

DON'T MISS THE AGM

BRA's Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, 9 July at 7p.m. and, as in previous years, the venue will be the Grove Neighbourhood Centre in Bradmore Park Road.

We hope as many members as possible will be able to attend. Besides participating in the usual AGM business this is your chance to put your questions to the Committee and raise any issues of concern.

Committee members who were elected at the last AGM can now stand for reelection for further one-year terms and any full members of the Association may also stand for election to the Committee. Nominations must be received in writing by the Secretary, Julia Davidson, julia@davidson515.freemove.co.uk or 020 8748 8451, not less than seven days before the AGM (i.e. by 2 July). Nomination forms are available from her. All candidates must indicate their willingness to serve by signing the form and must be proposed and seconded by full members of the Association.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

The following changes to Rule 5: The Committee will be proposed for adoption at the AGM. The aim is to increase the permitted Committee membership and to allow associate members to be co-opted to the Committee.

It is proposed that the first sentence of Rule 5 should now read: *The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Committee consisting of not less than 6 and no more than 14 full or associate members of the Association.*

It is proposed that the 2nd paragraph of this rule should now read: *The Committee may co-opt not more than four full or associate members of the Association to serve on the Committee until the next AGM. The names of the co-opted members shall be made known to the next General Meeting. A co-opted member may be co-opted again or stand for election. All co-opted members shall have the right to vote in the Committee.*

AGM AGENDA

Welcome
Apologies
Minutes of 2006 AGM
Chairman's Report
Treasurer's Report and 2006/7 Accounts
Membership Secretary's Report
Activity Reports
Graffiti
Neighbourhood Watch
Tree Project
Planning/Licensing
Rule Changes
To consider the changes to Rule 5
To consider the subscription for 2007/8
Election of Treasurer and Committee members
Appointment of Independent Examiner
Guest Speaker
Thanks and Close

Apologies and queries, including any requests for copies of the current Rules of the Association, or accounts, must be sent to the Secretary, Julia Davidson, julia@davidson515.freemove.co.uk or 020 8748 8451.

If you intend to raise any questions on issues not covered on this agenda, it would be helpful to have them in advance so that the Committee may provide you with a considered response.

If anyone would like a copy of the Minutes of the '06 AGM please apply to Rosemary Pettit on 020 8846 9707.

AGM GUEST SPEAKER

We will be delighted to welcome Jenny Gibbon, Head of Classics, and Community Links Co-ordinator for Godolphin and Laymer School, as guest speaker at the AGM.

Jenny Gibbon teaches classics at the school but in addition to that she will be taking up her appointment as Community Links Co-ordinator in September. She also runs the very popular Ancient Greek and Roman Breakfast Club on Fridays during term-time.

She will be speaking about the role of Godolphin and Laymer in Brackenburg, and welcomes ideas as to how the school might extend its facilities, expertise and service to the community.

CROSSOVERS

After a notice of a proposed crossover was posted in front of a house in Hammersmith Grove quite a few of our residents expressed concern over this kind of development. The background to objection is that crossovers reduce available parking, extend hard standing and thus impert trees in gardens and on the street, increase water run-off and wind damage, enable noise, dirt and air pollution, plus make difficulties for pedestrians, especially the young and disabled. All in all, crossovers are antipathetic to wildlife habitat, gardens and an attractive streetscape.

The BRA committee has made a formal rejection to this crossover.

GOING, GOING, GONE?

W

e reported in the last two newsletters that there was a suspicion that Tesco was planning to revive its plans for developing the Town Hall and King St cinema site.

We promised to keep an eye on things and our planning advisor, Richard Winterton, has been doing just that. For his pains, he and Chris Allen recently attended a meeting on the Council's Civic Accommodation Strategy.

Here is his report:

The Council is planning to create a new civic square in place of the much-hated Town Hall front extension as part of a set of proposals for the site on King Street. Following the outcry against the threat of a large Tesco in 2004, a brief has been prepared and developers are now being invited to submit proposals for the site, which covers the whole of the cinema street block, from the east side of Cromwell Avenue to the old Town Hall on Nigel Playfair Avenue. The scheme is to include a mixture of shopping and residential buildings, and a new office block connected to the old Town Hall by an atrium space over Nigel Playfair Avenue.

The proposals were revealed at an unruly meeting held by the Council on 25 April, when a poorly chaired panel of planners and councillors struggled to explain the benefits of the proposals; the unhappy audience included a number of residents from the Cromwell Avenue flats, who were told that they would have to be evicted and their homes demolished to make the scheme commercially viable.



BRA intends to monitor the development closely. The demolition of the town hall extension and the new civic square are great ideas, but there is serious concern that the benefits may be lost in the dazzle of financial gain. Do we want a retail square or a civic square? Is this going to be Tesco Towers? Can King Street support a second shopping centre? Will there be a cinema? We want to be kept informed of what is happening and we need a transparent, inclusive attitude from the Council in managing this development. There was a whiff of Livingstone-style consultation about the meeting.

What does it say across the Council website? **PUTTING RESIDENTS FIRST**
BRA cannot do much at present: it is a question of keeping a very close eye on developments.

WALKING WITH TREES



The first tree walk of our area took place on 21st April, and was led by Gavin Simmons, the Council's principal arboricultural officer. It was completely fascinating as Claire Harris reports:

I love trees. And it seems many people in Brackenhurst share – or at least understand – my passion.

