MOTTINGHAM RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER 5 SEPTEMBER 1973

FOREWORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

"The old order changes yielding place to the new" sums up the changes that occur in Governments as well as in Residents' Associations. Since the Annual General Meeting we have lost a Chairman and gained a new one; and many of us, if not all, are sorry and glad at the same time. It is sad to see Douglas Cater-Smith go from the Chair (but not from the Committee), as we owe him much not only in getting and keeping the Association thriving, but for his energy in following up what he believed in and what we all asked him to do. Doing things for the majority is not always popular, obviously, with any minority; and the minority often has in other matters a very good case which, equally, is difficult to put to the rest. I think we have with Douglas Cater-Smith steered a fair course.

We are very glad to welcome our new Chairman, Denis (Pat) Fitzgerald, and wish him a happy "tour". I know he will be supported by us all. He has also undertaken to edit this Newsletter, and I hope he will have plenty of good material from you to include in it. I am sure he will be glad of suggestions so ... drop him a line. I would like him to include in every issue some small "educational" item such as: "Do you know of any old person not known to the authorities or in need of, say, "Meals on Wheels".

Thank you, Douglas; Good Luck, Denis!

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

As many of you are aware, I have lived in Nottingham for the past 34 years and it gives me great pleasure to "chair" the Association for a short period of time.

It cannot be denied that an active, participating membership spurs on Committees to greater efforts. Therefore
any suggestions or ideas that may improve or enhance Nottingham should be communicated to a Committee Member; don't let them vegetate; air your views!

I hope very much that the Association will continue to thrive during my term of office.

With sincere good wishes to you all,

THE CHAIRMAN.


OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: Mr. D.L. Porter.
CHAIRMAN: Mr. D.J. Fitzgerald.
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Mr. F.D. Cater-Smith.
HON. SECRETARY: Mrs. M.V. Gardner.
HON. TREASURER: Mr. P. Osborne.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Mr. L. Bannister: 23, Grove Park Road
Mrs. M.A. Browning: 60, Leysdown Road
The Rev. C. Byers: 2, West Park
Mr. L.S. Byrne: 55, Leysdown Road
Mr. R.C. Cambrige: 43, Beaconsfield Road
Mrs. J.J. Clarke: 23, Crossmead
Mr. R.C. Crampton: 7, Lavidge Road
Mr. C.A. Durell: 580, Sidcup Road
Mr. J. Jeffery: 7, West Park
Mr. G. Jenkins: 10, Scotstowe Close, Orpington
Mrs. T.G. Kirk: 234, Court Road

Mr. K.B. Moncur: 234, Court Road
Mrs. N.I. Moncur: 15, Luxfield Road
Mr. A.H. Recknell: 52, Elmhurst Road
Mr. F.R. Skinner: 2, Hillary Court

Mrs. T.G. Kirk: 234, Court Road
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Mr. R.C. Cambridge
BROMLEY RESIDENTS' FEDERATION: Mrs. M.A. Browning
ANTI-MOTORWAY SUB-COMMITTEE: Mr. L.S. Byrne
ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Bromley: Mrs. T.G. Kirk
Greenwich: Mr. R.C. Cambridge
TOWN PLANNING APPLICATIONS: Mr. A.H. Recknell
PARKS & OPEN SPACES: Mr. F.R. Skinner
"NEWSLETTER" SUB-COMMITTEE: Mr. D.J. Fitzgerald
BROMLEY TENANTS LIAISON COMMITTEE: Mr. H. Sullivan
OXFORD HOUSE COMMITTEE: Mrs. N.I. Moncur

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS:

Bromley: Councillor A.H. Macdonald: 79, Oakdene Avenue, Chislehurst.
         Councillor R.W. Huzzard: 37, Hollingsworth Road, Pett's Wood.

ROAD REPRESENTATIVES:

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**MEMBERSHIP:**

Membership last year amounted to just over 1,500. An analysis of returns already to hand from our Road Representatives suggests that this figure will be exceeded this year. We have three roads to date with 100% membership.

At the Annual General Meeting held in May, it was decided that the present subscription rate of 15p should be retained, with the option for Senior Citizens to be admitted to Association membership without cost.

