

NEWSLETTER

April 2010

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Web site: rvps.synthasite.com

E-mail: RVPS@talktalk.net



EDITORIAL

The AGM was well attended and three ward Councillors, plus a candidate were also present. Our guest speaker this year was Sam French the Assistant Headmistress at the Valley School which is very popular with both pupils and parents and has had excellent ratings from OFSTED.

Her talk fell into four parts. A review of the school's history, pointing out that the earliest building dates from 1889 and the most recent addition from 1999.

She then drew attention to the many projects aimed at enhancing the facilities - an adventure playground; a multi-use play pod; a large roof canopy for teaching in the open air; a series of murals; a story telling chair and rustic seating; bird and bat boxes and feeders and a sensory garden. Many of these were funded wholly or partly by the Society. Yet to come are a renewed pond and a totem pole designed by the children.

She went on to discuss the National Curriculum and how the staff translate this to make the subjects interesting and appropriate for each age group. This was an education in itself for many of the members attending.

She concluded by talking about future changes to primary education and how the school would be addressing them.

The main decisions taken at the AGM were:-

- Subscriptions remain at £5 per household with Senior Citizens and members in special financial circumstances subscribing as they saw fit.
- Our finances remain healthy and the continuation of community projects was confirmed.
- The present officers of Chairman, Treasurer and Auditor were re-elected. Following the sad death of Tom Griffin, our previous Secretary, Tony Morton had volunteered to fill the post. He was proposed by Brian Atkinson and seconded by Bob Skinner. Tony was elected unanimously as Secretary.
- Our formal grateful thanks to the Hotel Board for their loyal support was strongly endorsed and recorded.

This time last year we were seeking volunteers for two Road Reps and a Roads and Traffic Rep. It is gratifying to be able to report that volunteers for the Road Reps came forward very quickly - Rita Smith for Ashgrove and Calmont Roads and David Page for Oaklands and Spencer Roads. It took a little longer to get a volunteer for the Roads and Traffic job but happily Brian Atkinson has taken it on and has already made a start. Our thanks to all of them.

Dates for the Diary:

Thursday 6th May - Members' Meeting, 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel

Thursday 1st July - Members' Meeting, 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel

Peter Pain (Editor)

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Scams: In the January Newsletter we reported that a member had received a package with their correct address but the wrong addressee. The package contained an expensive mobile phone. Later, a young man called asking for the package. As he could not prove his identity, the package was not handed over. The phone was returned to the sender as was the subsequent bill.

That report led another member to report a very similar incident. The main difference being that in this case they continued to receive bills addressed to the person who did not live there. They all came from the mobile phone sector and were returned. However, it did not end there as they then received letters from debt collectors about unpaid mobile accounts. When the companies were contacted and the circumstances explained, all but one did not pursue it further. That firm then started writing to the member's wife by name. After a very strong letter they received an apology with the assurance that their credit rating had not been affected.

In both cases the matter had been reported to the police but they were unable to do anything as no loss had been suffered and therefore no crime had been committed.

Useful places for advice are:-

The Citizens' Advice Bureau - Tel: 8315 1940 (Bromley)
or 8778 0921 (Beckenham)

Scam Busters (Office of Fair Trading) Tel: 8454 04 05 06

If you think that your credit rating might have been affected *Experian* on 0844 481 8000 can help. A statutory credit report attracts a small charge.

Neighbourhood Watch: Please remember to phone the police if you see any suspicious activity. Recently two separate individuals saw suspicious activity in our area - even going as far as to note a car registration, but neither reported their suspicions to the police. Shortly after there was a burglary and an attempted burglary nearby. These might have been prevented had the police been called at the outset.

Green Waste: Bromley's Satellite sites for green garden waste reopened on April 3rd. They operate from 9am to 4pm on Saturdays and from 8am to 12noon on Sundays. The ones nearest to us are:-

St. George's Road car park Beckenham and Norman Park (entrance off A21, Bromley Common).

Bonfires: Members are reminded that it is better to take garden waste to the dump rather than have a bonfire as it is a statutory offence to deprive someone of the enjoyment of their garden with a smokey bonfire. The Council will deal with any complaint - Tel: 8313 4830 or, out of hours, on 8464 4844.

PLANNING

113, Foxgrove Road: The appeal hearing on 2nd February was to determine the suitability of putting an additional flat in the roof space on top of the 5 flats which had already been approved on appeal. Bromley was represented by the Chief Planner, we also spoke as did Councillor Mellor. All were against the application. Nevertheless, the Inspector decided to allow the appeal. The sole positive outcome was that costs against Bromley were refused.

119, Foxgrove Road The proposed redevelopment of an existing house into a much larger one was refused by Bromley but has now been allowed on appeal.

17, Spencer Road There has now been a 5th application for this site (originally a Garage). Having got approval for an additional house (No. 19) on the end of an existing terrace of town houses, the applicant has now submitted plans for a 2nd house (No.21) which would completely fill the side space. An earlier application for a garage next to the yet to be built No.19 was refused. This application can only be described as audacious. We have objected.

Before that application was determined a 6th application to add a garage and a dining room to the yet to be built No.19 adds to the audacity in view of the past history of refusals.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

354 Bus Route: To date, no decision has been made on the re-routing of the 354 bus to pass Ravensbourne Station.

Potholes: After the recent cold winter the surfacing course (about the top inch) of many roads has broken up and in some cases also the base course. Although Bromley have finite finances for pothole repairs, they are keen to receive reports so that they can inspect them and deal with the worst cases. Any potholes in your road should be reported to 8313 4621 or by email to street.services@bromley.gov.uk You should be as accurate as possible about the location ie - "opposite No. X, in road Y".

Traffic Lights Beckenham Lane/Ravensbourne Avenue: Our new Roads and traffic Rep has made contact with the Senior Traffic Engineer at Bromley who has undertaken to give a full response to the range of issues which were raised. However the situation may become complicated because Beckenham Lane/Bromley Road (the A222) is the responsibility of Transport for London.

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

Mansion: Advertisements inviting expressions of interest in the Mansion have been published by Lewisham. They are hoping that the best responses from about 3 -4 organisations can be submitted to the Mayor and Cabinet by June. If approved, they will be further refined after competitive dialogue. A provisional preferred tenderer should then be submitted to the Mayor and Cabinet by November.

Golf Course and grounds Maintenance: The advertisement inviting expressions of interest for these contracts has also been published. This should lead to formal tenders by July and contracts placed in the Autumn.