

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

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Railway Rep.
Roads & Traffic Rep.
Tree Warden
LBRRF Delegate
Police Consultative Committee Rep.
BPP Joint Working Party Rep.
Hon Legal Adviser

ROAD REPRESENTATIVES

Bromley Ave./ Karen Ct. /
Grasmere / Highland Rds.

Coniston Rd / Ullswater
& Hawkshead Closes

Downs Hill / Crab Hill

Elstree Hill / Hillbrow /
Oaklands / Spencer Rds.

Farnaby Rd (1-108)

Farnaby Rd (109 +)

Madeira Avenue

Ravensbourne Ave. (evens)

Ravensbourne Ave. (odds)

Ravensmead Rd

Warren Ave./Calmont Rd.

Elizabeth Davies, 12 Ravensmead Road

Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue

Roy McCarthy, 16 Ravensmead Road

Brian Sanders, 41 Farnaby Road

Wally Carloss, 28a Parkhill Road

Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue

Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill

Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill

Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue

Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road

Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road

Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue

Richard Thomas, 118 Ravensbourne Avenue

Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue

Barbara Price, 85 Coniston Road

Barbara Brown, 34 Downs Hill

Daphne Robeson, 2 Lynton Court, London

Audrey Burford, 90 Farnaby Road

Maureen Johnson, 69 Farnaby Road

Ray Terrett, 70 Madeira Avenue

Ann Rowsell 164 Ravensbourne Avenue

Ann Freiter, 128 Ravensbourne Avenue

Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road

Alan Weatherley, 50 Warren Avenue



NEWSLETTER

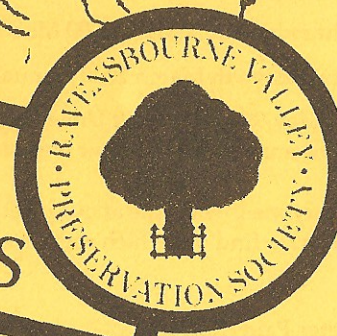
6/99

December 1999

*Merry
Christmas
to
everyone*



**GREETINGS TO
ALL OUR READERS**



EDITORIAL

Once a year, it is our custom to distribute our bi-monthly Newsletter to all households in the area, and not only to those who support us financially. The aim is to get it through letterboxes before Christmas, so our very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to every one of our readers. Plus a sincere thank you to all who have supported the Society, both actively and passively over the past year.

The Society is in effect a residents' association. It 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. As in other years this particular Newsletter reviews our activities over the past year, so apologies to those on the regular mailing list if some of the items covered seem familiar.

Some of the matters on which the Society has had an input during the year and which will be expanded upon later, are:

- Planning applications.
- Beckenham Place Park, management now and most importantly, 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.
- Environmental issues.

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 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 slip - join for half price - and put it through the letterbox of your Road Representative. Their name and address is on the green slip.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 6th January 2000 Members' Meeting 8.0 p.m., Bromley Court Hotel

Thursday 9th March 2000 Annual General Meeting 8.0 p.m., Bromley Court Hotel.

Sunday 9th April 2000 Unveiling the Meridian Post by the Mayor of Bromley. Details to be announced in a later Newsletter.

Everyone is welcome at our meetings, but please check the 'activities board' in the hotel foyer, to find out which room we will be using.

Peter Pain (Editor)

PLANNING

Unitary Development Plans (UDPs)

Both Bromley and Lewisham are in the process of revising their existing UDPs. Earlier there was a flurry of activity and we responded to many consultation papers from both Councils. There is now a respite while all of the comments are analysed and if appropriate incorporated into the Deposit Draft, which will be everyone's last chance to raise objections or seek changes. Doubtless as we did last time, we will make our views known and if necessary give evidence at the ensuing Public Inquiry.

Planning Applications

9 Spencer Road

This is at the junction of Spencer and Oaklands Rds. Although we objected approval was finally given for 6 town houses on this site. Building is now nearing completion.

3/3a/5 Spencer Road

A planning application has been submitted for a block of 24 flats in place of these 3 detached houses. The proposal is a substantial over-development and contravenes the current Unitary Development Plan, as well as being within the area of Tree Preservation Order No 9. We have written objecting and the developers have been told by the Planning Office that their proposal is too large. Bromley is currently waiting for the submission of a much reduced application.

