaces, increase floral diversity and increase pollinator habitats, which is good news for bees, butterflies, and invertebrates.



The trial, starting in March 2023, will last for an initial period of two years before the council reviews its impact. This two-year trial period was chosen as it is likely to take two growing seasons for wildflowers in the verges to establish, hopefully like those in the photograph.

RVR Subscriptions

Subscriptions will be collected during delivery of the annual roundup newsletter in the summer, or you will be reminded to complete your Standing Order mandate if you have offered to do so but have not yet followed through.

Meeting Dates

Forthcoming members' meetings are as follows:-

Thursday 4th May, 2023;

Thursday 6th July, 2023;

Thursday 7th September, 2023.

The meetings will be held at 8pm at Bromley Court Hotel in the William Pitt room.

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 [here](#).

Officers

Chairman	Pete Saunders	chair.rvr@outlook.com
Vice Chairman	Beatrice Osborn	vicechairman.rvr@outlook.com
Secretary	Jacqueline St Quinton	secretary.rvr@outlook.com
Treasurer	Dave Wiltshire	treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
Planning Officer	Clive Lees	planning.rvr@outlook.com
Membership Secretary	Linda Müller	membership.secretary.rvr@outlook.com
Newsletter Editor	Euan McMaster	editor.rvr@outlook.com
Roads and Traffic	Andrew Lancaster	roadsandtransport.rvr@outlook.com
Street Friends	Monica Wiltshire	trees.rvr@outlook.com
BPP Rep	Liz Logan	bpp.rvr@outlook.com
Webmaster	Alastair Holmes	webmaster.rvr@outlook.com
Hon. Legal Advisor	Richard Thomas	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com
Auditor	Alan Williams	contact - treasurer.rvr@outlook.com
LBBR Delegate	Vacant	contact - chair.rvr@outlook.com

Road Representatives

Bracken Hill Lane and Close / Highland Road	Linda Müller
Bromley Ave / Grasmere Rd	Jane Willcocks
Calmont & Ashgrove Roads / Belgravia Gardens	Rita Smith
Coniston Road / Ullswater Close	Sandra West
Downs Hill / Crab Hill	Emma Fagg
Elstree Hill / Erin Close / Hillbrow Road	Mick Pinson
Farnaby Road (1–81)	Jaki Moody
Farnaby Road (82–194)	Cathy Davies
Madeira Avenue (Evens)	Judy Adcock
Madeira Avenue (Odds)	Anne Lancaster
Oaklands Road / Spencer Road / Hawkshead Close /	
Lullington Garth	David Page
Ravensbourne Ave. (Evens)	Monica Wiltshire
Ravensbourne Ave. (Odds)	David MacKenzie
Ravensmead Road	Peter Saunders
Warren Avenue	Clive Lees

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

RVR Secretary
35 Downs Hill
Beckenham
BR3 5ET