



RVPS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 5th March 2015
8pm Bromley Court Hotel

Reports

- 1 Chairman's Report**
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1. Chairman's report

Clive Lees

This has been a year of considerable change and I would like to thank the various officers of the Society for their support and for their judgement in restraining my 'more enthusiastic' ideas. My thanks also to all our road reps. who tirelessly deliver our newsletters throughout the year.

Our newsletter has changed dramatically to considerable applause whilst we have begun to develop significantly different activities – notably the Farnaby Road tree project which is detailed below. In addition to the increasing tempo in planning activities, also on the horizon is the redevelopment of Beckenham Place Park and the Flood Alleviation Scheme. Both of these will have significant impact on the area and we will be monitoring both carefully.

By way of thank you to our road reps and officers and those who regularly attend our meetings, we are intending to hold a 'garden party' in June – further details to follow.

RAVENSBOURNE VALLEY PRESERVATION SOCIETY
Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st December 2014

INCOME	2014	2013
	£	£
Members' subscriptions	2192	2214
Other donations	NIL	10
Interest from bank accounts	59	42
Miscellaneous	NIL	4
TOTAL	2251	2270
EXPENDITURE		
Photocopying	NIL	NIL
Office supplies	17	48
Newsletter	344	300
Postage	NIL	10
Telephone	92	31
Refreshments	203	185
AGM	165	219
Insurance	126	227
Community Projects	NIL	NIL
Donations	NIL	250
Miscellaneous	74	15
TOTAL	1021	1285
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	1230	985

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2014

GENERAL RESERVE	2014	2013
	£	£
Balance at 1 st January 2014	10655	9670
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	1230	985
Balance at 31 st December 2014	11885	10655

ASSETS

National Savings & Investment Account	7954	7895
Santander Current Account	3619	2660
Santander Deposit Account (Closed)	NIL	22
Cash in hand	312	78
TOTAL	11885	10655

Signed by the Hon. Treasurer: (David Wiltshire)

Date:

Report by Auditor:

I have obtained all the information I consider necessary to audit these accounts. The Income and Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet agree with the accounting records kept and show a true record of the surplus for the Society's financial year ending 31st December 2014

Signed by the Hon. Auditor: (Pura Atkinson)

Date:

Accounts and Balance Sheet approved by the AGM

Signed by the Chair: (Clive Lees)

Date:

2. TREASURER'S REPORT

On the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2014

The Accounts were audited and approved at year end in January 2015

There was an overall surplus for the year of £1230 and the General Reserve was thereby increased to £11,885.

On the receipts side:

Subscriptions received for the year remain static as compared to 2013, albeit there were subscriptions received in 2014 from the previous year.

- The Santander Deposit Account was closed in May 2014 as it was no longer attracting worthwhile interest. The closing balance being transferred to the Santander Current Account.
- Interest from the National Savings and Investment Account was £59.00 for the year and was automatically added to that account.

On the expenditure side:

There has been a healthy increase in the surplus for the year, due to several factors.

- There were no community projects funded in 2014.
- A substantial reduction in insurance premiums, by changing our insurance provider and to a policy more tailored to our operations.
- There was a reduction in AGM costs as compared to 2013.

However, we are committed to a partnership with London Borough of Bromley regarding the Farnaby Road Tree Project of which the RVPS portion is valued at £3,000, in this current financial year.

At £11,885 the General Reserve remains in a healthy state, noting our commitment to the RVPS/LBB tree project. I therefore recommend that the present level of subscriptions, at £5 per annum, per household, be maintained, with senior citizens and members in special financial circumstances subscribing as they feel appropriate.

David Wiltshire (Hon. Treasurer)

3. Planning Report

Clive Lees

The last year has shown a significant upturn in planning activity. Developments at 61 The Avenue and Oak Dene, Oaklands Road have both been refused and are currently being Appealed whilst other significant developments at Sunset Hill, Hillbrow Road, 4 Oaklands Road and 20 Blyth Road are still being considered by the council at the time of writing this report.

