

WHAT'S GOING UP, WHAT'S COMING DOWN?

There seems to be so many planning developments in or adjacent to Brackebury at the moment, we thought it would be a good idea to review the state of play on the major ones.

Town Hall – King Street regeneration The Council has reported that there has been some slippage in the planning application timetable for this development because of the current market uncertainties. However, they hope to successfully conclude this exercise very shortly and then continue the process of consultation, including the stakeholder consultation meetings. Meanwhile, the shares of the developer for the Town Hall scheme have gone through the floor – and that was a few weeks back, long before the current crisis.

Strawberry armadillo slug at NCP There is some good news in the credit crunch after all. The proposed office building on the NCP car park opposite Lyric Square has been halted and may now never see the light of day. Three cheers? Not quite. The developers claim there is only a delay in proceeding with the project while alternative financial arrangements are being made. There is, of course, a chance that these will not be achieved and that the developers will seek to revise their plans. Nonetheless, it would seem that the chances of it never being built are a little better today than yesterday.

63-75 Glenthorne Road Linden London recently submitted a planning application to redevelop the vacant office building at the above site (opposite Secrets) into a residential scheme. Linden London has already held a public exhibition and consulted councillors, planning officers and local residents' associations (including BRA), and it says that the new plans reflect these consultations. For more information visit www.consultation-online.co.uk/glenthorneroad or a dedicated information line on 0800 298 7040.

Lyric Theatre Chris Allen, BRA's chairman, had a meeting with the Lyric Theatre which is considering a potential development above Mothercare as part of a project to expand its educational work. The theatre will be holding meetings and discussions with local amenity groups fairly soon.

Flora Gardens Children's Centre A slightly amended proposal for the Children's Centre in Flora Gardens School had been granted planning permission subject to various conditions. Some of the trees have been cut down as a consequence of conditional permission being granted, but they will be replaced.

NHHG Building, Grove House, Hammersmith Grove In July, Stuart Blake, Rosemary Pettit, and Richard Winterton of BRA, plus Angela Clarke of the Hammersmith Society, had a meeting with John Hughes, NHHG's Group Development Director, to discuss the proposed development of this old Wimpey building. It is fair to say that they gave absolutely nothing away and were rather defensive about the whole project. We know that NHHG have presented their plans to the Council's planning officers who raised certain concerns about 'building mass'. Since then, all has gone

quiet, and their September deadline for the public consultation has slipped. Perhaps the credit crunch has struck again! We'll keep you posted. If you know or have heard of any building developments in Brackebury that we should be alerted to, let Stuart Blake know at stublake@lineone.net or 020 8748 5219.

Consultation with BRA members on planning There has been some debate as to the sort of applications it is appropriate for BRA to comment on as a body, and the processes by which it should ascertain members' views on developments and feed information back. The committee believes we should involve you in deliberations about major developments in, and abutting, the Brackebury area. (We may supply advice, on request, about small private planning applications/developments, but otherwise it is generally inappropriate for us to comment.)

The committee will email members (or publish in the newsletter) details of proposed developments, to include exhibitions and meetings, as and when known. You are welcome at any time to inform the committee of development proposals, to seek advice or support, or let us know your views. In a voluntary organization, such as BRA, best results are obtained by all members taking a keen interest in their built environment. You do not have to wait for us to let you know what is going on. You can subscribe to a free planning alerts service by logging onto www.planningalerts.com Once the committee has formed a view we will tell you how we intend to proceed.

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WHITE ELEPHANT AT WHITE CITY?

The £1.6 billion Westfield London mall, roughly the same size as Bluewater, has opened.

Dozens of leading international brands have stores in the mall, making it the biggest cluster of names in Europe.

Westfield said shoppers would see the same array of brands as in Bond Street, Fifth Avenue or the Champs Elysees - but in the less-likely setting of "the Bush". Keith Mabbett, senior leasing executive, said: "The top brands worldwide are all talking to us. They are truly top-end names. There are one or two luxury shopping malls around in places like Hong Kong but in the context of a project of 1.5 million square feet there will nothing like it in the world."

All very tempting, but in the current financial crisis, will anyone be buying? Westfield couldn't have chosen a worse time to open a premier shopping mall. Are we going to have a huge white elephant on our hands? But let's assume people will visit it, whether buying or not... what is the effect likely to be on us in Brackebury?