In April I attended the inaugural Brackenhurst Tree Walk, organised by the ever-energetic Rosemary Pettit, and led by our borough's tree officer, Gavin Simmons, whose knowledge, enthusiasm and patience had us enthralled, appreciative and admiring in turn.

SEEING THE WOOD FROM THE TREES

I'm a market researcher, so here are a few facts and figures...

On 21 April, 16 people met outside Buchanan's at 10am. During our two-hour stroll around the Brackenhurst area, we learnt that we have over 530 "public" trees excluding those in gardens, etc, including 160 Cherries, 105 Planes, 120 Rowans/Whitbeams, 38 Limes, 36 Sweet Gum (Liquid Amber), 26 Hornbeams, 25 Pears, 20 Crab Apples, 15 Alders, 5 Maples and 1 Indian Bean.

Our trees are typically pruned every 3 years (although Hammersmith Grove tends to be every 5 years, to minimise disruption to this major thoroughfare); and while the Council aims to do this in the non-growing season, and to leave some greenery on surrounding trees, manpower utilisation issues mean some of our trees find themselves having their make-over well into the summer – to the consternation of at least one resident (me!).

Each tree planted in our area costs the Council £175 to provide and install. And it takes a further £48 for Council contractors to keep it watered during its first year. This pays for 8 lots of watering during the spring and summer, with the tree receiving 10 litres of water each time (the bare minimum a new tree should have). The Brackenhurst area currently has 16 trees that have been in situ for less than a year.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

WARD PANEL MEETINGS BRA's Committee members, Lesley Spires and Toni Raybould were invited to join their respective Ward Panels.

These consist of the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team and invited members representing local residents, youth teams, etc.

Everyone works together to combat muggings, knife gangs, burglary, drugs, begging, bike and car theft and all other types of anti-social behaviour.

Lesley reported that the Ravenscourt Ward Panel has now elected a Chairman and has a local vicar as Vice Chairman. Having started, the panel is only just beginning to work out its priorities but will report soon.

Toni said the Broadway Panel has been established for about a year. It includes John Stenton, the Manager of The Hop Poles and Christina Smythe who is the Chair.

NW BOROUGH MEETING Lesley and Toni attended the inaugural H&F meeting to which many representatives came from NW's across the borough. The guest speaker, Sue Yoxall, was a fascinating woman who runs the Croydon Borough Association NW.

LOOK OUT! POLICE IN LYRIC SQUARE

The police plan to set up a stand in Lyric Square to mark bicycles and advise on measures to keep them safe. Another stand will be set up in Benbow Road on 7 July for people to enquire about Neighbourhood Watch. The following NWs are already established: Agate, Beauclerc, Coulter, Hebron, Marco and Amor Roads; Brackenhurst Road; Richford Street. Another is being set up for Iffley Road and Hammersmith Grove.

A LOAD OF RUBBISH

We find it strange that, while rightly castigating rubbish tippers and litter droppers, the Council itself encourages residents to leave recyclables on the street in advance of collection.

Why not collect from householders' premises rather than from the kerb? As dustmen used to do in the old days and still do in some boroughs?

We are not sure how councils (of any political stripe) came to the conclusion that exhorting residents to disfigure the streets with their rubbish was a good idea. It is not acceptable for environmental, aesthetic, littering, safety and health reasons.



HOME SECURITY SPECIAL OFFER

Jonathan Horton of Aldensley Road is offering BRA members discounted trial software for home security. His company - iseemyworld.com - specializes in providing temporary home security when people are away, e.g., on holiday. All that is required is a broadband internet connection; the software is simple to install (he says).

Jonathan's company is in the process of upgrading its software to Version 4 and, to test that and give feedback, Brackenhurst residents are being offered an online 50% discount which works out at £15 for a week's monitoring rather than the usual £29.99 plus shipping.

Jonathan has put a special offer for BRA members on the site. Anyone wanting to try the system should simply go to iseemyworld.com and, at the bottom of the order page, enter BRAMAYOFFER. They'll then receive a 50% reduction in the web price and free delivery.

DID YOU KNOW...

- Grove Neighbourhood Council originally set up in the 1960s as an experiment in new forms of local government in deprived areas. At that time, our area was one of the most deprived in London.

- The GNC was originally housed in prefabs on a bomb site; the splendid new building was erected in the 1980s.

- The work of the GNC is funded partly by the Council, partly by specific charitable grants, and partly by income generated by its various activities.

- It has been the subject of a thesis by Japanese Professor, Mugiko Nishikawa, and is familiar to many Japanese university students who attend her courses.

FULHAM PALACE

Fulham Palace, the historic residence of the Bishops of London, is one of the Borough's hidden jewels. It has just undergone significant refurbishment, thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and is in as good a shape as it has been for many a year. If members of the Association would like a tour of the Palace, please let us know and (subject to adequate numbers) we will make the necessary arrangements.

SPEED CUSHIONS



The Council is reviewing traffic calming in the borough, and your committee has affirmed its support of the Brackenhurst Home Zone and the principles of traffic calming. We have said we would welcome a review of the effectiveness of the Home Zone, but would not wish to dismantle an integral part of the current scheme, such as speed cushions, without an overall review. The Council has responded by saying that speed cushions would only be reviewed when a road is being resurfaced (every 10-15 years), and a technical safety review and consultation has taken place.