An application for flats at the former Mason's Scaffolding Yard behind 50 Ashgrove Road was Dismissed at Appeal whilst two very significant developments are about to be presented to the council: 74 Madeira Avenue (the late Peter Pain's old house) and 2-4 Riverpark Gardens. Details of these will appear on our website in due course, as normal.

14 Highland Road has been completed and whilst we complained about the size of the rear extension, overall it is a relief to see this fine building restored. However, we understand that the redevelopment has not proceeded according to the submitted plans and that Bromley Council are currently investigating the matter from a planning enforcement perspective.

At Ravensbourne Station, it became apparent that the new wooden fence had not been constructed properly (it was missing the bottom arris rail) but following our observations, this has now been rectified(ish).

A pleasing victory came in the form of forcing the owners of the Travelodge building to plant the tree they said they would – we did this by instigating a Planning Enforcement complaint.

4. Roads and Transport Report

Clive Lees

During the year, we got new yellow lines painted at the top of Bromley Avenue and on a dangerous corner in Oaklands Road. We have also concerned ourselves with dangerous parking outside Valley Primary School and the difficulties in Crab Hill which need resolving, probably with additional yellow lines.

5. Community Projects

Clive Lees

During the year we complained incessantly about the poor state of the Warren Avenue Playing Fields. We didn't get everything we wanted (like new trees) but new contractors were employed and as a result the area is being kept to a much higher standard than previously. Litter is now under control and new bins have been installed.

Monica Wiltshire

For 2014 we have concentrated our efforts under this heading on one major project which has been the restoration of the avenue of trees in Farnaby Road as a joint endeavour with Bromley. Our plans were presented in outline and approved in principle at our 2014 AGM. At our Members' Meeting in November following a progress report the proposals were approved unanimously.

Since that date, in December 2014, 16 oak trees were planted in Farnaby Road, 7 birch trees in Downs Hill and 2 hazel trees in Warren Avenue. The results were very pleasing and received a lot of positive feedback from residents. It was therefore disappointing and somewhat alarming when all the oak trees in Farnaby Road were removed. On inspection, LBB arboricultural officers discovered the tree pits had not been built to their satisfaction and had to be reconstructed. Concerns were raised by residents that in uprooting and subsequent storage the trees may have been damaged. We have received the following assurance from LBB:

‘The new trees were containerised and therefore their roots were relatively space restricted. As we are still in the dormant season they will not have developed and broken beyond their initial level and therefore would have been lifted easily. I have been assured that the trees are being stored sensitively to protect them from frost and moisture loss. Given the problems we have encountered we will be monitoring the health of the trees carefully in the short term when they are replanted and beyond.’

I am pleased to say that all 16 trees have now been replanted in their new pits and all has been restored. We intend to mark this joint venture with a celebration event later in the year.

As this project draws to a close, we should warmly welcome suggestions for future local projects to make good use of RVPS funds and enhance the society’s reputation.

Tree Officer’s Report

Monica Wiltshire

Tree Symposium

Along with the other residents’ associations in Bromley we have been invited to the first Bromley Tree Symposium on Wednesday 18th March by Councillor Smith, portfolio holder for the Environment. We welcome this opportunity for discussion with LBB officers and other residents’ associations.

LBBRF Position Statement

Following a talk to the LBBRF meeting on November 20th 2014 the Chair, Robert Hadley, asked us to write a Position Statement on insurance-led demands to fell trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This has now been finalised and will be sent to Councillor Smith before the Tree Symposium and possibly to the London Assembly as this is a London wide issue.

76B The Avenue

On 5th February 2015 on behalf of RVPS I spoke to object to a planning application to fell the London Plane tree adjacent to 76B The Avenue. This was something of a test case for RVPS as it was the first application to fell a tree for insurance reasons after our successful campaign with the oak trees at 10 Crab Hill. We hoped for a positive outcome as the independent report said that other courses of action should be taken. It was therefore both surprising and disappointing that there was a majority vote from councillors to consent to fell on the threat of financial liability from the insurance company. We have been supported by Councillor Mellor who continues to pursue the principles involved and seek a much closer and correct adherence to the significance of a TPO. It is a travesty to lose trees such as the London Plane which are renowned for their longevity, impact on pollution and aesthetic value. This particular tree is believed to be between 150 – 200 years old, Plane trees do not die of old age.