There will be 4,500 parking spaces and on Westfield's own estimates there will be an average of 24,000 car journeys per day. Given that the peak shopping time is a Saturday afternoon that 'average' could well be exceeded by as much as 50%. What happens when QPR have home games doesn't bear thinking about. And where will everyone be parking? In a street near you.

PARKING ZONES



The Council has been asked by residents' associations in the area about the reviews of Zones K and C in the light of the expected traffic congestion. The Council is unwilling to review parking in these zones until Westfield has been open for at least six months. And even then, there will be a lot of argy-bargy about who's going to pay for it. Westfield, perhaps?

SHARED FOOTPATHS

Julia Davidson, BRA Secretary, recently wrote a letter to the Chronicle on behalf of members in support of protests against the shared footpaths (between cyclists and pedestrians) at the southern entrance of Westfield shopping centre. Residents are worried that the footpaths are a danger to the elderly, the disabled and children. If you would like a copy of her letter so that you can send it to members of the Council's Planning Applications Committee, please contact Julia at juliad@metronet.co.uk

BRACKEBURY
RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION



BORED WITH AGENTS' BOARDS?

A recent survey by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors revealed that British estate agents are selling an average of one property per week. However, this is not for want of trying, judging by the forest of boards that are up in our streets – Overstone Road, Southerton Road and Hammersmith Grove have been particularly over-crowded.

In their attempts to find a silver lining on a pretty black cloud, the Council called a summit in November last year to discuss, with all the major agents, the proliferation of boards in the area. And, believe it or not, all were in favour of tougher enforcement action.

Philip Wooller of Douglas & Gordon noted that Brook Green, Sinclair Road, W14, and Barons Court had been much improved by the banning of boards, and he is in favour of a blanket ban in the most badly affected streets, although not in all streets as boards do sell houses. John Horton of Horton & Garton doesn't entirely agree although he admits that agents who flout the Town and Country Planning Act by "flying" boards or leaving them outside properties for longer than necessary, are a source of frustration to established residents. He is proposing to contact all other estate agents marketing homes in Brackebury to ensure that their boards comply with the regulations of both The National Association of Estate Agents and LBH&F Environment Dept. He would be prepared to monitor any nuisance/unlawful board activity and report to BRA and LBH&F on a periodic basis.

Whether this would satisfy Cllr Nicholas Botterill is another matter. He recently said, "These boards are a really ugly and primitive way for agents to market properties. All the evidence from residents and now estate agents proves that when you ban these boards you are not only removing an eyesore but you are enhancing the value of your property."

BRA respects the rights of estate agents to earn a living and to be able to market their properties. But too many display boards on too many properties, up for too long, does the area, our property, and even the agent no favours. If you want to complain about estate agents boards, contact Cllr Harry Phibbs on harry.phibbs@gmail.com.

BURGLARS GO FISHING

It seems burglars in our area have no need to break into houses anymore; they simply fish through your letterbox, either to open the front door from inside or to reel in your house or car keys conveniently left on a hall table. BRA's Toni Raybould has circulated an offer on special letter-box covers to her 60 Neighbourhood Watch members, and she also has a brochure from the Solon security company advertising various gadgets to deter burglars. Contact her on 020 8741 5279 for further details.

If you're concerned about the security of your house may we suggest you contact Les Steggles, the Crime Prevention Officer for Hammersmith? Mr Steggles is very practical and realistic (he doesn't expect a Fort Knox). He will visit your home and discuss with you what is needed, and he has a list of suppliers (locksmiths, window fitters, etc) which is very useful. Contact him on Tel. 020 8246 2509; Mob. 07780 955 814; or email: les.steggles@met.police.uk.

Our advice is to keep your eyes and ears open and report anything suspicious to the police – 999 for emergencies or 020 8563 1212 for non emergencies. For any other issues such as dog mess, overhanging hedges, fly-tipping, etc, your first port of call should be the Council, either by phone or online. Alternatively, there's an excellent site called www.fixmystreet.com which is rather quicker to use.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Thanks to the sterling work put in by Lesley Spires, Toni Raybould, Claire Harris, Ann Awakian, Michael Tober and others, NW has a new lease of life in Brackebury.

Two new NWs have successfully started in Perrers and Atwood Roads and the scheme is beginning to spread further afield. Toni Raybould's NW is working very well, and appreciative letters have been written to the Hammersmith Broadway SNT sergeant about his work.

At present there are 8 other NHW schemes currently running.

