

Summer 2007 Newsletter

SUMMER 2007 EDITION

Welcome to the Summer Edition of Knoll News – at the time of writing in the last week in June, summer seems to have lost its way. Hopefully, by the time this Newsletter reaches you it will have returned to all its glory. This Summer Edition, sets out some new issues and carries announcements of various events and activities. I hope you find it of interest and if you require further information on any of the matters reported please do not hesitate to contact me.

TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS

I reported in the Spring Newsletter that Bromley Council had commissioned a forward looking piece of planning guidance to influence and shape the future of the town centre over the next 3-10 years. A team of architects, property surveyors, communication specialists and regeneration planners have been asked to come up with a strategy for.....” The delivery of a vision and masterplan that will change the face, feel and reputation of Orpington and result in a more vibrant, vital and viable town centre.” – to quote from the Council’s brief. I was invited, on behalf of the KRA, to attend an initial evidence gathering workshop on 13 June 2007 to share and develop ideas and aspirations with the consultants on the future of Orpington Town Centre. Over 40 people attended from various groups and organizations and after an initial presentation we were broken up into three teams to address three questions. Namely, imaging Orpington 2010 – how will it feel, how will it look and what will people think about Orpington? This produced some lively discussion and comment – some positive and some negative – all of which was recorded by the consultants. The next steps are for them to take this output away together with that from other groups such as local retailers and employers with the expectation that they will produce a draft masterplan by November 2007. That will then be the subject of 6 weeks formal public consultation then, after further consideration, the production of a final masterplan by March 2008 for the Council’s consideration. It was reassuring to see the constructive approach shown by the consultants who were clearly in “listening mode” and I am optimistic about seeing some positive outcomes from their work. On a less positive note the Tesco development has taken another curious turn. You may recall that I had reported that they had submitted revised plans seeking to nearly double the size of the store for which they had received planning permission. Now on 12 June 2007 we were informed by Bromley Council that Tesco Stores Ltd have submitted amended plans seeking to increase the size of the development by some 50% as compared with nearly doubling the extent of the development. We have made representations about this increase in size on grounds of added traffic flowing from the extra business Tesco’s will be seeking to generate, the even greater potential impact on existing retailers in the High Street and the inevitability that some of the additional traffic will access the store via the Knoll area. We have also pointed out that this additional application seems typical of the approach of Tesco Stores Ltd towards local planning authorities. Having been given planning permission in the first instance they then submit revised plans for a store twice the size of the original plans and now subsequently submit amended plans showing a reduction of 50% on the revised plans. A cynic might claim that this allows Tesco’s to claim that they have listened to local concerns and reduced their expansion plans accordingly but no doubt expecting as a consequence that their amended plans will be accepted. So they end up with possibly the size of store they

wanted in the first place but which probably would have been too large to obtain planning permission in the first instance. Hopefully the Planning Committee will see through this possible ruse and reject the application.

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, residents 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 concerns raised with us about plans to demolish properties and "infill" with a larger number of properties. The biggest such development that is still ongoing is the proposal to demolish practically the whole of one side of Orchard Grove (numbers 1-23) and replace 2 four storey blocks comprising 5 one bedroom/59 two bedroom/12 three bedroom flats and 16 three storey three bedroom houses together with 86 parking places. This proposed development is now subject to appeal after having been rejected by the Planning Committee and the Planning Inspectorate held a public hearing on 19 June 2007 at which we were represented. The outcome of this hearing should be known in some 6-8 weeks. I also reported in the last Newsletter an infilling application to build 3 three bedroom houses on land at the rear of 55 and 57 Vinson Close. This application has been rejected by the Planning Committee.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE TEAM

Sergeant John Kemp, the leader our the Petts Wood and Knoll Team has provided the following:-

“Charity Shops

Your generosity in donating unwanted items is the lifeblood of these shops. However, if you leave donations outside when the shops are closed, especially at weekends, the beneficiary may not be your intended Charity but often a greedy individual. It has come to our notice that in Orpington and Petts Wood, donations left outside shops are almost always sorted through by other people and valuable items removed before the shop re-opens. The items taken are then sold at Car Boot sales, making a handsome profit for the seller. The discarded mess left behind outside the shop is often left blowing about the streets, leaving the shop staff to clear up the following morning. Please, if you want the Charities to benefit, take your donations to the shops when they are open.

Crime

I am pleased to report a consistent monthly drop in total reported crime across the Petts Wood and Knoll area. This has continued now for a significant number of months. We are continuing to work hard to ensure this trend continues into the summer and beyond. As an example, last year we suffered a total of 130 reported crimes in April 2006; figures show this fell by well over half to 42 in April 2007. Again in May 2007 we recorded a total of only 41 reported crimes against 109 in May 2006. With your help, we are winning the battle and getting the message across that Petts Wood and Knoll is not a good place to commit crime. As a team we have arrested and successfully prosecuted a large number of individuals for various offences. Most recently, a shoplifter was sentenced by the Crown Court to 8 months imprisonment after stealing £60 from Morrisons in Queensway.

Finally, a short but timely reminder that with the holiday period fast approaching, please

don't let yourself become a victim of Burglary. Last year with your help, Residential Burglary fell by 39% in Petts Wood and Knoll Ward. We want to continue this success but we can't patrol every road, every hour of every day. The first line of defence is to ensure that you keep all your windows and doors locked if your house is empty. Also, inform neighbours that you will be away and similarly call 999 if you see or hear anything suspicious. If you would like individual Crime Prevention Advice we would be happy to hear from you."