6 Kimberley Terrace, Madeira Avenue

With the support of Councillor Dykes we are following up an issue about a planning application requirement to plant a replacement oak tree which was never done and also following up planning application requirements to plant replacement trees in general.

6. Beckenham Place Park Joint Working Party Representative’s Report

Leslie Tucker

At the time of our last AGM we knew that Lewisham had submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to enable one of four schemes to enhance the park and

to restore other buildings (other than the Mansion). We had seen outline plans for each option but did not know which had been chosen for submission. The four choices had been the subject of a series of consultations in January 2014 with selected local groups (including RVPS) and had been discussed with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) prior to the submission.

In his presentation to our 2014 AGM, Gavin Plaskitt, Lewisham's Officer in charge of the project, described each option and the overall future program. He is due to give us an update at this meeting.

In early July it was revealed that the chosen option that had been submitted to HLF was no. 4 which did not include any provision for golf. This was not received well by many members of the Working Party and immediately an intemperate objecting email was sent by the Chairman of the WP to Lewisham. He also happens to be Secretary to the Braeside Golf club. At the following WP meeting on 26th September the principal subject of the discussion was the loss of the golf course - however by the end of the meeting the Chairman applauded Lewisham's initiatives in raising the funds for the first stage and stated that the WP should support LBL in progressing the project design through to the second stage.

At the November meeting the formal approval of HLF for the financing of the first stage was announced and the subject of the loss of golf was not mentioned.

On 12th February the mood of the meeting had regressed and the earlier undertaking of the WP to support the approved scheme seemed to have been forgotten. In my opinion, unless future WP meetings turn their attention, in a positive and constructive way, to the scheme for which the grant has been given, its credibility will suffer and it will not be listened to by LBL. This could mean that the valuable local knowledge of the members could be compromised.

A separate submission is being prepared for grants to cover the future of the Mansion.

In parallel with the present schemes for the park, the Environment Agency hopes to be able to carry out a flood prevention proposal within the part of the park east of the railway. We understand that at present EA are negotiating with the government for approval of the necessary funding. Assuming that this will be cleared, the intention is that their design details can be dove-tailed into the landscaping proposals for the park.

I feel strongly that, whatever the case might be to retain golf in the park, after 20 years without any progress having been made to establish a viable future of this exceptional and underused park, we should grasp the opportunity now offered. This requires the WP and others to support the current proposals, at least, in principle. There will be many details which will require searching comment but a positive and constructive attitude must be established if we are to move forward. Continuing to address an option which is not going to happen will simply waste time.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

Linda Müller

Of the roughly 1200 households in our area, we have – as at March 2015 – 492 member households, a number which has remained relatively stable over the past 5 years, with a steady trickle of new members replacing those who have died or moved away. New members come to us occasionally by word of mouth via our Road Representatives, sometimes following our annual Roundup mailing to all households in the area, and increasingly via our website.

The number of members wishing to receive Newsletters in email form is steadily increasing; of our 492 members, 256 (or 52 %) have requested emailed Newsletters in future, whilst 236 members (or 48 %) still receive paper copies delivered by hand. We

hope this trend continues in the future as more and more members are encouraged to join the online movement once it is brought to their attention.

For health reasons, we had to bid a fond farewell to our rep Ann Rowsell mid-year, after many years of “active service”: our thanks go to her and to Monica Wiltshire who kindly stepped into the breach and has become our latest road rep.

Thanks to all the time and pavement-pounding put in by our wonderful team of Road Reps, non-payment of membership subscriptions remained low in the last year at 36 members (or 7 %) of the total. It is virtually impossible to find everybody at home, even after repeat callings, and notes through doors as a last resort do not always result in success – as I well know from personal experience! So many thanks to all Road Reps for your perseverance and hard work.