It is perhaps worthy of mention that, despite rising costs, your Association continues to "soldier on" without having to request that you contribute more.

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS:**

Committee meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of alternate months; the next bi-monthly meeting will be on September 26th, 1973.

Sub-Committee meetings are held as and when occasion
warrants. During the past year, a sub-committee met to study the revision of our Rules, for example; and their recommendations were approved by the Executive Committee and subsequently presented to and approved by members at the Annual General Meeting.

We are indebted to Councillors of both Bromley and Greenwich Councils who are invited to attend our meetings and who raise matters in Council on our behalf, when requested.

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ROAD SAFETY:

GREENWICH

Our Road Safety Officer attends the London Borough of Greenwich, Eltham Road Safety Advisory Committee. If there is any point you wish to raise concerning road safety, defective paving, lighting or obstruction, please contact Mr. Reg Cambridge at 837 1291. Incidentally, during the past year, no one has contacted Mr. Cambridge in this connection, and he would like to hear from you. He has, of course, brought matters raised by the Executive Committee to the attention of the Eltham Road Safety Committee. (See further news on p. 14).

The London Borough of Greenwich will again be holding Advanced Driving Theory courses at Charlton House, commencing in September, with an optional driving test at the conclusion. Motor cycle training courses are also held throughout the year. These courses are really essential for the beginner, and we urge parents to encourage their sons and daughters to join these courses. To enrol in either of these courses, please contact the Road Safety Officer at Churchill House, 6 Greens End, Woolwich, S.E.18 6HY.

Finally, we would draw your attention to an ILLUSTRATED TALK to be held in St. Andrew's Church Hill on the 31st October next, at 8 p.m., when MR. W.J. EDWARDS, the Greenwich Road Safety Officer, will be giving a Talk on "The Education of the Driver", with illustrations. Please make a note of this date, and come along with your family.
ROAD SAFETY:

BROMLEY

Zig-Zag Markings in Nottingham Road: Your Committee expressed concern that these markings now extend into an area formerly reserved for parking; but we were informed by the Bromley Borough Engineer that rules governing the approach to pedestrian crossings made this inevitable, and nothing could be done in the matter. We can therefore only warn our members to avoid parking on these markings.

Parking in Nottingham Road: Your Committee have viewed with increasing concern the practice of motorists to park on yellow lines and/or on the pavement in the narrow part of the road leading to the Memorial Roundabout. The whole question of parking in Nottingham raises great problems, in the areas covered by both Bromley and Greenwich; and your Committee is in touch with both local authorities on this subject. In the meantime, we would urge members to observe the "rule of the road" in the interest of safety to road users and convenience of householders.

Note: One of the first announcements made by the newly elected Greater London Council in April, 1973, was the cancellation of plans for Ringways 1 and 2 and the combined Ringway proposed by the Layfield Panel of Inquiry.

The new Policy and Resources Committee and the Transport Committee put their new policy to the Council meeting on the 24th July 1973 as a resolution, which was adopted.

As far as this area is concerned, the following proposals have been cancelled:

Ringway 2, which would have affected Jevington Way and houses in Court Road.
A20/M, the motorway which would have run parallel to the Sidcup Road in a deep cutting, resulting in the demolition of over 400 houses in Sidcup Road, Crossroad, West Hallows and Court Road.

The cancellation of these roads means that the G.L.C.
have removed the so-called "protection orders", better known as "motorway blight", which resulted in owners being unable to sell their houses to anyone except the G.L.C. Henceforth, houses can be sold and bought on the open market; none will be purchased by the G.L.C.

The G.L.C. is maintaining, for the time being, the "protection order" on the Sidcup Link Road. This was proposed to run from the Dutch House to the Blackwall Tunnel approach.

The Department of the Environment has a commitment to widen the A20 from the London end of Swanley Bypass to Kennal Corner, where the Sidcup Bypass ends and the dual carriageway Sidcup Road commences. At present, this widening is scheduled to twin three-lane carriageway standard; but with the cancellation of the A20/M and Ringway 2 at the Iutch House, the Department will be asked to review the scale of this widening.

