

Knoll News



Knoll Residents Association Spring 2017 Newsletter

From the Chair – Ian Black

NEW CHAIR

At the AGM in November we said goodbye to Paul Savage who had served as Chair for 6 years along with his wife Jane who had been a road warden for their section of Lynwood Grove for so long she couldn't remember! I have been on the committee for about 16 years so readers of the Knoll News should be familiar with my name at least. I have been Treasurer for around 8 years so those who have attended the AGM will be familiar with my face too!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of The Knoll News. For those who are new to the area this edition is distributed to every household in The Knoll requesting payment of the 2017/18 subscription. This is still £1 per adult member of each household. Your Road Warden will call on you to collect the subscription but it helps them and speeds up the whole collection process if you could complete the form at the end of the newsletter and pop the money through their door. The list of Road Wardens is at the end of this newsletter. The Summer and Autumn editions will only be delivered to households with a paying member.

ROAD WARDENS - URGENT

We have Road Warden vacancies to cover Tower Road 4-26 & 9-27, Tower Road top, St Aubyns Gardens, Irene Road and White Hart Road. If you live in or near these roads and would like to volunteer as a Road Warden please see the Road Wardens item over the page for who to contact. Ideally, you will take over immediately and collect the 2017 subscriptions.

THE PURPOSE OF THE KRA

Again with new members in mind, but as a reminder to those who have lived in this area for a while, it seems a pertinent time to remind all what the point of the KRA is. The constitution states that the objectives of the KRA are "to safeguard, promote and further the common interests of the area". We try and achieve these in a variety of ways. Newsletters are issued three times a year, which aim to keep you up to date with issues and events which affect the area and hopefully are of interest. This is increasingly difficult with the spread of social media so our role is perhaps as mediator to balance the many views and comments, some of which are based on gossip and hearsay, and hopefully provide what we understand to be the facts. We meet with the local councillors annually to raise issues that are of concern to you and then feedback. We comment on planning applications that affect the area as a whole, either because of their lack of architectural merit or their size, visual dominance or they just are not in keeping with the area. In the past we have funded benches, one of which was at the end of Tower Road so those travelling on foot to Orpington Hospital could rest en route. One of our more unusual contributions to the area was, in conjunction with the Petts Wood Residents Association, to fund a bicycle for members of the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team, to travel around from their base in Petts Wood. Surprisingly bike users needed to undergo special training which meant the bikes were, at best, underused. Now the local Police are based in St Marys Cray I believe they use buses to travel in to Orpington.

ASRC NEWS

Consultation on the LBB local plan which included part of The Knoll as a designated Area of Special Residential Character ended on 31 December 2016. The next stage is for Secretary of State approval. We will let you know when this occurs, though the LBB website does not seem to suggest the local plan has been submitted as yet, following the consultation period.

MEETING WITH LOCAL COUNCILLORS

We will be meeting with our local Councillors at the beginning of July. If you have any particular issues you would like us to raise please let Ian Black know by the end of May.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

New and additional committee members are always welcome. If you would like to become a member of the KRA Committee, please contact Ian Black. We meet for a couple of hours on a Monday about eight times a year. There are a variety of roles, none of which are too demanding. This is your chance to input on developments in The Knoll area and make it a better place to live. Any offers of assistance are greatly appreciated.

ROAD WARDENS

As noted on the previous page, we also need some new Road Wardens. Duties involve delivering the Knoll News to your area, three times a year, and collecting subscriptions annually. We have vacancies for:

Tower Road 4-26 & 9-27
Tower Road top
St Aubyns Gardens
Irene Road
White Hart Road

For Tower Road and St Aubyns Gardens please contact Hilary Robson. For Irene Road and White Hart Road please contact Simon Wood.

You will note in the Road Warden list following, either a neighbouring Road Warden or the relevant Road Warden Secretary is shown as the acting Road Warden for these roads. It would be extremely helpful if someone from the road could come forward as soon as possible, contact their RW Secretary and then make the collections on behalf of their road straight away. Cover arrangements rely on the goodwill of those covering and can only be for the short term.