31-33 Downs Hill

Berkeley Homes have applied for permission to demolish No 31 to give access to the rear gardens of 31 & 33, fell over 100 trees and erect 10 new large detached houses (7 with 5 bedrooms and 3 with 4 bedrooms). Downs Hill has been designated as a Conservation Area for over 10 years and if the scheme were to be approved it would degrade the very characteristics for which the area was originally designated. We have objected strongly and Downs Hill residents are mobilised in opposition. The latest information is that Berkeley Homes have asked Bromley to put the submitted scheme into abeyance while they re-design the layout to fewer houses. It remains to be seen whether the new proposal will be any more acceptable.

The Synagogue Highland Road

There have been several proposals for extending or rebuilding the Synagogue. The latest was deferred for further discussions about reducing the size and bulk. New plans for a rebuild with a reduced size have now been submitted for planning approval. These will be considered by Bromley's Planning

Committee in December. The new plans appear to be the best arrangement yet, both visually and functionally, although near neighbours may still be concerned.

Bromley South Station

We earlier reported that the outline proposals envisaged a development of more than a quarter of a million square feet. It comprises a 12 screen cinema, 8 restaurants, 10 shops, 2 family entertainment centres and a night club. The complex could accommodate up to 5000 people. It will be built over the tracks and cover almost the whole length of the platforms. Strangely, although Railtrack are part of the development consortium, no attempt has been made to improve the station over and above essential Health & Safety and Operational requirements. If the development goes ahead as proposed, then a golden opportunity will have been lost to create a main line station in Bromley which would be both a credit and a benefit.

Holwood House and Estate

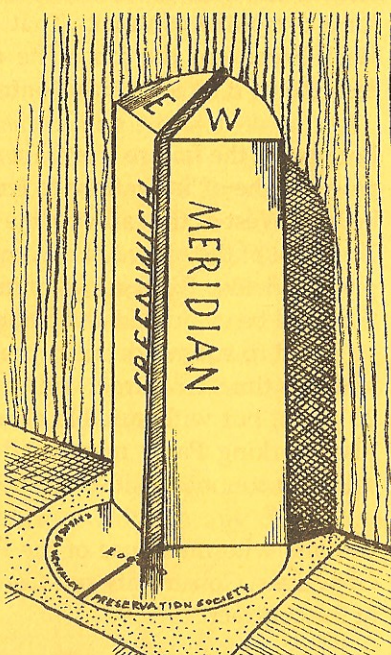
This is near Keston Ponds and although well outside of our area, because it is in the Green Belt, we have been keeping a watch on developments as any decision could have an impact on places like Beckenham Place Park. The Estate came onto the market after the Seismographic Service moved out. The Agents were unable to find another occupier and the London Development Corporation took it over. They sought approval for substantial redevelopment despite it being in the Green Belt. After several attempts to get approval for various schemes, they disposed of it to Crest Homes. Crest Homes now have permission to refurbish the Mansion (a Grade I listed building) and to sell it plus 38 acres as an up-market home. However, that is only about a quarter of the Estate. Crest have now expressed a preference for building several hundred houses on the rest despite the Green Belt designation. In addition there are areas of archaeological and ecological importance which have to be taken into account. We shall continue to watch this with interest.

MARKING THE MILLENNIUM

Some 2 years ago, discussion started on how the Society should mark the Millennium. It was decided to commission and erect a Marker Post on one side of Farnaby Rd where it crosses the Greenwich Meridian and to set a circular plaque into the pavement on the other side. They will be near where the Golf Course crosses the road. This concept fitted in with the national scheme to mark the Millennium by planting trees throughout the country along the line of the Meridian. Leslie Tucker was then tasked to design a meridian post and plaque and to obtain quotations for its manufacture. The final design and initial quotations were considered at a Members' Meeting this

year and the finances approved. The contract has now been let to a manufacturer in Leeds which specialises in fabricating stainless steel (our chosen material). In parallel with the design and contract letting, negotiations were started with Bromley Council and with the help of Richard Thomas, our Hon. Legal Adviser, a legal agreement has now been signed. That agreement formalises Bromley's earlier preparedness to erect the post and plaque at their expense and to their standards for street furniture. They will also assume full responsibility for it thereafter.