Neither of these two items would affect housing in Nottingham, but would increase the amount of traffic travelling from the Continental ports to East London through the Tunnel.

Although it was a political change at County Hall which resulted in the achievement of our objective to stop the construction of motorways through Nottingham, there is no doubt that this change was aided by a revulsion of public opinion against turning large sections of London into concrete jungles, inhabited only by the ravening motor vehicle.

L.S. BYRNE.

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TOWN PLANNING:

All planning applications for development within the Association area are carefully studied by Committee Member Mr. Rocknell; and in those cases where the development is considered to be disadvantageous to the interest of members or out of keeping with the surrounding environment, we oppose the application to either Bromley or Greenwich Councils.

Members likely to be affected by a planning application are advised, and their views ascertained before any decision is made.
This was especially necessary where residents in the Bronley Council of Nottingham were concerned, for, unlike Greenwich, Bronley Council had not until recently advised householders of planning applications.

Major developments involve the Association in a considerable amount of correspondence and time spent in discussion with Council Officers, etc. - the Geffery Homes site being an example.

Although we explored all avenues open to us to prevent the G.L.C. from proceeding with plans formulated with complete disregard of the wishes of residents occupying adjacent property, we were only able to achieve minor adjustments.

Had Bronley Council bestirred themselves during the initial planning stages - for their approval is necessary even though the site is being developed by the G.L.C. - it would have been possible for recommendations submitted by the Association to have been incorporated.

We do not "object for the sake of objecting", and where applications are made to demolish old and semi-derelict property and erect blocks of flats of reasonable proportion and appearance (the North end of West Park being an example), we support such application as being of benefit to the community.

But when application is made to replace well-maintained houses of character with dwellings totally at variance with the general aspect of the area, then objection is registered. In particular, we are concerned at the number of recent applications to demolish good-quality houses in Nottingham Lane and West Park. In some instances, the owner was not even aware that application to develop his property had been made until advised by this Association.

Let us consider a hypothetical case which is nevertheless officially possible: Messrs. Brown, Green and White are neighbours. Mr. Brown and Mr. White decide to sell their property for development. Mr. Green, occupying the centre property, is not so disposed. With the planning permission granted, the selling price is considerably higher, and application is made by Mr. Brown and Mr. White jointly to demolish the three houses and erect a block of flats. If planning permission
is granted, Mr. Green is offered a figure for his property that he cannot afford to refuse. The three-house "package" is then offered to a development company at a figure which is contributory to the unrealistic price charged for new houses/flats.

So property-owners want to sell at as high a price as possible. Why not? The point we are trying to make is that householders who had no intention of selling are being pressurised into selling, and in a few years time a pleasant area becomes a heterogeneous collection of ill-conceived planning.

We recently had a case in West Park where planning application was made by a development company to demolish a well-maintained, owner-occupied property to erect a block of flats. We objected to the proposal, and Greenwich Council refused planning permission.

Three applications were made by this company to develop this property, and all were refused!

When approached by a member of the Association, the owner stated that he had not been approached by any development company; he was unaware of any application to develop, and that he had no intention of selling.

Greenwich Council legal department were asked to comment on regulations which permitted this appalling waste of time and ratepayers' money - every application, regardless of the number of submissions, is dealt with by the Planning Committee - and they agreed that the situation was unsatisfactory and that regulations in this respect required amendments.

We can but hope that both Greenwich and Bromley Planning Officers will keep in mind the need to preserve that which is well-maintained in residential areas and concentrate development in areas really needing improvement.

You have our assurance that we shall exercise vigilance on all aspects of town-planning and continue to advise all members affected by planning applications.

P.D. Caton-Smith.
LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY RESIDENTS' FEDERATION:

As an affiliated member of the Federation, our delegate, Mrs. Browning, attends their bi-monthly meetings and keeps us regularly informed of their discussions and activities.

A matter under current discussion, brought forward by their Environmental Committee, is one which we think will be of interest to all our members. This concerns the future of the GREEN BELT; and was set in motion by the recent publication of two papers: one by the G.L.C. on "Leisure for Londoners"; and the other by COMECCO on "Urban pressures on the countryside".

