

Autumn 2009 Newsletter

AUTUMN 2009 EDITION

AGM EDITION

Welcome to this autumn's edition of Knoll News. Mike Fogden was hoping to write this as his final posting before formally stepping-down at the forthcoming AGM. Unfortunately he has been too poorly to tackle the task so, under his guidance, and now possession of his faithful attaché case of current news snippets, I have complied this round-up.

Annual General Meeting

Firstly I have the pleasure of inviting you, our members, to the Association's 35th AGM on Tuesday 24 November 2009. The Meeting is held in the Main Hall at St. John's United Reformed Church, Lynwood Grove, Orpington, BR6 0GB. Proceedings commence at 7.45pm and the agenda & 34th AGM Minutes are included with this edition. Copies of the Association's audited accounts to 30 September 2009 will be available 'on the night'. We will be joined by our local councillors and representatives from the London Borough of Bromley & the Safer Neighbourhood Teams covering our area. Invitations have also been sent to John Horam MP and James Cleverly GLA Member for Bexley & Bromley. We really look forward to seeing you at the AGM and sharing a chat and light refreshments with you all at the end of the formal business.

Any Questions?

One of the most valuable parts of the evening is your chance to put questions to the committee & invited guests. Now that we have dedicated KRA email addresses you have the opportunity to put your questions in advance. This will give more of you the opportunity to be heard and the invited guests the opportunity to be briefed with the data, information etc you are seeking.

A new face

The Committee were delighted that Mr Fogden's situation vacant ads prompted a positive response from Paul Savage. He will be our Chairman Designate by the time of the AGM and here, in his own words, is his introduction:-

"Following Mike Fogden's announcement in the last issue of Knoll News that he would have to step down as Chairman of the Knoll Residents Association, I have volunteered to take over as Chairman. I have worked locally (Bromley) and in London, initially as a tax inspector, although I try not to dwell on that part of my life, and then as a tax advisor with Price Waterhouse/PricewaterhouseCoopers. My family and I have lived in Lynwood Grove for over twenty years and my wife acts as a road warden for the Association. I am looking forward to acting as Chairman, although I am conscious that with Mike's departure there are some very big boots to fill, and with the help of the rest of the Committee hope to build on his work in developing the KRA as we move into the second decade of the twenty first century. My contact details are at the back of this issue and please contact me, or the appropriate member of the Committee, through the

KRA e-mail addresses or directly if you have any issues you wish the Association to take up."

And another new face?

Due to other commitments Dinesh Gupta has had to tender his resignation from the Committee, leaving a space to fill. You do not need any special skills to join us, just an interest in our locality and a willingness to attend most of our Committee meetings. That is not too onerous - we meet about six times a year and the meetings are well-run & cover worthwhile topics. If you are interested please speak to any of us at the AGM (we'll be wearing name & role badges). A nomination slip is below with the AGM agenda and we look forward to meeting you.....

Safer Neighbourhood Team

The Committee has a very good working relationship with our local Team and the next item is the full transcript I've received from Sgt John Kemp for this October. Mike Fogden referred to the uPVC door concern in the summer edition but it is valuable advice and worth repeating:-

"THE FOLLOWING IS NOT INTENDED TO ALARM BUT TO INFORM. At the last meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel, I was asked by the Chairman to send a strong message to all our residents to the effect that there is a very real increase in burglaries across the country. It therefore follows that there will probably be an increase in Petts Wood and Knoll. So with that in mind, why not make a real effort to increase your home security to such an extent, that this national increase happens elsewhere and not here! It is so easy for a casual burglar to enter your house if an accessible window or door is left open, even for 'A minute'. Always lock exterior doors and shut accessible windows when you are out and even if you are in. Burglars are known to access front windows when the occupier(s) are watching TV in a back room or working or relaxing in the garden. How would you deal with an intruder who walks into your house while you were reading the paper or doing the ironing? Could you send him packing? What if there were two of them? Don't let it happen to you. DON'T LET HIM OR THEM GET IN. LOCK THE DOORS.

