



Autumn 2006 Newsletter



AUTUMN 2006 EDITION

It is early October as I write following a glorious September. October has certainly by contrast come in with some dynamic weather which if it continues may well get Autumn back on timetable. With the season of Autumn also comes our Annual General Meeting details of which follow.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on Tuesday 21 November 2006 at 7.25 pm at our normal venue - St John's Church Hall, Lynwood Grove (close to the junction with Mayfield Avenue). It will as is our practice be followed by a reception with light refreshments - reasonable wine, soft drinks and tasty snacks. Your Committee feels this makes for a pleasant end to our annual meeting which we aim to make informative as well as conducting the formal business of the Association. Last year over 100 members attended and from the feedback they certainly found it worthwhile to turn out on a dark November evening! So we look forward to seeing you all again this year. We hope to have a number of speakers who will report on their activities and answer any questions you may wish to raise. These will include our new Town Centre Manager Cheryl Cuff, our new Safer Neighbourhood Team leader Police Sergeant John Kemp and Councillors Auld, Owen and Tunnicliffe. The agenda for the meeting is attached at the end of this newsletter together with the minutes of last year's AGM. It would be helpful if you could bring these to the meeting together with the nomination portion completed if you wish to propose somebody for the Committee. We will, of course, have some spare copies available at the meeting for those needing them. The annual Accounts are not completed and audited in time for advance circulation with this newsletter as our financial year does not end until the last day in September. However, I can assure you that these will be available for all at the meeting together with our prudent Treasurer, Bill Daniell, to present them and deal with any questions you may have. Please do try to attend; we do aim to make it an informative evening with a pleasant ending.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This report, as is our practice, is presented as a basis for consideration at the AGM. It will cover the main points at the meeting in my opening remarks and then we can deal with any matters arising in the Open Forum.

ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION

This has been another active year for your Association as we have been involved with a number of matters and issues concerning our locality and the surrounding area. The Committee has met regularly throughout the year at around six weekly intervals to consider and discuss a range of subjects most of which have been reported back to you in our Seasonal Newsletters. We continue to participate to a

service provided by Bromley Council whereby we receive copies of meeting papers and minutes of the Committee meetings covering most of the matters under consideration by the Council. Fortunately, we get these on a cost-free basis as our Treasurer collects them on a regular basis from the Civic Centre on his trips into Bromley which saves us having to subscribe to the postal delivery service. A good example of a Treasurer with a close eye on costs! We have been consulted on a number of subjects by the Council, have pursued matters raised with by members of the Association on an individual basis and drawn attention to local issues with public service providers. We also keep in touch with our neighbouring resident associations and more generally through our attendance at meetings of the Bromley Federation of Residents Associations where a number of Borough-wide issues are discussed. I regret to announce that Andrew Wallace has had to resign from the Committee as he is moving to the south coast. Andrew has been an active member of your Committee for several years including being one of our Road Warden Secretaries and we will miss his work for the Association. This means we will have at least one vacancy on the Committee so any volunteer to fill his place will be very welcome -the nomination form is at the end of the newsletter!

GENERAL MATTERS PLANNING

We receive details from Bromley Council of all planning applications in our locality including the High Street. Carol Gray, our Planning Secretary, keeps a close eye on these and submits a written report on all of them to each Committee meeting. In addition members do from time to time seek her advice about planning applications which they consider may have an adverse impact on their property or neighbourhood and where appropriate we make representations to the Planning Committee of Bromley Council. Whilst we rarely comment on individual house extensions we have made representations about plans to demolish properties and "infill" with a larger number of new properties. We have been successful with regard to two separate sites on Station Road to demolish the existing houses and replace them with three storey blocks of flats. Similarly, just recently the Planning Committee have refused an application to demolish four adjacent properties in Orchard Grove and replace them with three blocks of some 36 flats. As I reported in the Summer Newsletter we received representations that this would constitute over-development, be out of keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood with loss of privacy and could cause adverse traffic problems. We passed these objections on to the Planning Committee for their consideration and they have been accepted. Of course, the biggest planning matter in recent years is Tesco's plans to demolish the Station Road car park and replace it with a large store plus flats and car parking. I will report on the current position under the next heading of Town Centre Developments.

TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS

Our new Town Centre Manager, Cheryl Curr, has settled in well after taking over from Ian Hedges earlier this year. The floral displays have been extended and certainly add to the attractiveness of the High Street. Cheryl is planning to come to our AGM and will no doubt report on her activities since taking up post and her future plans as Town Centre Manager. She has told me that there will be an Italian Market in the High Street on Friday and Saturday 24-25 November and that on Friday 25 November the Christmas Lights will be switched on accompanied by some street entertainment. There is also planned a French Market for 8-10 December which will have a Christmas theme. So some dates to put in the diary. As to the Tesco development I hope some of you were able to attend the exhibition

held on Thursday 21 September at the New Village Hall in the High Street to inform us of the new temporary parking arrangements to be put in place whilst the Station Road car park is being redeveloped. Clearly, some of the suggestions, albeit not all, made during the resident consultation have been included in the final scheme which is helpful. More generally the further planning application from Tesco's to practically double the size of the store for which planning was approved are apparently to be considered by the Planning Committee some time during October. It is now also public knowledge that Tesco have paid the Council some £17 million for a 125 year lease on the site. Let us hope that this will not prejudice the Planning Committee's consideration of the revised planning application from Tesco and that it will be properly dealt with on its merits or not as the case maybe. That apart, demolition of the car park is expected to commence early in the New Year with construction expected to take some 18-24 months.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY

I am pleased to report that the vacancy of the Borough Neighbourhood watch Coordinator has been filled and that Geoff Wright has taken up post at Bromley Police Station, High Street, Bromley BR1 1ER and that he can be contacted on Tel; 0208 721451. He also has an email address which is geoff.wright@bromley.gov.uk; he hopes to produce a newsletter entitled Watchword to be circulated via email. This will include information about postal and telephone "scams". We have been asked to draw your attention to one particular scam that has recently emerged involving an organization called International Lotto Commission based in Madrid, Spain. Like all these scams it states you have won money or a prize but your personal and banking details are required before you can receive your prize. DO NOT in any circumstances comply with their request because you do so at your peril. We offer the following advice based on a leaflet from the Office of Fair Trading. Refuse to have any dealings with organizations that ask you to;

- send money up front - an administration fee or tax, the list is endless but it is always a ruse to get you to give them money
- give them your bank details or other personal details
- ring a premium rate number (all UK premium rate numbers start with 090)
- buy something to get a prize.

Sergeant John Kemp of the Petts Wood and Knoll Safer Neighbourhood Team has sent me the following contribution to this Newsletter;

"I'd like to raise your awareness of two types of crime that are unfortunately present in Petts Wood & Knoll all year round but which show a marked increase in the Autumn.

Thefts from Motor Vehicles

Imagine, you return to your car after a hard days work or a long shopping trip to find a window broken, glass everywhere, the car's contents scattered and something important taken. It may be a company car but you've still got to sort it out and how are going to replace those stolen things? Lock all easily stolen items out of sight, preferably in the boot. The thief's favourites are Sat. Navs., Mobile Phones, Laptops, Handbags/Wallets, Expensive Christmas Presents etc or anything else that's easily grabbed.

Residential Burglary

Even worse, imagine returning home to find the front door locked from the inside but the rear windows wide open. Once inside, every room including your bedroom has been searched, your possessions thrown everywhere. For weeks after, you can feel insecure and keep noticing things that have been stolen. This is a taste of the horrors and emotions that householders experience after a burglary. You really don't want to be a victim of this sort of crime. Thieves know your house is full of items to steal. However, you can overcome this by keeping them out. Make sure you have good quality external doors with dead locks. Make sure you have locks on your windows. Then, most important of all, use them! A third of all burglars get in through an open window. If you have an alarm, use it. If you don't consider fitting one, it could save on your insurance premiums. Make access to the rear of your property as difficult as possible, by locking side gates and growing thick thorny hedges. Also burglars don't like gravel, it's too noisy. Make sure your garages and sheds are locked, they are full of useful tools/ladders that can help the burglar. If you want to keep your lawn mower till Spring, why not chain it to something else. If you are going away, tell your neighbours. Thieves benefit from the distractions caused by the run up to Christmas. There are increasingly rich pickings to be had as you gather together lots of new things to give as presents. Just remember that thieves love to Christmas shop at your expense.

