

NEWSLETTER

September 2012

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EDITORIAL

In the previous Newsletter I mentioned that it had just dawned on me that the RVPS had been established 25 years ago and that maybe the fact should be discussed at our next Members' Meeting with a view to devise some recognition of our modest longevity. We had that meeting on 5th July when it was agreed that I would produce a Special Booklet Reviewing the Society's activities since we were founded in 1987. The booklet to be distributed to all members free of charge. Thanks to the weather thinking that every day during the Summer was a Bank Holiday, I was kept inside long enough to be able to do most of the work before our next meeting.

At September's meeting my proposals were accepted and the resulting booklet should be with you with this Newsletter. I hope that you will find it worth reading, if not, at least that you will enjoy the pictures!. I think that the extent of our efforts over the last 25 years have surprised and impressed a number of our more recent members. Of course I could not have produced this Review without the support of those members who I refer to in my acknowledgments on the last page of the booklet. The Society could not have achieved all the things it has without the hard work of many others over the years. I have not been able to name them all in the Review but feel that there is at least one that should not be forgotten. The late Bill Jamieson was our "Planning Officer" for many years and his dogged diligence won us many battles. It was he who made scale models of Christ Church and the adjoining properties for presentation of our case at that Planning Inquiry. That was certainly beyond the call of duty.

Some of the Road Reps may already have collected the annual subscriptions from you but I think others may have delayed this until our Jubilee Booklet was available. They may have done this either to save their legs or to soften you up before asking for your cash. Whichever it is, please respond with your payment as soon as possible as we like to be able to tie up the accounts before the end of the year and we do not wish the Road Reps to have to make unnecessary return visits to you.

Leslie Tucker (Editor)

Dates for the Diary

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

Thursday 3rd January - Members' Meeting 8.00pm, Bromley Court Hotel

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Warren Avenue Playing Field

In our last issue of this newsletter we feared for the life of the trees which Lewisham had planted in the Playing Fields. At the time, if you remember, we had a drought. Also a hose pipe ban had been used as an excuse for not watering them. Soon after that, and this you will remember, it rained and the ban was lifted. However in some cases this seems to have come too late and some of the young trees are struggling to survive while others have given up all hope. The situation continues to be monitored and the hope is that Lewisham will honor their promise to replace any that do not survive.

Refuse Collection

We have passed on to Bromley, complaints by Members that the refuse collectors leave behind them our bins and boxes scattered in disarray with lids separated from their containers which are liable to be blown into the roads on windy days. Since then, in some roads, bins have been left where they were found, as asked, but not all. If this problem is continuing in your road please let your Road Rep know.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Ravensbourne Ave / Station Road / Beckenham Lane Junction

Having been battling for too long to try to persuade the authorities to take action to raise the chances of drivers exiting Ravensbourne Avenue to turn right towards Beckenham, we have decided that we have achieved as much as we can for the time being. We will watch how things go for a while.

Junction of Farnaby Road, Bromley Avenue and Warren Avenue

Here the shrubs in the raised bed required to be reduced in height as they obscured the sight-lines of drivers exiting from both Bromley Avenue and Warren Avenue. We drew the attention of Bromley's highway officers to this and they sent a man to deal with it. Unfortunately he failed to deal with the problem and only trimmed the shrubs from their former shagginess to smooth shapes without significantly reducing their height. Sight-lines remain obstructed. Our recently elected Councillor, Nicola Dykes, has referred the matter to the man in charge who decided that the shrubs are not a hazard. Instead of reviewing the type of planting he has recommended some improved signage in Farnaby Road and the illumination of a "give way" sign in Warren Avenue. We will see if these actions will help, but we have our doubts. We had the same problem with these shrubs a few years ago.

Pavement obstructions

Maybe it has been due to the very wet weather which we suffered during our recent "summer". This has encouraged rapid growth of trees and shrubs, and when walking down many local roads it is very noticeable how many pavements

are partially obstructed by overhanging vegetation. We ask members to ensure that they are not culprits in this regard, so that, if or when we might appeal to Bromley to act in any bad cases, RVPS members are seen as the good guys. Of particular concern are branches which protrude at head height (of both children and adults). Branches of things like brambles, can be especially dangerous. One pavement particularly noted was the stretch in Madeira Avenue which passes the rear boundaries of gardens in Farnaby Road.

PLANNING

Queen's Gardens

In our previous Newsletter we reminded readers that the first application received by Bromley for a new block in Queen's gardens to accommodate 5 restaurants had been refused. A second application was to be considered by Bromley in July. At that meeting, although the building had been reduced in size, it was again refused. Principally it was thrown out because of the significant loss of open space in the Queen's Gardens if allowed. At the time we quite expected that the developers would appeal against the refusals. So far they have not done so and we understand from a reliable source that they have decided not to pursue the idea further. If that proves to be correct, it will be good news.

Bromley South Central

This is the large development recently approved by Bromley in place of the existing multi-storey car park and other buildings in the area. Construction is due to start shortly.

DHSS Site, Bromley South

Another site nearby, known as the DHSS site, is the subject of a new outline application which would include yet another hotel. Until recently it has been acknowledged that Bromley has been short of hotel accommodation. Now we are expecting the new Travelodge to open shortly and a new Hotel will be part of the Bromley South Central development we would have thought that the Borough's hotel deficiency will already have been addressed and that another one would be over-kill. No decision has been made.

Italian Villa, Elstree Hill

This vacant listed building is featured on the cover and inside the "25 Year Review" issued to you with this Newsletter. It has been the subject of a recent planning application for permission to make some entirely internal alterations to improve it as a house and for the owners, a Housing Trust, to use part of it as their office. Some nearby neighbours objected (we did not) as they thought its use as an office would be unacceptable as they could be overlooked. It was recommended by the Planning Officers for approval but it was refused by the Committee. No appeal has been made to date.