Modern PVC exterior doors have a very secure locking system. Do you know how to use it? Many do not, so try this. You will need a helper so get the other half, a child or a friend or neighbour to go outside your front door. You then lock it as you would normally. Shout to them to try to open it. Did they? If they opened it without any trouble by using only the outside handle, you do not know how to use the security system built into the door and that is very helpful to the burglar. If they are still outside and cannot get in, then you have it cracked!

Most of these doors engage the locking security system by lifting up the interior (Or exterior) handle. In some doors when either handle is turned to open the door; releasing the security system, the sprung catch (This is the bit you can easily push in when the door is open and is operated by turning the handle downwards.) remains engaged and, with most doors, cannot be operated with the exterior handle, giving the impression that the door is locked. It is not and the door can be 'Sprung' with a strong push or a wallop with a large, heavy object, and opened with relative ease. This method is used to enter premises at any time of the day and night and is useful when the prime motive is theft of your car and the keys are the target. (Do you still leave them on the hall table, all ready for the burglar?)

We have now established that you are able to dis-engage the security system simply by turning either door handle in the normal manner. So, what are you doing wrong? It is what you are not doing that is the problem: You are not locking the door. After you lift the handle to engage the locking system you MUST LOCK THE DOOR WITH THE KEY. This keeps the security system engaged until the key is used to unlock it. Having

locked it correctly, it is recommended that you leave the key in the lock to facilitate your exit in the case of an emergency, e.g. fire etc. In most doors the key cannot be seen from outside if it remains in the lock. Also most doors are double glazed with laminated or toughened patterned glass which is very difficult to break and, of course, there are two panes of it.

If you need any help in understanding the above or need any further assistance in your home security, please contact me or the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 0208 721 2609. Historically, there are very few burglaries in this area but by next month statistically at least one or two residents will have experienced one. Please ensure it is not you!

REMEMBER THIS IS NOT INTENDED TO ALARM BUT TO INFORM. "

And also on the matter of crime.....

In amongst Mr Fogden's papers I have found an upbeat article from the Economist Magazine entitled 'Reasons for the British to be cheerful'. The latest British Crime Survey, it states, is packed with reassuring statistics. Crime has dropped dramatically by 45% since 1995 with burglaries down by 58%.

News on the town & further afield...

Carol Gray our planning member has sent me this article about the Library:-

As part of the Orpington Masterplan, the council proposes to move the library into the centre of the town. Although the Priory is an attractive and quiet location for the library, access for people with pushchairs and wheelchairs is awkward. The Priory is a listed building, and alterations to provide better disabled access would be very expensive. Many people in Orpington are hardly aware of the library because they never walk past it. Moving the library into the Walnuts, the Council hopes, would encourage more people to use the library.

A planning application has been submitted for renovation of the Council office building currently occupied by Housing and Social Services, between Sainsbury's and the Silver Lounge. The library would be on the ground and first floors, and Social Services would continue to use part of the ground floor and all of the second floor. The building would have a new glass "shop window" style frontage which would draw attention to what the library has to offer: newspapers, books, CDs, DVDs, and free Internet access. An increase in library opening hours is also under discussion.

If you would like to know more, the plans are available in the library, and can also be seen via the Council's website; the planning application number is 09/02496.

And I am grateful to Councillor Tony Owen for the following:-

"Council officers are about to engage in a review of traffic and parking following the opening of the new Tesco store. In principle, parking will revert to the position before the demolition of Station Road car park. In practice, there will be an opportunity for a complete review..... Views from residents will be warmly welcomed....."

"The introduction of the alcohol exclusion zone that includes Hillview Crescent and most of Elm Grove is currently due for approval at the General Purposes & Licensing committee on 2nd November. The border runs along the alleyway between Elm Grove and Knoll Rise. Anybody drinking alcohol in public can have it confiscated by the police. The zone is mainly designed to combat problems in Priory Gardens and the

High Street."