This is a very positive report together with some sound advice from Sergeant Kemp which shows that he and his team are carrying out excellent work across the Ward. Sergeant John Kemp's Team contact details are:

- Telephone 0208 721 2609
- Mobile 07920 233853
- Email pettswood.knoll.snt@met.police.uk

ORPINGTON RAILWAY STATION

We have been informed of new developments at the railway station concerning disabled access. Work will start shortly to provide such provision as part of the Department for Transport's (DfT) "Access for All" scheme. Funded by the DfT and managed by Network Rail, the works will provide step free access at the station including lifts. Over the next twelve months, foundations will be installed, a bridge (built off site) will be lowered in and lifts installed. Tactile paving will also be installed on all platforms. Southeast Trains say every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to passengers while the works are taking place. The works are scheduled for completion by Summer 2008. This is a very welcome piece of news which will really enhance the facilities at the railway station for disabled passengers.

OPEN GARDEN'S – DEMELZA HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

The Open Garden's event that I mentioned in the last Newsletter took place on Sunday 24 June 2007 and despite the inclement weather was well supported particularly in the afternoon when many attended the seven garden's open to the public. There was much to see of colour, interest and variety – the result of much hardwork and dedication by the resident gardeners. John Mangold, our Vice Chairman, and a participant has told me that the afternoon raised the grand sum of £2,940; a very credible outcome for such a worthy cause.

FIRST TIME MUMS/DADS/NANNIES ETC

I have been asked to mention the work of this Group. It provides quality time for lovely babies (0-1year) in a friendly atmosphere. They meet on Wednesday afternoons at St John's Church Hall, Lynwood Grove, from 2pm to 3.30pm (term time only). Toys for the babies are provided with lots of chatter (for grown ups too). Refreshments are provided – only the very best china mugs – no polystyrene in sight! The cost is £1 per week and there is no need to book – just turn up. For more information contact Margaret or Jill via the [Contact Page](#).

ENVIRONMENT

Following the census carried out by Richard Healey, our Tree Warden, the Council has carried out the remedial work that he reported. At a Borough meeting of Road Wardens on 12 May 2007 local Wardens have been asked to make reports of ancient trees so they

can be mapped. If you are aware of any tree that you think might qualify please let Richard know via the [Contact Page](#). Similarly, if you know of any tree that needs replacing or remedial work then give Richard a call. He has asked me to remind those residents whose gardens abut the various pathways across our locality that this is the time of year when shrubs and hedgerows need to be trimmed back. I have also been asked to mention the need to show consideration to your neighbours in terms of time, wind direction and strength when planning on having a bonfire.

WEA – PETTS WOOD AND ORPINGTON BRANCH – 2007/08 PROGRAMME

The WEA have provided details of what looks like an excellent programme of courses starting in the Autumn. Details are as follows:-

- Monday am – “British History 1903-1939: the Edwardians to the Second World War” for 10 weeks starting 17 September 2007 followed by “British History 1939-1999 for 10 weeks starting 7 January 2008.

- Monday pm - “Literature: Nature and Human Nature” for 10 weeks starting 17 September 2007 followed by “Literature and Social Change” for 10 weeks starting 7 January 2008

- Wednesday pm - “The Changing Face of London: from the Roman beginnings of the City to its Destruction by the Fire of London” for 10 weeks from 3 October 2007 followed by “The Changing Face of London: from Wren`s reconstruction of the City to modern times” for 10 weeks from 9 January 2008.

- Thursday pm - “History of England 1784-1837” for 20 weeks from 20 September 2007. (This is Part 2 of a current course).

- Friday am - “Victoria`s People” (this will focus on famous Victorians under various headings such as heroes of the Empire, great explorers, Women`s Rights, the greats of Victorian science, social reformers, literary and theatrical figures) for 20 weeks From 21 September 2007.

- Friday pm - “Art: Revolution to Realism, from the French Revolution to the eve of Impressionism for 10 weeks from 21 September 2007 followed by “Art: European Impressionism” for 10 weeks from 11 January 2008.

And if you want to spend Saturday afternoons “getting away from it all”, the WEA is also organizing a number of varied and interesting Saturday lectures, all taking place at St John`s Church Hall, Lynwood Grove: “Landscapes and Literature” on 20 October; “Millais” on 3 November (to complement the exhibition at Tate Britain); “The Changing Design of Church Buildings” on 17 November and “The Music of Grieg” on 24 November (to mark the centenary of the composer`s death).

For further details of all the courses, please contact Penny Stewart, the WEA Petts Wood & Orpington Branch Secretary via the [Contact Page](#). Information about the Saturday lectures specifically can be obtained from Barbara Jenkins via the [Contact Page](#).

LOCAL COMMUNITY ONLINE

You may care to know that a local community website has been set up by a young local couple in Petts Wood. Its address is www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/BR5 - as you will gather from the address it currently covers matters of local interest in post code BR5 but there are plans to extend it to BR6. Any rate when you have a spare moment on the internet

you might care to access it out of curiosity.

EARLY NOTICE

Finally, here is advance notice of the date of our Annual General Meeting. It will be on Tuesday 20 November at St John`s Church Hall, Lynwood Grove at 7.45pm so please note your diary now! Full details will be in the [Autumn Newsletter](#).

Mike Fogden CB Chairman

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