To mark the occasion the post will be unveiled by the Mayor of Bromley on Sunday the 9th April 2000 with a reception afterwards at the Shortlands Golf Club. Full details will be published in a later Newsletter.



BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

Following the failure 5 years ago by Lewisham and David Lloyd Leisure to get planning approval for substantial building and usage changes in the Park, Lewisham set up a Working Party between themselves and local Residents' Groups. The purpose of the Working Party (WP) was to chart a way forward for the future of the Park. Many of the original participants have fallen by the wayside, but this Society has stayed with it. We were one of the 4 'Main Parties' at the Public Inquiry and we have since been a major contributor to the present Management Plan for the Park. That Plan has been approved and adopted by Lewisham's Leisure and Environmental Services Committee.

After the Public Inquiry, Lewisham had to move quickly to make arrangements for the immediate maintenance of the Park. So they used the old competitive tendering scheme to let a 5 year maintenance and golf management contract to David Lloyd Leisure. Although that has not done any substantial harm to the Park, it was hardly beneficial. That contract has now expired and DLL has no further interest in the Park. Belatedly, Lewisham carried out a tendering exercise to find a contractor to manage the Park after DLL. That exercise also included Warren Avenue playing fields. There was no creditable response. This caused Lewisham to seek a short term solution until fresh tenders could be sought, so they triggered a separate tendering process

for a 6 months contract. That has been completed and a consortium called Wick Force got the job. The 6 months contract is extendable by monthly increments if no long term contractor has been identified by May 2000.

Because of the failure to attract a creditable response to the original tender the new tranche of 'invitations to tender' will split the Park into two lots. One will be land West of the railway line including the golf course and the other will be land East of the railway i.e. Summerhouse field, the Common and Warren Ave playing fields. Expressions of interest had to be in by the end of October when they will be evaluated and a short list produced. Groups on the short list will be asked to submit detailed proposals by the end of January 2000. If all goes well this time, a contract will be awarded, starting 1/5/2000 and could last for 25 years, but with suitable clauses if performance does not match promises. The Working Party mentioned earlier should have a representative on the selection committee, if so this Society will be providing that representative.

Readers who make use of the Park may be interested in the following list of Objectives, Constraints and Considerations which will influence the awarding of the contract.

Objectives

- Upgrade golf and clubhouse facilities.
- Retain pay and play policy and improve golf practice facilities.
- Find a commercially acceptable use for the Mansion and Homesteads.
- Provide a range of informal recreation facilities and ensure continued public access to the Park.
- Maintain, conserve and if appropriate enhance the wildlife value, historic features, nature conservation and ecology of the Park.
- Generate a commercial return to the Borough of Lewisham.

Constraints

- The Planning Brief produced post the Public Inquiry.
- The Management Plan - formally adopted by the LB of Lewisham.

Note: Both the Planning Brief and the Management Plan refer in no uncertain terms to the listed category of the Mansion and the Homesteads. They also refer to the designation of the Park as Metropolitan Open Land and many other constraints detailed in Lewisham's Unitary Development Plan, a statutory document.

Considerations

- Historic landscape included in the English Heritage register of Historic Parks and Landscapes. Variety of habitats including Ancient Woodland.
- Designated as a London Ecology Committee site of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation and forms part of the South East London Green Chain Walk.
- The Mansion is a Grade II* listed building and the Homesteads Grade II.
- The area around the Mansion is designated of Archaeological Priority.
- Need to ensure the continued public access to the property as a whole for informal recreation. Need to provide alternative accommodation within the Park for the Friends of Beckenham Place Park Information Centre and to liaise with the Friends on future management policies.

Note: This Society's view is the Working Party, of which the Friends are a constituent member, would bring a wider range of skills to any discussion about future management policies.

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Abandoned Vehicles

From time to time cars are abandoned in the area. If you see an obviously abandoned vehicle it should be reported to the Bromley Abandoned Vehicle Officer on 0181-313 4236 or 464 3333. If the vehicle is in Lewisham the Officer will give a Lewisham contact.