In "Leisure for Londoners", the paper deals with the "leisure explosion" expected within a generation, due to increasing levels of affluence, longer holidays, shorter hours, earlier retirements and rising standards and expectations. The Bromley Environmental Committee points out that "formal" leisure use, e.g. for sport, of Green Belt areas is not generally destructive; but "informal" use, e.g. by trippers and ramblers, very often is. Travel to and from the point of use, whether by vehicle or on foot, is still more so. Users' pets and other possessions introduce further forms of destruction, through negligence, litter, inadvertent or deliberate acts of malice.

COMECCO, in its report: "Urban pressures on the countryside", assesses the probable land demands during the same period for a range of purposes, and concludes that for a number of them besides leisure (housing, industry, mineral extraction, power, transport and water storage) demand will increase continually, even with no further population increase.

The anticipated increase in leisure usage of the Green Belt should not be resisted: its availability for this purpose is the sole justification for refusing the use of the Green Belt for the purposes enumerated by COMECCO. But it is vitally necessary to try to foresee the outcome of any increase in leisure usage; and to educate the users of Green Belt amenities to take a more considerate and responsible attitude in its use.

Both these reports give us much food for thought, and they indicate ways in which our Green Belt areas may be developed.
in the years ahead, unless we are very careful of our precious heritage.

This is surely a matter of great concern to us all. If you have any views on the subject, your Editor would be pleased to have them.

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**MOTTINGHAM WEEK:** June 16th - 24th, 1973
**A Note from the Rev. Christopher Eyers.**

I would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way towards the success of "MOTTINGHAM WEEK" last June. In many ways, the Week exceeded our hopes, and we confounded the pessimists who felt that we were attempting too much.

People often say that apathy and anonymity are the order of the day in suburbia, and that local groups, organisations and churches are incapable of working together or of contributing anything significant. If this were true, the idea of a community festival would never have met with the response it did. I am sure that people who care about the area in which they live, and give time and energy to local activities, can now believe even more in the value of what they do.

The Mayors of Greenwich and Bromley who attended many of the functions, expressed their interest and approval. Many new friends were made, a wonderful spirit prevailed, and neighbours enjoyed themselves together. Mistakes were made and the organisation "creaked" a little at times, or relied too heavily on a few willing workers; but we'll do better next time!

To try to launch another Festival Week next year would, I think, be a mistake; but I am sure the idea of a Mottingham Fete as an annual event is here to stay. How about an even bigger and better MOTTINGHAM WEEK in 1975?

What do you, the residents of Mottingham, think?

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MEMORIAL SERVICE:

During the week preceding November 11th you will be invited to purchase a poppy; and that contribution, for the great majority, will be the sole recognition and remembrance of the "forgotten heroes" who paid the ultimate price that we might enjoy the simple pleasure of living.

The writer is of the opinion that a personal appreciation would not be too much to ask.

As in past years, a SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE will be held; a brief address, a floral tribute, the singing of a hymn and the National Anthem. We once again invite the local clergy to consult with the few who have "kept the torch alight" and local branches of the British Legion, with a view to holding a Joint Service of Remembrance.

The various denominations have been paying lip-service to unity for some years now. Here is common ground for a genuine "get together"! Is it too much to ask that the community spirit of "Nottingham Week" be extended into November?

War is abhorrent to Christians, and there is a school of opinion which advocates that even the sacrifices of war should be forgotten. But if members of the Royal Family willingly accept the privilege of leading their "congregation" at the Cenotaph, then it would seem fitting for lesser mortals to follow suit at local Memorials.

We do NOT accept that traffic conditions render the Service impractical:

The Service was held in previous years.
The Service was held last year.
It will be held this year.

We invite all residents to attend the Service at the War Memorial at 10.30 a.m. on SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11th, 1973.

F.D. CATER-SMITH
GOING SHOPPING:

The shopkeeper/customer relationship in the village has always been extremely cordial - one accepts that there will always be the "awkward customer", and we were therefore surprised to receive a number of requests for "something to be done" with regard to the marked deterioration in the service of a village shop that recently changed hands.