A thank you to all the Road Wardens, without whom the KRA could not operate in the way that it does. A particular thank you goes to Sheila Lilly of Tower Road who has been the Road Warden for her section of the road for a very long time and the neighbouring section for a less long time. She served on the KRA committee for a number of years as well. We hope you enjoy your retirement from KRA activities. Thanks also go to Richard Healey who has been a Road Warden for St Aubyns Gardens and has now down sized and left the area. Richard also served on the committee for 10 years. We wish him well in his new home.

Since the last subscription request we welcome Nina Taylor (Somerset Road), Richard Parrott (Devonshire and Wiltshire Roads), Julie Bagshaw (Lynwood Grove), Alan Willey (Dale Wood Road) and David Riddock (Novar Close) to the Road Warden team.

Sometimes we do not receive enough notice of road wardens leaving so it would be useful to have a 'bank' of available volunteers who could step in if we don't have the opportunity to advertise for replacements before the incumbent leaves. If you are interested please let either me or the Road Warden Secretary nearest to where you live know. Even if you aren't looking after your own road hopefully it would be nearby and you could move to your own road if a vacancy arose.

2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We had a very successful AGM on Tuesday, 24 November which well over 100 members attended, together with local Councillors, and invited speakers.

The meeting opened with a welcome from Rev Jennifer Millington, the Minister of St John's United Reform Church, whose hall we were of course using. This was followed by a plea from Tina Wheeler, the Guide leader, on behalf of all the uniformed groups that are attached to St John's, for more adult leaders and helpers.

Councillor Kim Botting provided an update on some of the issues the KRA raised with the councillors following our meeting with them last May. Two main areas of concern had been raised, evidence of drug taking behind Tesco Orpington and cycling on pavements.

Sally Pennington of the Orpington Priory Community Hub (OPCH) provided an update on the future of the Priory. LBB are in the process of granting a 125 year lease to V22, a company that lets out studios to artists. V22 will refurbish the building and it is hoped that OPCH will work with V22 in order to retain its place in the community. The first studios should be available from this summer. For more information on V22, what they have done elsewhere and how they plan to use The Priory please see <http://www.v22collection.com/>

Sharon Baldwin from Orpington 1st outlined High Street developments. Following the successful opening of the cinema and hotel the aim is to move to improving the retail space and the retail environment. This will entail Orpington 1st trying to persuade developers and landlords to create larger retail units to attract chains who otherwise have been reluctant to move to the High Street due to the generally small size of the retail units. The Walnuts recently changed ownership, yet again, and they intend to renovate the market. This work has just started.

She followed up Kim Botting's comments on crime and security. Regarding the problem with pavement cycling she reported that the Police had confiscated bikes from some and visited the homes of others and whilst there was not a large drug problem in the area the Police regularly patrol areas frequent by users. The most serious problem was retail crime. Orpington 1st were continuing to work with businesses to improve security measures, by improving CCTV coverage and sharing photos of known suspects amongst the retailers. They also provide office space and computer facilities for the Police team of 2 constables and 4 PCSOs.

Finally, she advised that 16 houses in Homefield Rise will be demolished and replaced by 3 low rise blocks comprising 104 flats.

PLANNING

One of the most contentious issues the KRA gets involved with is planning. Quite often it is not the actual planning that is the issue but the way the applicant handles it.

In the past planning applications were made using a paper form which had to be obtained from LBB. LBB would send out the form with a guidance booklet, one of the first instructions being to 'talk to your neighbours'. Now the planning application is made via a central planning portal, not even to LBB directly, a wholly anonymous process. I am no psychiatrist but people really do not like being ignored, treated as though they do not exist or presented with a fait accompli. Therefore if the first a neighbour finds out about a planning application is receiving the consultation letter from LBB asking them to comment on an large extension planned for next door then you can pretty much guarantee they are going to be annoyed! It also almost certainly guarantees they will object to the application and whatever relationship you have had with your neighbour to date, it will deteriorate. In our experience this happens all too often. Whilst everyone is affected by the often months of noise, dust, parking problems, damaged pavements etc only one party benefits. So please think about your neighbours, show them the plans as soon as you have drawn them up, listen to their concerns and perhaps go back to the architects to make mutually agreed changes. Subject to any problems LBB note, the planning application can then proceed smoothly.