Fortunately Petts Wood & Knoll is still one of the safest wards in London. Incidents of serious crime are thankfully very rare. Lets keep it that way. You can get further advice on crime prevention on these or any other issues from your local Police Team on 0208 7212609."

John Kemp Police Sergeant, Petts Wood & Knoll SNT

VOLUNTEERING

Age Concern Bromley have sent us the following details of their HOur Bank Scheme:

"HOur Bank is volunteering with a difference - it is a reciprocal skill swapping scheme suitable for people of all ages, 16+ (with most members aged 50+), whether you are out and about or housebound. HOur Bank tackles social isolation, promotes intergenerational relationships and community engagement and brings people together in a spirit of equality. It has an arts focus, encouraging older people to engage in life long learning activities. Hour Bank is FREE to join, no money is involved and you get to meet and make friends, participate in activities both familiar and new ...and have fun! You earn one time credit for every hour you give, which you can then spend within the HOur Bank, choosing from a list of over 80 skills available. Skills such as gardening, companionship, creative writing, cake baking, Scrabble or knitting. Even skills such as putting, playing cards, art, crafts or practical skills like sewing, light housework, car washing and computer knowledge. You participate in skill swaps when you choose to and as soon as you become a member you receive a gift voucher worth one time credit to start you skill swapping. You can learn a new skill, pass on a skill you already have either one-to-one or as part of a group. All members are CRB checked at no cost to themselves and issued with an HOur Bank ID photo card. Members say that this promotes a feeling of security when they undertake skill swaps in their or other members' houses. Since 2003 HOur Bank has been inspiring people to get active and to get involved.....want to join us? If you want to have a chat about HOur Bank please either call the number below and speak with myself - Liz Kent (HOur Bank Coordinator) or Bett Swindells (HOur Bank Worker) or drop into one of the three regular outreach venues - Every Monday 10.00-12.00 at The Centre Cotmandene Crescent, St Pauls's Cray, Every Wednesday 14.00-16.00 at Our Lady of the Rosary Church, West Common Road, Hayes, First and third Wednesday of the month 10.00-12.00 at the Age Concern Centre, Chislehurst High Street (next to Sainsbury's).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Liz Kent

Contact: HOur Bank Team Tel: 0208315 1850 or HOur Bank, Age Concern Bromley, Community House, South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH. Email hourbank@acbromley.org.uk "

CHURCH NEWS

St John's United Reform Church are pleased to announce that The Revd Jennifer Millington was inducted as Minister of St John's Church on 21 October and she will be conducting services every Sunday and all are welcome to attend.

ROAD WARDENS

We are still looking to fill the vacancy in Dale Wood Road that I mentioned in the Summer Newsletter. We also now have a vacancy for St Aubyn's Gardens as Mr Church has had to resign as the Road Warden. We are grateful to him for his service as Road Warden. So we now need two volunteers. Being a Road Warden is not particularly onerous. It entails delivering the Newsletter 3 times a year and collecting/receiving the annual subscriptions. However, the role is vital to the work of the Association so we need to fill these two vacancies - part of Dale Wood Road and St Aubyn's Gardens - or you have to do is give me a call!

ALL SAINTS FESTIVAL CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA

The next concert of this eminent local choir and orchestra will be at 7.30 pm on 18 November at All Saints' Parish Church in Bark Hart Road. There is plenty of parking on both sides of the church and in adjoining roads. The programme consists of two works - The "Mass Sancti Hieronymi" by Michael Haydn (Joseph Haydn's younger brother) and Benjamin Britten's popular cantata "St Nicholas". Tickets are £8.50 at the door (advance bookings £7.50, students/children £3.50) which includes a comprehensive programme and a glass of wine. Booking and enquiries - Tel: 01622 679052.

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME

John Mangold, our Vice-Chairman writes from 19 Oakhill Road: " We would like to thank everyone who came to see our garden and the friends who devoted their time, plants and home-made cakes. With their help we managed to raise well over £600, which was shared between Harris Hospice Care and the charities nominated by the National Garden Scheme, which includes Macmillan Cancer Relief, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Help the Hospices and Crossroads - caring for Carers. We are opening again next year on 1st July and one other date yet to be arranged. Details will be included in the Spring Newsletter."

AND FINALLY

Don't forget the AGM on Tuesday 21 November at 7.45pm - I look forward to seeing you.

Mike Fogden - Chairman