Beckenham / Croydon / Wimbledon Tramlink

An earlier Newsletter reported that operational services should start in November. However, track signalling problems were found during the trials and the Beckenham section is not now expected to be operational before January.

Traffic Calming

Calmont Road / Ashgrove Road

Associated with the planning approval for the old Garden Gate public house to be a drive-in McDonalds, Lewisham plan to vary the road markings to facilitate entry and exit. Separately, they are also examining whether the traffic using Calmont & Ashgrove could be better managed. At present there are no specific proposals. If any are formulated then local residents and businesses who will be directly affected will be notified and consulted. If there is no support, then the proposals will not proceed.

Blackbrook Lane

An earlier plan for 15 speed humps in Blackbrook Lane has been modified following objections by residents and a local Action Group. The current proposals which are for further consultation envisage 4 calming tables at the junctions within the Lane plus high visibility warning signs at each end.

Permit Parking Bromley Town Centre -Outer Areas

An earlier Newsletter contained a report that consultation was taking place about extending the Outer Zone and several roads within our area would be affected. The consultation process has finished and revised proposals have been approved by Bromley's Environmental Services Committee. Implementation is planned for the summer of 2000.

Roads within our area which will be affected Chart Close, Farnaby Rd (part), Grasmere Rd, Highland Rd, Meadow Rd, and Ravensbourne Ave (part).
Nearby roads which will be affected: Station Rd and Valley Rd.

POLICING AND CRIME

Bromley's Crime and Disorder Strategy

During the year Bromley and the Metropolitan Police published a crime and disorder profile for the borough and invited structured responses from Resident's Associations and Community Groups. We and many others duly obliged. Those comments have now been brought together to form a Crime and Disorder Strategy. Built into the Strategy are individual Action Plans for the main agencies involved. i.e. Police, Council, Probation Service and Health Service. The priorities for action are:

- Reduce youth crime.
- Reduce drug related crimes.
- Help communities most affected by crime.
- Create safer town centres.
- Strengthen local communities.
- Support victims and vulnerable groups.

Each priority will have a lead Agency. For example Bromley Health will lead the Drug Action Team and Bromley Council the Town Centre Action Team. This activity does not mean that is a high crime area. In fact it is one of London's safest boroughs and all types of crime have been steadily reducing over the past decade. More detailed information is available from Bromley Council Offices or on their internet site. www.bromley.gov.UK/crime/default.htm

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH. (by A. Barwell, a Local Co-ordinator)

From small beginnings in about 1986 the Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) movement in the London Borough of Bromley now has some 300 Watch areas. These areas have just taken a big step forward in amalgamating into the LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION. it has a formal CONSTITUTION, with a full time paid Co-ordinator, an elected Committee and it is a Registered Charity sponsored by Brownhill, Morris & West the CGU's Bromley Agents. If you wish to know more about this and the CGU home insurance being offered to NHW members speak to your NHW Co-ordinator. At present the following roads in the RVPS area are not represented:-

Calmont Rd.; Coniston Rd.; Crab Hill; Downs Hill; Farnaby Rd.; Madeira Ave.; Ravensbourne Ave.; Spencer Rd.; Warren Ave.

This is a pity because the scheme really does work but is much better if there is a degree of co-ordination throughout an area. Remember, They are not 'Vigilantes' just concerned people prepared to keep good observation and help their neighbours and the Police.

Items of news. Operation Eagle Eye is a new £1M project based in Orpington to beat street crime in which NHWs are co-operating. There is an excellent Met. Police web site <www.met.police.uk> for general information. For those of you unfortunate enough to have lost property, there is a web site showing the property held by the Bumblebee project <www.lost-property.com> (notice the dash). The pictures are very recognisable. If you do not have access to the internet, you can do so at Bromley Reference Library (for a small fee).

Bogus and Cowboy Builders

We have previously drawn attention to these confidence tricksters and make no apology for revisiting the subject. Generally older people are targeted. Attention is drawn to an imaginary problem with the house - usually the roof, but it could be paintwork, walls or even trees. They offer to do the job cheaply and often for cash in advance. If the job is done it will be done badly and if cash in advance is asked for, you are unlikely to see them again. Regarding trees any resident living in an area bounded by Madeira Ave/Highland Rd/Park End/London Rd and Hillbrow should remember that all trees within that area are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). TPOs are statutory orders and felling or pruning without permission attracts a substantial fine. There are a few exceptions such as trees that are dead and pruning cultivated fruit trees. If in doubt contact the Council's Tree Officers on 0181-313 4516.