Most of the properties in this area are over 80 years old when lifestyles were very different so it is almost a necessity to modernise. The stamp duty regime encourages development of existing properties rather than upsizing, even before moving costs and other matters such as schooling and community are considered, so planning applications to modernise won't go away. So it is best to just try and make the process as easy for all concerned whilst ensuring the basic levels of courtesy are maintained. It may not work and the neighbour is still unhappy, but at least you have tried!

Of course it isn't only home owners who seek to make changes to properties, it is property developers, who along with bankers and estate agents are modern day bête noire's! They are not part of the community so have no interest in maintaining neighbourly relations. It is believed they just want to maximise their profits. Perhaps they do! Developers either seem to make an absolutely outrageous planning application, squeezing the proverbial quart in to the pint pot, gradually lowering their sights via repeated revisions until LBB and interested parties are ground down and planning consent is granted. Or the reverse happens and a just about reasonable application is granted and then followed up by amendments which increase volume, height, depth etc. Either way an enormous structure compared to the building it replaces is invariably the end result. Neighbours are put through months of uncertainty and stress while the planning process goes through its many hurdles and that is even before the lorries and workers turn up.

Again, the KRA does not have Luddite tendencies and accepts that changes to the area are inevitable. There is a chronic housing shortage, particularly in the South East and the only way this is going to be resolved is by building more residences. In the last few years the number of homes in Orpington has grown considerably with the developments in Orchard Grove, above Tesco and the Village Hall, the conversion of offices to flats in Vinson Close/Berwick Way, the development opposite Sainsbury's on the site of the former Police Station plus the yet to be started development in Homefield Rise, to name a few. With building costs so much less than the retail price for houses profit margins are already high, so do developers really need to build the property as close to the boundaries and as high as possible and keep making applications to achieve this? I don't expect many developers will be reading this but if they are please give us a break!

We believe that the cost of a planning application is too low, starting at £172. This can barely cover the cost to LBB even if it is uncontentious. It seems a reasonable objective, for the benefit of all parties, to make one application which is successful so we will be lobbying the councillors at our meeting in July to increase fees for 2nd and subsequent applications to encourage this. It would also encourage applicants to ensure their neighbours are onside as well. We would like to find some way of at least encouraging developers to speak to those affected. I have no idea how this would work in practice but we have to start somewhere.

The KRA will continue to do our best to ensure that planning is less contentious and its affect minimised.

Finally we would like to thank Michael Latham, an architect and planner, who resides in The Knoll, for offering his assistance and support to the excellent work Sue Smith, who deals with planning matters for the KRA, carries out on your behalf. His knowledge and experience will be a valuable tool in firstly identifying whether there is any point in commenting on a planning application and then what the best grounds for objection are.



POST-EASTER ADULT EDUCATION COURSE

The Petts Wood & Orpington WEA will be running a new part-time course after Easter, 'A History of Colour in Art'.

It will study the story of colour throughout the centuries; look into how artists have used colour theory to achieve specific effects; and consider colour as a symbolic language.

Consisting of 5 sessions, the course will take place on Tuesdays (2.15-4.15pm) at St John's URC, Orpington starting on 25 April.

For further details and to book a place, please contact Penny Stewart on 01689 827420 or Martine Haynes at haynes.martine@gmail.com

PRAISE AND PASTRIES

Please join us at St John's URC, Lynwood Grove on Sunday, April 30th at 5pm for an hour or so, singing favourite hymns and songs of praise.

If that doesn't tempt you, perhaps the prospect of delicious pastries and tea and coffee might.



All ages are very welcome.

The event was very successful last year and we are expecting another good turnout to really raise the roof.

If you have a favourite hymn or song that you would like included in the programme, please contact either Suzanne Wallbridge: suzannewallbridge@gmail.com or Margaret Barnes: margaret@cambarnes.plus.com

We look forward to welcoming you.



ADULTS WITH A SENSE OF FUN ARE STILL NEEDED....

Were you or your children Brownies, Guides, Cubs or Scouts? Or maybe Rangers or Venture Scouts? Or more recently, Rainbows, Beavers or Explorers? Was it fun? Would you like to help that fun to continue for the next generation of young people?

