

# NEWSLETTER

2/2006

April 2006



## EDITORIAL

The recent AGM was very well attended.

The guest speaker, Joe Burchell JP had been a magistrate for nearly thirty years and has a wide experience, mainly centred on Inner London courts. He is the current chairman of the Inner London Magistrates Association and also a Freeman of the City of London. He spoke about how one becomes a magistrate, both when he became one and now, about the training given and the different types of work that a magistrate is called upon to do - also some of the constraints. His talk was amply illustrated with examples leavened with "tales from the bench". He finished by talking about the many changes he had seen over the years. The talk obviously created a lot of interest as the Chair had to call a halt to questions so that we could stop for refreshments before dealing with the business of the AGM.

The main decisions taken at the AGM were:-

- \* The present officers in the posts of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor were all re-elected.
- \* Subscriptions remain unchanged at £5 per household. Senior Citizens and members in special financial circumstances may subscribe as they think fit.
- \* Our finances remain healthy and the continuation of community projects was confirmed.
- \* Special thanks were recorded to Miss Frenkel for her continuing support in allowing us to use the facilities of the Bromley Court Hotel.

In the last Newsletter we sought a volunteer to take over as road rep for part of Farnaby Road as Audrey Burford was moving out of our area. We are pleased to welcome Peter Clarke who has agreed to take over from Audrey. We hope this Newsletter will be the first of many that he will deliver.

### Dates for the Diary

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May - Members' Meeting 8.00pm - Bromley Court Hotel

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July - Members' Meeting 8.00pm - Bromley Court Hotel

Peter Pain (Editor)

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## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

After last year's project for murals on the wall in the playground of Valley School we are looking for new ideas. One of which could be another project for the school.

They have come up with 3 ideas for us to consider:

- a group of different types of standing stones under a tree where nothing will grow.
- an area identifying plants and flowers throughout the seasons.
- some rustic benches fashioned from logs to compliment the story-telling chair which we financed 2 or 3 years ago.

These will be discussed at the next members' meeting plus any other ideas for projects that might be suggested - such as identifying the position of lost street trees and offering to part fund their replacement..

## **BECKENHAM PLACE PARK**

A further meeting was held just after the AGM but the long-term way forward is no clearer. It seems that no major decisions will be made until after the local government elections in May. Even then it is likely that the present arrangements will continue until 2010 when a new Parks Management contract will be negotiated for all of Lewisham's open spaces.

Match funding from Lewisham for Lottery grants seems to be a non-starter and unless some other source is found the buildings will only get day to day maintenance instead of refurbishment.

## **TRANSPORT**

*Sight lines - Grasmere Road / Oaklands Road junction:* Bromley now agree that a section of yellow line is very short and it appears that it may not have been restored to its right length after road works. However they are still checking and if they find it is as originally planned it is unlikely that they will go through the Traffic Order procedures needed to extend it. If it has been cut off by road works they may well find the necessary quantity of yellow paint to do the job!

*Shortlands railway bridge:* Many of our members, and probably lots of others have in the past complained about the pigeons roosting under the bridge. Network Rail, and before them Railtrack, never seemed to have the will to do anything about it. However the Councillor for Shortlands, Cllr. George Taylor, who is also the portfolio holder for the Environment in Bromley Council became involved. By threatening the use of new legislation he helped Network Rail to see the light and replace the torn netting under the bridge. To date the pigeons have been prevented from roosting on the bridge girders - that is until the next lorry gets jammed under the bridge and tears the netting again.

## **PLANNING**

*37, Ravensmead Road:* This application was for a new house on a narrow plot in the garden of the existing house. Bromley refused the application and the owner appealed. The appeal has been disallowed.

*100/102 Madeira Avenue:* last year a development company made an application for 14, 2 bedroom flats on this site. That was refused by Bromley. This year they made a fresh application for 7, 4 storey town houses. Before the plans committee sat the developer made some amendments triggered by officer recommendations. These were to save 2 mature oak trees; one had been at risk of root damage and the other was to be felled. The plans committee deferred a decision so that the developer could reduce the number of houses from 7 to 6 and also make two blocks of three. The developer duly amended the plans but instead of keeping the houses the same width they increased each by half a metre. They also rearranged the articulation of the frontage, failed to make them into 2 blocks of 3 and increased the distance which the end block projected beyond the rear face of the adjacent house (no.98) from 2 metres to 5. Your Vice Chairman and Cllr. Paul Clark both spoke against the application and after some discussion the committee voted, with one abstention, to refuse permission. We now wait to see whether the developer appeals on just the town houses or both flats and the town houses - or puts in a fresh application.

8, "Kowloon" & "Penfro" Highland Road: This application is actually 2 separate ones from the same developer to replace Kowloon and Penfro with a block of 12 flats and replace No. 8 with a block of 10 flats. Part of the garden of No. 10 would also be taken for parking for the 10 flats on No. 8. We objected on grounds of over-development. Bromley refused the applications but the developer has now appealed.

3, Highland Road: This is a proposal to demolish the existing house and replace it with a block of 6 flats. It is a fairly modest scheme near existing flats and we do not intend to object.

44, Coniston Road: This application to Lewisham is for 2 pairs of semi-detached houses in the rear garden with access from Belgravia Gardens. The plans are very similar to plans which were approved in September 2003, but many residents will be objecting.

*Unitary Development Plans and their successor, Local Development Frameworks:*  
Lewisham are in advance of Bromley. Their last UDP was adopted in 2004 and they have since produced several consultation papers for different aspects of their LDF. Bromley hope to have their last UDP ready for adoption this summer but they have already started their first LDF document, a "Statement of Community Involvement". We have made one comment on the submission draft.

## ENVIRONMENT

For those of you who do your own gardening, Bromley have again set up satellite sites for green waste only. They opened on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April and will continue every weekend until the Autumn.

The nearest sites to us are: Beckenham - St. Georges Rd car park.  
Bromley - Norman Park entrance off Bromley Common  
The hours are Saturdays - 11am to 4pm and Sundays - 8am to 12noon.  
Last year the five sites had over 56,000 visits and collected over 100 tons of garden waste.

## STREET TREES:

Bromley have had a blitz on replacing street trees which had to be felled for one reason or another. The main species are Rowan, Field Maple and Birch although some Midland Hawthorns have also been planted. We have had at least three trees replaced but there must be scope for more. If we knew where, we could put in a bid for the next planting season. If any member who is missing a street tree and would like to see it replaced would let your Road Rep know, the society will follow it up with Bromley.

## SECURITY

*Credit Card Fraud:* There is a new credit card scam - probably as a result of the increased use of chip & PIN. A caller telephones saying that they are from your credit card company (using the appropriate name - Visa, Mastercard, etc) they give their name and badge reference and claim to be investigating an unusual purchase pattern or irregular transaction. They already know your name and card number. When they quote a purchase which you have not made and deny, they say they will be issuing a credit to your account, at that stage they will give a number to ring with any queries. **BUT**, before they ring off they will ask you to verify that you still have the card and ask for the last 3 digits on the rear of the card. **Do not give it**, as they can then quote the card number and security numbers for all sorts of telephone and internet transactions.. If it really was your credit card company they will know your details and would not need to ask for them. Anything of this nature should be reported at once to the police and your card company with as many details as you can recall.