

NEWSLETTER

June 2012

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EDITORIAL

I begin this editorial with the bad news. For the first time it is not being written by Peter Pain. Those members who attended our May meeting will know that Peter is currently undergoing a course of chemotherapy and has to give up as your Editor and divest himself of his other RVPS commitments. I know that you will all wish him the best outcome possible.

Long term members will be aware of how much exceptionally valuable work for the Society Peter has done over the last 20+ years. Apart from being the Newsletter Editor since September 1989 he has also served as Chairman, Vice Chairman, our representative on Beckenham Place Park Working Party, our meetings organiser and general wise advisor to the rest of us.

At least in this last capacity he remains active, as we hope he will continue to be for a long time yet. For the time being we must thank Peter sincerely for all that he has done for this Society so far, but of course that is not a goodbye - we shall continue to bother him for as long as he will put up with us and not let all of that wisdom and experience go to waste.

Again, those who came to our last meeting (or even read the last Newsletter) will be aware of yet another piece of unwelcome news - Diana MacMull, the one of our Ward Councillors who regularly attended our meetings and supported our concerns, has left the Council to marry - we shall miss her support and have yet to find out how her successor will compare. We dried our tears long enough to send her congratulations for which she has responded with effusive gratitude.

To redress the balance of news from the bad and the sad to the good, I will now turn to some of the better. Last time we told you that one of our Road Reps, Peter Clarke, had to give up serving Farnaby Road (no that is not the good news) the good news is that we have a volunteer to replace him. His name and address is now listed on page 4. Thank you Roger Thelwell - I look forward to meeting you when I deliver copies of this Newsletter (sorry Roger, as you would not have read this until after I have delivered it to you, the last sentence should be in the past tense).

The year of 2012 will henceforth be tagged by two events by the nation at large - "HM's Diamond Jubilee" and "London Olympics" - I suggest that we in this part of Bromley may also remember 2012 as the **Silver Jubilee year of the RVPS!** So now you know why all those flags have been flying recently! I have to admit that it was only recently that, through my moderate mathematical skills, it dawned on me that it was on 28th July 1987 that, what was effectively the first meeting of the RVPS, was held in Paul Bennett's home in Elstree Hill. The agenda included two main subjects; first was the discussion on who would volunteer for what and then our attention was steered to the reason for setting up a society anyway. The issue of the day was to fight a development proposal for far too many flats on the south side of Elstree Hill. Most of those trees, including the fine cedar would

have gone. It took several years and many applications and appeals before it was whittled down to the houses which were eventually accepted. And the rest is history.

I am sorry that I did not think of this auspicious milestone date before so that we could have arranged for all members to throw their hats in the air - or whatever. Maybe at our next Members' Meeting in July we can discuss it.

The June Newsletter usually issues a reminder that although our Financial year begins each New Year's Day, we do not ask our Road Reps to begin collecting Membership Subscriptions before June. In fact most collecting is done after it can be assumed that most have returned from their summer holidays - usually in September to early October. Later than this could mean that the accounts are not completed by the end of the year. There is nothing to stop Members saving their Road Rep from having to knock on your door by sending him or her a cheque payable to RVPS any time from now on. The normal annual subscription remains at £5 for each household with Senior Citizens given the option of paying less if necessary.

Up to now I have written this editorial in the first person singular without disclosing who I am. As I have been formatting Peter's Newsletters for some time it seemed natural that I should offer to relieve him of his editorial role at least for the time being. We must see how things work out; for now I will sign off as :-

Leslie Tucker.
Acting Editor

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 5th July - Members' Meeting 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel

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

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Warren Avenue Playing Field

A new sign has recently been installed at the Warren Avenue entrance to the playing fields. Unfortunately the design of the new sign leaves a great deal to be desired. We are currently pursuing this to see if improvements can be made.

In addition, readers will be aware of the long running saga to have more trees planted in the fields. Of the seven that were planted last year, one is doing well, two have died, and four are rather poorly. We believe that this is due to the failure of Lewisham to water them properly during the hot summer last year. However, Lewisham have agreed to replant the dead trees later in the year and have advised us that they continue to monitor the four ailing trees - apparently it is quite possible that they will survive to become healthy specimens, but if they don't Lewisham have committed to replace them.

Observant walkers in the field will have noticed that this year a further nine trees were planted at our request. Unfortunately because of the drought, Lewisham is not allowed to water them and despite our efforts to overcome bureaucracy, rules are rules. Hopefully there will be sufficient rain to mean that watering will not be necessary.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Ravensbourne Ave / Station Road / Beckenham Lane Junction

Brian Atkinson has repeatedly reminded the various officers representing Bromley and TfL of the several actions that they promised when they met us on

site last November. The aim was to speed traffic flow exiting from Ravensbourne Avenue and turning right. No discernible improvement has been achieved after the adjustments to the signal phasing they claim to have made and no replies have yet been received in response to some further suggestions discussed at the meeting or subsequently made by RVPS. The correspondence and frustrations continue. Newsletter references to this subject date from late 1992!

Road and pavement sweeping

Council austerity measures mean that local roads (as opposed to pavements) will now be swept only once a month rather than the previous schedule of once a week. It is therefore imperative that when it is actually done, it should be done properly. If this is not the case, then residents should complain to the council immediately via the main switchboard 020 8464 3333 or by e-mail to csc@bromley.gov.uk.

We are currently trying to establish the frequency of cleaning pavements in the future and this information will be posted on our website in due course. Again residents should be vigilant for any signs of the job having not been done properly. If the frequency is to be reduced at least we hope they will recognise the varying needs of the seasons - our famously "Green Borough" will still require weekly sweeping at least during each autumn!

PLANNING

44-46 Bromley Hill

As reported recently, a proposal to demolish this pair of semi detached houses and replace them with a block of seven flats had been refused by Lewisham council. The developer subsequently appealed and we are now pleased to confirm that the inspector has dismissed the appeal on the basis that the provision of seven additional dwellings would be "clearly outweighed by the harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, highway safety, the living conditions of neighbours and inadequate parking."

Queen's Gardens

A revised application has now been submitted, following the refusal of an earlier application. The new application shows a minimal reduction in the footprint of the proposal but in essence all of the problems remain the same. Principally there will be a significant loss of open space in the Queens Gardens area. A decision will be made by the council in early July and if you wish to contribute your opinion on this development please contact the council as soon as possible quoting 12/01339 as a reference.

Ravensbourne railway station

We are pleased to advise that a recent meeting was held between Network Rail, contractors, Bromley Council, ourselves and local residents to discuss how the disabled access ramp is to be shielded from neighbouring houses so that rail passengers cannot peer into the gardens and properties of local residents.

This was a very constructive meeting and we now expect that Network Rail will submit a new planning application for the construction of a wooden fence which will be installed alongside the ramp. We are very grateful to Councillor Colin Smith who has been instrumental in getting things moving after very long delays.