Some ways to defeat the cowboy are:

- Get personal recommendations from friends or neighbours.
- Use a credit card for bills over £100. All credit card firms have to provide insurance for items over £100.
- Get 3 estimates detailing work to be done and materials needed.
- Paying cash to avoid VAT is illegal.
- Do not employ cold-callers.
- Check whether the firm belongs to a trade association such as the Federation of Master Builders or is Corgi registered if the work concerns gas appliances.
- Finally always call the police if you feel threatened or the caller refuses to leave.

ENVIRONMENT

Waste Recycling

Many will remember that last March, Pat Ellender from Bromley's Environmental Services came to our AGM to talk about the costs and problems associated with collecting and disposing of household rubbish.

Bromley have now produced a Waste Recycling Plan. For many reasons the amount of waste created grows from year to year. Currently Bromley handles 150,000 tonnes a year, but this is forecast to increase to 181,000 tonnes by 2003. Given the costs and limitations on landfill ie. the South East landfill capacity will be exhausted by 2005, then alternatives become essential. The basis of Bromley's strategy is 'recycling'. Part of the Borough already has a paper collection service but material like glass, aluminium, other metals and textiles have to be taken to a street or central collecting point.

In the next 5 years Bromley aims to provide each household with a week's house to house multi-material collection of recyclable material including plastics. At that time non recyclable waste will only be collected once a fortnight. Many other options are also under consideration. For example campaigning for greater use of recycled material, reduction of waste at source such as over sized packaging plus an increased emphasis on composting household organic waste. Inevitably the foregoing is a précis of some 90 pages. However, if any reader wants to know more or read the Plan for themselves a copy can be obtained from Bromley Environmental Services, telephone No. 0181- 313 4510.

Junk Mail

Probably many readers are inundated with junk mail and wish that they were

not. Often this happens because at some time we filled in a questionnaire associated with a guarantee registration form or perhaps tempted by a prize offer. Much of this mail can be prevented by getting your name and address removed from mailing lists. The Mailing Preference Service can do just that and they can be contacted by letter at Freepost 22, London W1E 7EZ. Alternatively, Bromley Environmental Services can provide labels so that the envelopes can be reused and they recommend that the contents be included in the fortnightly collection of paper for recycling.

Fly Tipping

We continue to have sporadic incidents of fly tipping. This has been written about before, but as it does not seem to go away, a summary of the earlier notes follows. Fly tipping is illegal and offenders can be prosecuted. Although the Police can and do act, it is generally the Environment Agency that leads. Anyone seeing fly tipping taking place should note as many details as possible and pass them on to Bromley's Litter Helpline (0181-313 4510). They will follow it up. If the rubbish is on a made up road (adopted) the Council will clear it at no cost. If it is on an unmade road (unadopted) the Council will arrange clearance if it is blocking the way for ambulances or fire engines. If it is on the verges, the Council will raise a charge to the frontages unless the waste is hazardous i.e. asbestos, chemicals etc.

MISCELLANY

The following good advice on how to survive the winter has been taken, unaltered, from a pocket 'Almanac' published in 1839 - be warned - take heed - follow it to the letter or blame us not if you fall victim to the ague or the vapours. Remember we draw these practices to your attention for your own good.

December

Consumptions, coughs and rheumatisms fix themselves in the habits of the body more in this month than any other. The body should now be encased in flannel; and persons of weak lungs should avoid exposure to sudden alterations of heat and cold. Avoid the night air, and never take ardent spirits in foggy weather.

January

Sudden exposure to the operation of heat when the body has long been in the cold air, is apt to produce rheumatisms, catarrhs, and inflammatory diseases, because cold renders the habit of the body more susceptible of impressions; hence the transition from cold to a heated room quickens the action of the blood vessels, and causes fever and inflammation.

(Don't we live dangerously now).