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Issue 3



www.ravensbournevalley.org



Welcome to our latest newsletter which is also being produced on paper, unlike the last edition, as it is now safe to deliver it in person. Please note, if you are reading the paper version, that all the hyperlinks will work if you access the digital version available in the 'Download' section of our website.

Despite the world pausing over the last few months, much has been happening in our area.

Air Quality Action Plan



A major piece of work for us was to respond to Bromley's draft Air Quality Action Plan, a document that was frustratingly short of any targets and timescales by which Bromley intends to improve the air we breathe. Hopefully the final version will be corrected. Meanwhile, please, as ever, be thoughtful about air pollution especially from idling cars (now banned in Bromley), bonfires and wood-burning stoves - all three generate large quantities of dangerous microscopic particles that can and do enter the blood stream.

Bromley Town Centre

Bromley Town Centre is likely to change greatly due to changing shopping patterns and Covid restrictions, both in the short and long term. The Council is currently running a [consultation](#) to help determine future planning guidance which will help the town centre continue to thrive. If you have concerns about the future of Bromley please get involved. Consultation ends 5th October.

Twitter

Do follow us, if you don't already, on Twitter [@RVResidents](#) where we tweet local news daily.



Covid 19

Here are two links dealing with Covid 19. Stay safe everyone - and remain vigilant!

[Local Covid-19 Outbreak Control Plan](#)

[NHS Test and Trace](#)

Speeding

Excessive speeding has been particularly noticeable on our roads which have been emptier during 'lockdown'. Despite these issues being reported to police and Council, the reality is that there are insufficient formal resources to deal with the problem in the manner in which residents would like.

However, it is now possible to do something about it yourself. Recently there has been a surge in the use of video evidence (headcam, dashcam, phone footage) provided by the public to secure convictions for driving offences. In July alone, 3,000 [video submissions](#) were made to the Met Police which is four times the rate for 2019 as a whole. Two thirds of submissions result in successful convictions, showing the very effective nature of video evidence. Evidence can be submitted [here](#). Please note that the Met Police require that the offence be reported within 10 days (and the sooner the better) and that you have two minutes of unedited footage before and after the incident.

Noisy cars and motorbikes

'Lockdown' has reminded many of us of how much we can appreciate silence. Equally, it has reminded us of just how annoying motorbikes and cars with deliberately loud exhausts are! We can do something about it—and indeed we have already curbed one person's proclivity for making a racket. If you see a noisy vehicle, please get as much detail as possible (especially the number plate) and let us know.



....And Something Different....

For those who have enjoyed walking in our green landscape recently (and finding it a wonderful tonic to being cooped up) we have some suggestions to try:

- The woodland just to the west of South Eden Park Road
- The actual wood of Petts Wood
- The extensive woodland and heathland south of Hayes.



Planning Applications

There is no space to list them in this newsletter, but find them all on our website!

Upwards Extension Permitted Development Rights

UEPDR became effective on 1st August following Government approval. It gives the owners of most blocks of flats the right to add an additional two floors without having to make a planning application. Controls to stop this happening are fairly weak and this has caused considerable concern within the Council. This is because many blocks of flats are already 'pushing the envelope' of what is acceptable and a further two floors are likely to result in buildings that are extremely overbearing in the street scene.

Similar Permitted Development Rights in respect of houses are expected to come into force on 31st August. We await final details but we believe the new rules will only apply to detached homes, those built between 1948 and 2018 and those not in Conservation Areas. Again, the concern is that this could result in monstrosities in the street scene.

For example the soft verdant street scene in Hillbrow Road which was once a delight has been turned into a very hard landscape with the development of two blocks of flats - see before and after below. Now imagine what an extra two floors would look like!



Of course, we can't prevent all development (people need places to live, after all) but developers could do *much* better to soften the appearance of buildings by decent landscaping. Interestingly, we understand that for both blocks of flats above, the Council is pursuing the developers/freeholders to comply with Planning Conditions to have enough trees to do exactly that.

Area of Special Residential Characteristic ASRC

Buildings in an ASRC may be easier to protect from UEPDR and we are brushing off our 1990 files to see if we can get the Bromley Park area designated as an ASRC. We just failed in 1990 but there may be more appetite for it now as people have become more aware of the importance of protecting our built heritage. This picture is one of the lesser-known original grand houses in Oaklands Road.