They are:

- AGATE ROAD/MARCO ROAD/ COULTER/ BEAUCLERC
- BRACKENBURY ROAD
- CAMBRIDGE GROVE/LEAMORE STREET
- HAMMERSMITH GROVE
- IFFLEY ROAD
- PEABODY ESTATE
- RICHFORD STREET
- ST JAMES STREET

There are two more schemes in the offing for BENBOWROAD and SYCAMORE GARDENS. These will be set up in the next few months.

So what does NW achieve? Well, in Brackebury there have been instances where NW has been very successful and offenders have actually been caught and imprisoned. Also, where houses are empty, we can keep squatters at bay by reporting any suspicious behaviour in the area.

To find out more about joining or setting up a NW in your street, contact Lesley Spires. Tel: 020 8741 8126.

TWO FOR ONE OFFER ON TREES

Great news! The Council has awarded a small-grant application to BRA. We now have £2000 to spend on tree planting this coming season, i.e., eight new trees. Hooray!

The Council is also offering matching funding for tree sponsorship this year. For the first five new trees sponsored by residents in any ward (£250 a tree) the Council will plant another tree.

Nothing further has been heard from the police about the vandalised tree in Carthew Road. Gavin Simmons, H&F's chief arboricultural officer, was going to chop it down, but it has sprouted afresh and we have persuaded him to leave it for another year. However, the Council will investigate a failing new tree in Dorville Road, and the Southerton Road trees reaching the telephone lines.

There are no specific plans for pruning in Brackebury at present. As plane trees are pruned in winter, the Council needs to be notified of any requests now. Summer is the time to prune cherries, hornbeams and limes so they need to know about them early in the year. They don't prune from April to June because of nesting birds.

MY LIFE WITH MOTHS

The following is Rosemary Pettit's report of her ongoing battle with *Tineola bisselliella* – it may be familiar to you.

In the last few years clothes moths have arrived in Brackebury in a big way. At the beginning I bought moth traps (a sticky pad baited with a pheromone) from a museum conservator in Wales. Working on an 'attract and repel' principle the traps attracted the male moths to their doom, while moth balls - placed under beds, behind cupboards and other out-of-the-way places - discouraged moths from taking up residence. Other refinements followed: Colibri essential oils' hanging sachets (from John Lewis) and the French Bouchard moth balls in little bags which are kinder to clothes than the sock-it-to 'em moth balls like grandma used to have.

I also use a spray which is now not available, and sometimes put small items in a plastic bag in the freezer for a couple of weeks to kill off anything living, including moth eggs. Lavender bags and cedar wood smell nice but you can't rely on them to repel moths.

Then, two years ago, larger, brown food moths flew into our area...

Meanwhile, at Sisi hardware store in Brackebury Road, Kiran Patel - his customers clamouring for effective remedies - interested himself in all products designed to kill and repel moths. He imported traps from Germany; he searched the web for information on the life cycle of the moth; he tested various traps for clothes and food moths - and this is what he has to say:

'There are hundreds of types of moths, but the few that affect our homes are clothes moths and food moths.

Clothes moths are light brown-gold in colour and much smaller than food moths. Food moths are darker and bigger and, in some cases, develop from infected food stuffs, e.g., cereal or flour. It's the hatched larvae with their voracious appetites - rather than the mature moths - which do the damage. Clothes moths feed on textiles or feathers derived from an animal source, such as fur, wool, leather or silk.'



How do pheromone traps work? Kiran says, 'Insects use pheromones to communicate; they are chemical messengers that are the secret language of insects. The message can tell insects where to find food, mate, live, or even if they are being attacked by predators. Male insects can be irresistibly drawn to the scent of a female insect ready to mate. So this is the reason pheromone traps are used. Once trapped on the sticky surface of the trap the moth can no longer continue its life cycle.'

'After practical tests at home over the last couple of years we think we have found the perfect trap which combines effectiveness with low cost... that is, until next year when no doubt there will be another product on the market.'

Keeping moths at bay is a long-term project and you can never relax your guard. Kiran is knowledgeable, as well as interested in moth control, and Sisi has the products to match the need.

SWIFTS

Chris Allen, Rosemary Pettit and Fiona Mansfield held a meeting about the non-appearance of the swifts in the tower of St John's Church this year. They agreed to: (i) ensure that the swifts' nests in the tower have not been damaged by the school's building works; and (ii) in the event of a decline in the local swift population decide whether to put swift boxes in other sites.

The Godolphin and Latymer works manager has assured us that building works in the tower were minimal. We shall continue to monitor the situation. Meanwhile, if you know of a high site locally where swift boxes would be welcome please get in touch.