He has also asked me to reiterate previous warnings about rogue traders. Please heed his advice not to enter into an arrangement with any cold callers. The Council and Police have already had to take action against a paving firm currently in the area. You can speak to Tony (870268) if you have any concerns or helpful information as he is happy to hear from our members.

Going out?

The Orpington Chorale's current programme runs up to 19 June 2010. Their next performance is at 7.45 pm on Saturday 12 December 2009, at All Saints Church. For full details visit their website at <http://www.orpington-chorale.com/?page=home>

With the onset of those cold, dark days of Winter, why not spend an enjoyable few hours (2-5pm) at one of the **WEA's Saturday afternoon lectures**. The venue is St John's United Reform Church, Lynwood Grove and for a small fee you get tea & biscuits, excellent company and, most of all, a splendid talk on an interesting subject. Coming up soon Turner & The Old Masters on 31 October 2009, A Wilde Afternoon on 21 November 2009 and A Day in Prague on 16 January 2010. For tickets or for more information, please contact Audrey Foord at audreyfoord@aol.com

Harris HospisCare have a plethora of fund-raising events going on. For the adventurous there are cycle rides & treks in foreign parts or skydives & parachute jumps. There's a London theatre tour on 2 December and a Christmas concert at Holy Innocents, Orpington on 14 December. If you have some spare time to offer their fundraising team would love you to volunteer your help. For the full low-down on all these items visit <http://www.harrishospiscare.org.uk/>

And whilst you are at our **AGM** why not look at the notice boards in **St John's United Reformed Church** to learn what activities they run and you can join. Alison McCartney from our committee attended a cheese & wine evening earlier this year for all groups who use their facilities. She comments "I was amazed at how much activity goes on and was informed that at least 1,000 people go through the church every weekIt forms a large part of the community here.....As well as the usual uniform uses of the church for beavers, guides, rangers, etc and the children facilities there are a number of other groups, including the 'Men of Leisure' Group which is for men of any age who have time on their hands during the day, a ladies group called 'OK ladies' and there is also Chinese language class on a Saturday."

Contacts

For general enquires about the Association or for specific questions, please send a message using our [Contact Page](#)

- o Paul Savage - Chairman
- o Richard Burton - Vice chairman
- o Hilary Robson - Secretary
- o Ian Black - Treasurer & membership secretary
- o Chris Tait - Road warden co-ordinator

- o Ray Vaughan - Road warden secretary
- o Richard Healey - Tree warden
- o Carol Gray - Planning
- o Kay Wilkins -Road warden secretary
- o Alison McCartney - Road warden secretary
- o Brian Wilkin - Road warden

I am sure that, like the Committee, you all want to take this opportunity to thank the Road wardens for their deliveries and subscription collections during 2009.

Mike Fogden

As Paul Savage states in his introduction Mike is leaving some big boots to fill. He is truly one of the Knoll's larger than life characters and his presence brings a sense of order, gentle authority and lots of fun to all situations. He officially took over as Chairman in November 1997 and has worked tirelessly since to raise the Association's profile and make it the valuable resource it has become to us, its members.

Mike does not seek the limelight and is always the first to pass on his grateful thanks and praise to the Committee, the road wardens, the members, the councillors, the Town Centre manager, SNT etc for their positive contributions to our area. When he telephoned me from his hospital bed to relinquish his authorship of this newsletter, his first breathless sentences were to say how pleased he is that Chris Tait has kindly offered to chair the AGM and to thank Ian Black for chairing the Committee meetings.

Mike has said that he has found it very reassuring that the Committee have all rallied round to help him and hopes he will be able to come to the AGM to express his thanks in person. We all hope that he will be well enough to join us then so we can confer our heartfelt thanks on him in return.

Hilary Robson 25/09/09