Flooding Concerns

Many will have noticed that where the Ravensbourne River goes under Farnaby Road, the river is getting badly blocked by silt and vegetation. This has caused nearby homeowners to be understandably worried about flooding. Technically, responsibility for the river lies with the 'riparian owners' (i.e. the people who live either side of the river) but in practice the Environment Agency looks after major rivers, of which this is one. After much lobbying, we are pleased to confirm that, indirectly, the CEO of the EA has stated that clearance work will start this autumn.



Downs Hill Road

While RVR volunteers were clearing vegetation to make the sharp corner in this road safer (see before and after photos) - you can now see the 'sharp corner sign' - we noticed ominous cracks in the road. We have asked Bromley to check that the road is not going to slip downhill into the gardens in Ravensbourne Avenue.



Beckenham Place Park

It is wonderful to see how well BPP is being used, especially as an open place for people to enjoy during 'lockdown'. Here is the latest information about the park.

- Toilets in the Homestead courtyard are open daily 9.30am-8pm.
- The [Homestead Café](#) and the [Beckenham Mansion](#) café and bar are now open for take away only with a cashless service.
- The car park now operates a pay and display system and there are other restrictions around parking inside the park. But please walk or cycle!
- The lake is open for [swimming](#). Sessions must be pre booked. However, do watch out for the skin-burrowing parasites that have been [reported](#). Ugh!

Proposed Shortlands Village Conservation Area



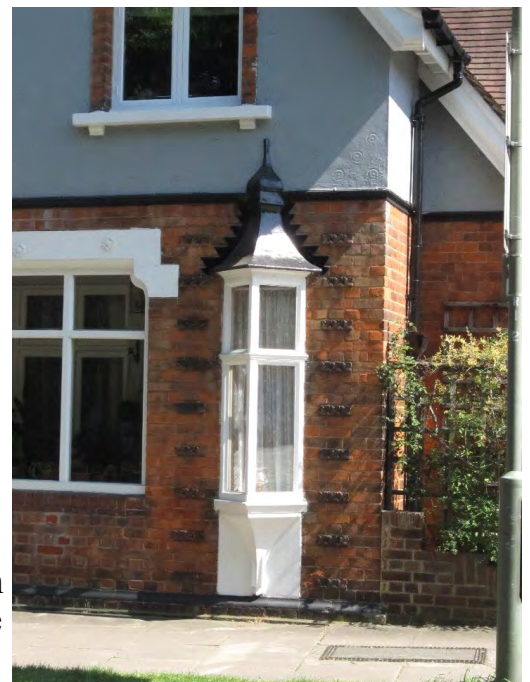
The Council has recently launched a [consultation](#) (closes 5th October) to obtain views about the proposal to form a Conservation Area in Shortlands Village. The general intention of this proposal is to ensure that attractive and historic buildings are not demolished. Last time RVR discussed this in a meeting, there was approval in principle for such a Conservation Area and our draft response is [here](#) which we will be discussing at our next meeting on the 3rd September.

Benefits

The principal impact that being designated as a Conservation Area would be to protect the attractive heritage of the area and specifically: -

- Control over demolition of unlisted buildings
- Control over works to trees
- Limitations on types of advertisements
- Restriction on types of development which can be carried out under permitted development rights
- Support for Article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights where avoidable damage is occurring

The picture (right) shows the old toll booth in Ravensbourne Avenue which is an example of what the Conservation Area would be able to protect.



Shortlands Friendly Village Project

Members will remember this major project to improve Shortlands. Unfortunately, this project is now on hold because of the financial difficulties of TfL. However, TfL funding has been won by Bromley for changes to roads to promote cycling and walking as part of the Government response to the Covid crisis. The two biggest projects in our area are a cycling route along Albemarle Road and another along Valley Road. Work should start soon.

Litter, fly tipping and other problems



A big thankyou to the many people who go out litter picking in our roads and parks to make the area nicer for everyone. We would like to offer particular thanks to Cllr Dykes who has spent considerable time picking litter in Shortlands recently and this is very much appreciated. We have free litter pickers for anyone who wants to help out! In particular, parts of Ravensbourne Avenue (south end), Calmont Road (all) and Coniston Road (south end) would benefit from some attention.

Alternatively, become a Street Friend/Tree Friend and join us in our occasional 'spring cleans'. Recently we tidied the 'green area' at the bottom of Downs Hill and the tree pits in Farnaby Road. The picture shows just some of the waste/cuttings we amassed, ready for the Council to collect, in the special purple bags.



