

NEWSLETTER

3/2008

April 2008



EDITORIAL

The AGM was well attended but unfortunately none of our Councillors were able to come.

Our guest speaker this year was Bob Vale who is the manager of Bromley's Trading Standards Team. Backed by a Power Point presentation he took us through the list of functions for which Trading Standards are responsible. As he was limited to about 45 minutes, he principally concentrated on:-

- The checking of weights and measures used by shops, stall holders and petrol stations.
- The illegal selling of tobacco and alcohol to underage purchasers.
- The dangers of accepting offers to do work by doorstep rogue traders who cold call.

We were reassured that inaccurate weighing or measuring equipment was rare but the sale of tobacco and alcohol to underage purchasers was more common and breaches were taken very seriously. In passing he indicated the wide range of products which had age restrictions on purchase and quoted the minimum age for each.

Turning to the doorstep rogue traders, he gave cases where outrageous acts of deceit, greed and even threats had been perpetrated against elderly householders. He particularly emphasised that anyone cold calling to do roof, building or garden work should always be turned away. He also talked about several successful prosecutions they had made.

To conclude he urged anyone who thinks they, or an elderly neighbour, was being taken advantage of should contact Trading Standards immediately. They would then check the situation.

Two important telephone numbers were:-

- Bromley Trading Standards rapid response team - 07903 852 090 and - Consumer Direct (Scam Busters) - 08454 04 05 06

The latter gives advice on most consumer issues and their web site is:-

- www.consumerdirect.gov.uk - which gives a whole range of advice on purchasing goods and services.

The main decisions taken at the AGM were:-

- Our finances remain healthy and the continuance of community projects was confirmed.

- Subscriptions remain unchanged at £5 per household with senior citizens and members in special financial circumstances subscribing as they thought fit.

- The present officers of Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor were all re-elected. Following the loss of our chairman Elizabeth Davies who had moved to Devon, volunteers had been sought. Fortunately Leslie Watmore, who has lived in the area for a long time, responded. Proposed by Barbara Brown and seconded by Pat Tucker, he was unanimously elected. He will take the next members' meeting in May.

- Special thanks were recorded to Miss Frankel for her continuing support in allowing us to use the facilities of the Bromley Court Hotel for our meetings.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 1st May Members Meeting, 8.0pm at Bromley Court Hotel.

Thursday 3rd July Members Meeting, 8.0pm at Bromley Court Hotel.

Peter Pain (Editor)

PLANNING

8 Madeira Avenue

A second application has now been submitted. This time for a 4 storey block of 2 bedroom flats. The reduction in height from 5 storeys to 4 does not materially change any of the earlier objections. It is scheduled for a Plans Sub-committee on 3rd April. Clive Lees will speak against the application and Councillor Phillips will speak in our support.

126 Madeira Avenue:

As expected a 3rd planning application has been made for this site. This time it was for 3 detached, 4 bedroom houses with scope for a 5th bedroom. The application is for outline approval only, but except for the lack of elevations other information could be adequate for a full application.

It is recognised that 3 houses on this site would be a substantial improvement over the previous terraces of 8 or 6 town houses. However the position of one of the houses in the south west corner of the site gives cause for concern. There is an existing flank wall of about 7 metres x 5 metres near the western boundary but the proposals would replace this with the side wall of a house which would be nearly three times the area of the existing wall. It would also be nearer to the boundary and hence nearer to the properties below in Madeira Avenue. It would also have a window and patios overlooking the existing houses. In addition there has been no resolution of the access problems.

Blythe Road Hotel:

Permission has been granted for a 3 storey block of 9, 2 bedroom flats.

113 Foxgrove Road:

A second application for this property in a Conservation Area has been submitted for a block of flats similar to the first application. This time the plans try to take account of the Inspector's reasons for disallowing the first application. Because it

is in a Conservation Area of detached houses with substantial separation, we have objected in principle. The views of Bromley's Advisory Panel on Conservation Areas are not yet known.

14 Highland Road:

As expected there was a recent application to substantially extend this Locally Listed property. The plans propose a large rear and flank extension to create 9, 2 bedroom flats plus a self contained town house. We objected, not only on the grounds of over-development, and the proposed changes negating the reasons for Locally Listing, but also because many of the rooms were barely usable due to the pitch of various parts of the roof.

Stop press: This application has just been refused

35, Downs Hill:

Permission has been granted for 6 trees to be felled because of claimed damage to the house.

17, Spencer Road:

Permission was given to the second application to demolish a garage at the end of a terrace of town houses and build a single detached house. The second application was much smaller than the first and we raised no objections.

161, Ravensbourne Avenue:

An application has been made to demolish the existing detached house and erect a pair of semi-detached houses. We objected mainly because one of the pair is particularly overbearing and out of character with the street scene. It is also too close to the boundary of the neighbouring house. The application has been refused.

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

Lewisham has now prepared a commissioning brief for external consultants to express an interest in, and price a public consultation on the future of the Park. The brief is separated into 3 parts, each to be individually priced. One of the aims is to involve people who do not normally use the park but might do so if changes are made.

The first part is to hold a "Citizens Workshop" to explain potential changes and seek views. The intention is to invite a minimum of 100 people to Lewisham Civic Suite for an introductory discussion and then bus them to the Park for a guided tour. That would be followed by workshop sessions possibly with electronic voting. After that there would be a public survey for both general and website use.

Finally there would be a series of "Focus Groups" with all identifiable groups which might have an interest in the park. Separately the Council intend to undertake specific consultation work with young people and staff.

Expressions of interest from suitable consultancy firms will be required by the 21st April.

Proposed time scales are:-

May - July 2008 -

August -September 2008 -

October 2008 -

Consultancy process.

Consultation analysis and report writing.

Sustainable Development Select Committee - Mayor and Cabinet and discussion with English Heritage