As I wrote in the Autumn edition of Knoll News, there have been uniformed organisations at St John's Church for over 60 years, and so far this is still true. However, several of the units are likely to be closing by the end of this year if we cannot find some more adult help. As I write, the Cub pack and Guide Unit are without enough leaders to continue after the summer term. We are not looking for one person to run a unit single handed, but for a number of people to share the work. There is a small amount of training, but mostly you learn while having fun.

I have been involved with Guiding and Scouting, one way and another, all my adult life. It has given me some of my best memories and immeasurable amounts of fun. Why wouldn't anyone want to be part of that?

If you or anyone you know might like to join in this great game, please email guides@tw.wsn.co.uk or ring me on 01689 829584. We can arrange for you to come and visit and see what you think!

Tina Wheeler (Guide Leader)



HISTORY OF THE KNOLL— *Don't let's lose it!*

The Knoll area has a fascinating history. The area was mentioned in the Domesday Book, but even our more recent history is interesting, and shouldn't be lost!

Do you remember St Nicholas School in Mayfield Avenue, or the large house used as a club where Pepys Rise now is? What about the allotments at the back of Elm Grove?

As long-time residents move or pass away, memories are lost. Would you like to help record those memories? If so, then please get in touch with Margaret Collins: margaret.collins@care4free.net 01689 872468

If we can recruit enough people, then we can permanently record those details of life in the Knoll that otherwise will be lost for ever.

Thank you!

Road	Road Warden	Road Warden address	Road	Road Warden	Road Warden address
Bancroft Gardens	Michael Carter	2c Lynwood Grove	Lynwood Grove 42-58 & 45-85	Julie Bagshaw	45 Lynwood Grove
Blossom Drive	Brian Wilkin	27a Orchard Grove	Lynwood Grove 60-84	Simon Hulme	54 Lynwood Grove
Braeburn Court	Brian Wilkin	27a Orchard Grove	Mayfield Avenue 20-38	Ray Humby	39 Mayfield Avenue
Bramley Court	Brian Wilkin	27a Orchard Grove	Mayfield Avenue 21-57	Val Humby	39 Mayfield Avenue
Brookside	Val Humby	39 Mayfield Avenue	Mayfield Avenue 40-76	Karin McCormack	70 Mayfield Avenue
Broomhill Road 3-71	Friso Dijstelbergen	24 Broomhill Road	Mayfield Avenue 59-123	Kay Wilkins	1 Lynwood Grove
Broomhill Road 8-62a	Patricia Sanderson	21 Broomhill Road	Melbourne Close	Simon Hulme	54 Lynwood Grove
Broxbourne Road	Amrita Shodhan	59 Mayfield Avenue	Moorfield Road	Anne Bailey	34 Moorfield Road
Chislehurst Road	Maureen Elliott	97 Chislehurst Road	Novar Close	David Riddoch	15 Novar Close
Cornmill Drive	Friso Dijstelbergen	24 Broomhill Road	Oakhill Road	John Mangold	19 Oakhill Road
Cyril Road	Susan Tapp	'The Sheiling' Cyril Road	Oatfield Road	Fiona Borthwick	1 Oatfield Road
Dale Wood Road 1-27 & 2-24	Percy Williams	23 Dale Wood Road	Orchard Grove	Brian Wilkin	27a Orchard Grove
Dale Wood Road 29-49 & 26-48	Alan Willey	42 Dale Wood Road	Pepys Rise	Diane Brown	2 Pepys Rise
Dale Wood Road 51-93 & 50-60	Lisa Bristow	89 Dale Wood Road	Sequoia Gardens	Julia McCarthy	3 Sequoia Gardens
Devonshire Road	Richard Parrott	20 Wiltshire Road	Somerset Road	Nina Taylor	3 Somerset Road
Eastcote	Kay Wilkins	1 Lynwood Grove	St Aubyns Close	Hilary Robson	35 Tower Road
Elm Grove 1-33 & 2-36	Deborah Simpson	19 Elm Grove	St Aubyns Gardens	Hilary Robson (acting)	35 Tower Road
Elm Grove 35-57 & 38-88	Harold Holding	42 Elm Grove	St Kilda Road	Anne Raymond	4A St Kilda Road
Hill End	John Mangold	19 Oakhill Road	Stanbrook House	Brian Wilkin	27a Orchard Grove
Hill View Crescent	Patrick Foo	1 Hill View Crescent	Stanley Road	Anne Raymond	4A St Kilda Road
Hill View Road 1-31 & 2-32	Geoff Gammon	29 Hillview Road	Station Road	Duncan & Elizabeth Cameron	15 Station Road
Hill View Road 33-49 & 34-52	Jayita Kundu	48 Hillview Road	The Avenue	Tim Andrews	19 The Avenue
Irene Road	David Riddoch (acting)	15 Novar Close	The Drive	Martin Carney	24 The Drive
Irvine Way	Amrita Shodhan	59 Mayfield Avenue	The Maltings	Jan Wright	8 The Maltings
Keswick Road	Jill Solly	9 Keswick Road	Tower Close	Hilary Robson	35 Tower Road
Knoll Court	Alice Smith	10 Knoll Court	Tower Road 29-47 & 26A-36	Hilary Robson	35 Tower Road
Knoll Rise 1-17 & 14-32	Alan Goddard	11A Knoll Rise	Tower Road 4-26 & 9-27	Hilary Robson (acting)	35 Tower Road
Knoll Rise 17a-31 & 34-50	Trevor Marcussen	24 Lucerne Road	Tower Road top	Hilary Robson (acting)	35 Tower Road
Lamorna Close	Susan Tapp	'The Sheiling' Cyril Road	Vinson Close	Richard Burton	46 Vinson Close
Lucerne Road	Chris Davies	3A Lucerne Road	Westholme	Ray Humby	39 Mayfield Avenue
Lynwood Grove 1-43	Michael Carter	2c Lynwood Grove	White Hart Road	Patricia Sanderson (acting)	21 Broomhill Road
			Wiltshire Road	Richard Parrott	20 Wiltshire Road