Warren Avenue Playing Fields

Excessive rubbish, fly-tipping and litter have been a particular problem here in recent months as Lewisham's contractors are having difficulties meeting their obligations during the pandemic. In particular, bins have not been emptied often enough but Lewisham are now giving the Park greater attention. Part of this includes forensic investigation of rubbish that is fly-tipped near the entrance of the Park as this has become a persistent problem. **If you see any fly-tipping or have evidence identifying the culprit please report it [here](#).**

Bizarre incident

Bizarre incident of the month goes to the anti-social night prowler in the Ravensbourne Avenue area who leaves all manner of rubbish and soil in other people's bins late at night. This has caused residents significant problems as they then have to deal with it. Avoid this problem yourself by NOT putting out your bins until the morning of collection.

Roads and Traffic

The revised parking scheme around Ravensbourne Station has been agreed and we hope will be implemented shortly. This should mean less speeding and an easier journey through the rush-hour bottle neck in Ravensbourne Avenue.

We intend to hold a survey of residents in Farnaby Road soon to try to address the speeding issues in the road. We have also had some preliminary thoughts about making Ravensmead Road a Low Traffic Neighbourhood, if a majority of residents in that road wish it.

Architectural Delights

One thing that proved popular during ‘lockdown’ was our series of tweets (about 50, all still available) on the architectural delights of Bromley. Despite the ravages of time, development and unsympathetic town development policies, much of our built surroundings are still wonderful to see. A particular favourite was this small and easily overlooked window together with date at the corner of Church Road and Shortlands Road which is in the Shortlands Conservation Area. The oriel window has a lovely goblet shaped corbel made of ‘rubbed and gauged’ bricks (i.e. expensive), which have then been carved to the correct shape.



Gardening Delights

It has been wonderful to see residents in Ravensmead Road taking responsibility for the scruffy bit of land by the footpath over the river and turning it in to a garden (left and centre, below). Meanwhile ‘Tony’s Garden’ in Elstree Hill is looking better and better - go and have a look (right, below)!



Online library resources

It is well worth checking out some of the online resources available from Bromley Library, especially given that it is still not possible to browse freely in the physical library buildings. Highly recommended is the [Libby app](#) which enables you to borrow up to 5 ebooks or Audiobooks from a vast collection, including the latest releases. If nothing else, it is great fun to browse. Other good resources are [Pressreader](#) and [RBDigital](#) which give access to a wide range of magazines and newspapers. All you need to access these are your library card number and PIN. Contact the [library](#) to join or obtain a PIN.

Subscriptions

This year because of Covid, we are not collecting subscriptions in the normal way. Please send yours via bank transfer using the details sent to you in a recent email, or please send a cheque payable to Ravensbourne Valley Residents or cash to our Treasurer at 10 Crab Hill. Alternatively, please email treasurer.rvr@outlook.com to discuss. **If you are not already a member, please [join here](#) or contact your road rep. Thank you!**

Meeting Dates

In normal times, meetings are held on the first Thursday, every other month, at 8pm at Bromley Court Hotel. While social distancing is necessary, meetings are held via Zoom, complete with much-acclaimed slide show to illustrate the issues (i.e. it's interesting rather than watching a dreary Zoom screen!). All members and prospective members are welcome. The meetings normally last about 60 minutes and focus on local community and planning issues. There is normally at least one of our local councillors in attendance to answer questions and log concerns. Forthcoming members' meetings are as follows:-

Thursday 3rd September 2020;

Thursday 5th November 2020;

Thursday 7th January 2021.

Officers

Chairman	Clive Lees	chairman.rvr@outlook.com
Vice Chairman	Beatrice Osborn	vicechairman.rvr@outlook.com
Secretary	Judy Adcock	secretary.rvr@outlook.com
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Hon. Legal Advisor	Richard Thomas	
Auditor	Alan Williams	

Road Representatives

Bracken Hill Lane and Close / Highland Road
Bromley Ave / Grasmere Rd
Calmont & Ashgrove Roads / Belgravia Gardens
Coniston Road / Ullswater Close
Downs Hill / Crab Hill
Elstree Hill / Erin Close / Hillbrow Road
Farnaby Road (1-81)
Farnaby Road (82-194)
Madeira Avenue
Oaklands Road / Spencer Road / Hawkshead Close /
Lullington Garth
Ravensbourne Ave. (Evens)
Ravensbourne Ave. (Odds)
Ravensmead Road
Warren Avenue

Linda Müller
Quinton Schönknecht
Rita Smith
Sandra West
Wendy Watmore
Mick Pinson
Anna Koffer
Kay Shaw
Judy Adcock

David Page
Monica Wiltshire
Sharon Miles
Peter Saunders
Clive Lees

If you wish to contact your representative please email the RVR Secretary or write to:

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38 Warren Avenue
Bromley