

Autumn, 2015
Issue 4/2015



Editor's Update

The autumn edition of 2015 is once more focussed on news of planning applications and tree activities.

There is opportunity to help with both these activities. See below for further information.

You will no doubt notice that the logo in the letterhead and on our website has reverted to the previous version. It is because it is easier

to use as an icon on webpage tabs and in electronic publications. Nevertheless, we are still open to suggestions for an improved version if you wish to submit your proposal.

In addition, if you have a suggestion for content for future newsletters please let the editor know and submit your own copy if you wish.

Ideas please to editor.rvps@outlook.com

Chairman's Corner

We are currently seeing one of the busiest times with respect to planning that we have ever had – there are no less than six appeals currently in the process at the time of writing. In addition, two of the biggest applications we have seen are 'in the works': firstly 2 Riverpark Gardens which is still being decided and secondly Bromley Court Hotel which has just been given permission. On top of that, there are at least four enforcement type issues in progress!

We have also been busy in other ways.

Our tree planting scheme in Farnaby Road has, eventually, been successful and now we are planning another one – see below.

The summer saw our outstandingly successful drinks party at The Shortlands Tavern and I am certain there will be demand for another one next summer.

All of this takes a great deal of hard work and I am particularly grateful to all the officers and road reps who help keep the society running. We always need help and further details about this are below. As ever, we have been grateful to receive the support of our Copers Cope and Bromley Town Councillors.

Help Needed

Our Road Rep. for Farnaby Road, numbers 1 to 81, will shortly be moving house so we need a volunteer to replace her. The role involves delivering newsletters, four or five times a year, to those houses where members have not elected to receive it by email. In this case there are less than 20 to deliver each time. In recognition there is likely to be an invite to a party next summer ! See Chairman's comments.

We continue to need additional assistance with Planning—please contact the Chairman if interested.

Planning Issues

More information about these and other recent applications can be found on the RVPS website

We currently have appeals at 74 Madeira Avenue, 61 The Avenue, 4 Oaklands Road, 20 Blyth Road, Billingford and 124 Madeira Avenue. All except the last appeal would be significantly detrimental to the locality so we are keeping our fingers crossed.



With regard to enforcement, we are aware that enforcement action is in abeyance at 20 Blyth Road pending the outcome of the appeal. We believe there is further enforcement action in hand which also relates to the Blyth Wood development –very recently a very high new fence was installed on the boundary with Bracken Hill Lane just to the north of 20 Blyth Road which currently does not have planning permission.

Remember you can lodge your own objection to any of these which will help reinforce the chance that they will be turned down by the Council

The saga of unfulfilled conditions and unapproved development at 14 Highland Road continues but we understand that recently a new application to regularise the situation (and hopefully avoid enforcement) has been submitted. The first picture below shows an additional side window which was put in without planning permission and, just, the absence of privacy screens on the rear balconies. The second shows the restored front elevation.



We understand that the council is also looking at the appalling mess known as The Chalet in Kirkstone Way – we are hoping that once and for all the council will get this site tidied up.



Community Tree Projects

Watering new trees – impending notice

The one year maintenance contract for trees in Farnaby Road, Warren Avenue and Downs Hill will finish at the end of **March 2016** so it is important that residents adjacent to these trees will take over responsibility for watering. Ideally new trees should be watered around once a week for the first three years. The watering bags hold 100 litres of water and should be topped up so they are reasonably full. The contractors will attach PLEASE WATER ME signs to the green water bags at the end of the maintenance period to signal the changeover of this task to residents.

Other news from the Community Tree Projects

- Low hanging branches from a few of the new trees in Farnaby Road will be removed to prevent them being damaged
- All 5 dead trees from the south end of Downs Hill have been removed. They were not part of the RVPS project but were noted on our assessment
- The dead trees outside no. 77 and no. 36 Downs Hill are to be removed and replaced as part of the contract arrangement with Gristwood and Toms

Residents have commented that the trees in Millwall's training ground need to be pollarded again. If you have a view on this please contact

trees.rvps@outlook.com and we will then decide whether to approach Millwall.

A second Community Tree Project

We are planning our second Community Tree Project and will work with the London Borough of Bromley again, drawing on the experience we gained during the first project. RVPS will sponsor the purchase of about 15 new trees for Bromley to plant in Warren Avenue, Ravensmead Road and Ravensbourne Avenue and to maintain within the first year. The aim is to replace lost trees and provide additional trees to enhance the RVPS area. A survey of existing trees in these roads will be carried out to identify possible sites for new trees. Factors considered will include: sight lines from driveways; drainage; underground services; and residents' opinions. RVPS will canvass residents in properties adjacent to possible new trees and forward responses to Bromley Borough. The project timescale is to plant before Christmas 2015.

Tree Friends

The London Borough of Bromley have produced a document called 'Tree Friend Toolkit' which explains everything about being a 'Tree Friend'. It is available to read or download on the RVPS website.

A Basal Pruning Session

Would you like to learn about basal pruning and become a RVPS tree friend? Julian Fowgies, Principal Arboricultural Officer, will give a small group instruction on how to carry out basal pruning on street trees in spring 2016. This kind of tree care from residents' association members is increasingly important with reduced local authority budgets. The council will supply secateurs and purple sacks for waste collection. As well as improving the street scene it promises to be a social occasion and will be the start of the RVPS Tree Friends.

To join this group or get further information on any tree related matters please contact Monica Wiltshire, RVPS Tree Officer at trees.rvps@outlook.com

We were delighted that Cllr Smith, Deputy Leader of the Council came to discuss concerns that too many trees are being felled on the demand of Insurers. We hope we can restrict this practice to ensure we keep as many trees as possible.

Please note that volunteers are requested to help our efforts on preserving trees.

General News

Beckenham Place Park

Progress on the early design stage for the proposals is slower than expected although we are told that the necessary research surveys have now been carried out.

At a recent meeting we were told that the consultation process would restart by the beginning of November and continue for about six months. It is hoped that some details may be available for public assessment by February.

The "drip feed" approach to information adopted by Lewisham is very frustrating to all of us who feel that we will have constructive comments to make once the detailed proposals are made clear.

Warren Avenue Playing Fields



As many of you will know, whenever it rained hard, a manhole near the driveway surcharged and flooded the field badly. After many years trying, we have finally managed to get Thames Water to clean the pipework but unfortunately a second problem, namely a blocked soakaway, means it still surcharges. We are trying to get Lewisham to deal with this.

Allotments

There are allotments alongside Valley School in Beckenham Lane with no waiting list. If anyone is interested contact Andrew and Irene Karrouze for information: karrouze@hotmail.co.uk

Andrew and Irene are very enthusiastic participants, including keeping bee hives.

Snow Friends

Please consider becoming a Snow Friend. You get great winter exercise shifting snow and afterwards everyone benefits from clear pavements. For details just Google 'Bromley Snow Friends'

Councillors and Council Services

If you do not know who your local councillor is you can find out via the Bromley Council website: http://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200033/councillors_democracy_and_elections/264/councillors

You can report problems with Council services on 020 8464 3333 or, out of hours, in emergency, on 020 8464 4848. Alternatively, to the Customer Service centre email: csc@bromley.gov.uk

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