Please enter your details below and deliver with your subscription (£1 for each adult household member) to your road warden listed above. **Subscriptions are due by 30 April 2017**

Name(1) _____ Name (2) _____

Name (3) _____ Address _____

HAVE YOU LOST A WATCH?

Early on Sunday morning, 15th January, a lady's watch was found on the road at Brookside, a quiet road off Mayfield Avenue. It was taken to the police station and, after one month, the police handed it back to the person who found it – who has been unable to track down the owner.

If you are the owner of this watch, please telephone 01689 829972

POST OFFICE RELOCATION

As anyone who has been down to the High Street recently will have noticed the Post Office has now closed and, as planned, relocated to WH Smith opposite.

We have not heard of any plans for the re use of the former Post Office premises as yet.

SPANISH IS COMING TO ST JOHNS!

Join an eight week taster course for beginners. This course is also suitable for anyone who wants to revisit and build on the basics.

Starting date: Wednesday May 24th from 11:30 - 1pm

For more information contact: d4spanish@outlook.com or call 07504 086443

CONTACT US

The contact details for specific KRA officers & committee members are:-

Chair & Treasurer Ian Black 831014 kra.chair@gmail.com

Secretary Miriam Harries 811243 kra.secretary@gmail.com

Membership Stacey Taylor 332031 knollra.membership@gmail.com

Planning Sue Smith 830251 kra.planning@gmail.com

Tree Warden Brian Wilkin 867728 kra.treewarden@gmail.com

Road Warden co ordinator & Road Warden secretary Kay Wilkins 878603

Road Warden secretary Jo Wyton 810622

Road Warden secretary Hilary Robson 825422

Road Warden secretary Simon Wood 871811

Road Warden secretary Dave Thomas 829646

Items for the KRA website to knollnews@gmail.com

Our Spring Newsletter is delivered to all households in our area. Summer and Autumn editions are only delivered to members.



If you have any articles or news snippets you would like to share, or details of any forthcoming courses, events or talks that you would like publicised in the Summer 2017 edition please email to knollnews@gmail.com by Monday 12th June 2017.

Thank you.

Please note that information and activities included in this newsletter and on our website are as received by the KRA. The KRA is not responsible for these items or activities and the inclusion of such activities does not constitute an endorsement of services or information offered.