We have been informed by the new owners that the manager was installed on a temporary basis, and they very much regret any inconvenience being experienced by residents. We have their assurance that "normal service will be resumed as soon as possible".

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FURTHER ROAD SAFETY NEWS - GREENWICH.

Our Association keeps under constant review the danger which exists to pedestrians crossing the main Sidcup Road at the junction of Court Road.

Our representative, Mr. Reg Cambridge, who sits on the Eltham Road Safety Advisory Council to the London Borough of Greenwich, first brought this danger to the notice of the Council over two years ago. After the death of a child crossing the main road last year, going to Fairy Hill Park, local residents raised a petition which was handed by Mr. Cambridge to the Greenwich Council via the Road Safety Officer. To date, no action has been taken to provide a safe crossing of this very busy road. This crossing serves Notting Hill Station, shops, bus stops, a public house, and two parks. The traffic light all-red phase is only 6 seconds; with cars crossing on the amber, and many even "shooting the lights" on the red, it is impossible to cross the road in safety at peak hours. One danger is the vehicles turning from Court Road into the Sidcup Road, and the drivers who will not give way to
pedestrians crossing. Nottingham Station is one of the busiest in South London; it is understood some 7,000 passengers use it morning and night.

Our Association feels that it would ease the situation if the red phase was increased by at least 5 seconds, which even then would make it only 12 seconds; but the Greenwich Council state that this would cause a build-up of traffic with consequent frustration to the car drivers – which seems to be the best frivolous excuse for doing nothing. This is another example where there will have to be a serious accident, with possible loss of life, before something is done.

At the September meeting of the Eltham Road Safety Advisory Council, Mr. Cambridge suggested that the Works Committee should investigate this hazard.

We watch future action, if any, with interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Association warmly supports the work of THE FRIENDS OF TASK FORCE in the Greenwich area, and invites the support of our members for the forthcoming events:-

Mayor's Michaelmas Market: Saturday, 6th October, 1973: The Friends of Task Force will once again have a stall at this event, which will be a "10p" Parcel stall. Gifts or donations will be gratefully received. Parcels will be sold for both adults and children.

Cheese & Wine Party: Friday, 19th October, 1973, in the Committee Room Suite at the Town Hall, Woolwich, at 8 p.m. During the evening a display of fashions will be given by "Hitch Spot" and "Just Cuddly" Boutiques of Welling. Tickets are available from The Town Clerk @ £1, inclusive of refreshments.

Combined Function with the "Friends of Elm Grove" on Saturday, the 8th December, 1973, at Elm Grove Old People's Home, Halver Terrace, S.E. 16, when it is hoped to put on an "Old Time Music Hall" type of entertainment, followed by a Cheese & Wine Party.

Fund-Raising Ball at THE YORKSHIRE GREY on Friday, January 4th,
1974. Further details available from The Town Clerk. (Note from Editor: Your support for any or all of the above would be greatly appreciated).

NEW CONSUMER ADVICE CENTRE: Greenwich Council's new Consumer & Advice Centre is now open in Wellington Street, Woolwich, S.E. 18. Advice on the best buys before actual purchase and advice on Council matters can be obtained from this centre.

ELTHAM'S "MINI" TOWN HALL: Have you discovered this latest amenity? It is to be found at the top of Eltham High Street, on the corner of Westmount Road; and already is proving a boon to residents in the Borough of Greenwich.

LECTURE ON ROAD SAFETY and THE EDUCATION OF THE DRIVER: We are happy to announce that our association has obtained the services of our Greenwich Road Safety Officer, Mr. BILL EDWARDS, who will be visiting St. Andrew's Church Hall, Court Road, S.E. 9, on WEDNESDAY, the 31st OCTOBER, 1973, at 8 p.m. Those who attended our A.G.M. in May will have had a foretaste of the excellence of Mr. Edward's talks; and we can promise you a thoroughly entertaining evening on October 31st. Mr. Edwards will be illustrating his talk with slides and visual aids, and has promised to answer questions from the floor. So - make a note of this event in your diary - NOW.

VISIT OF MRS. PEGGY FENNER, Member of Parliament for Rochester and Chatham, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food: FRIDAY, the 9th NOVEMBER, 1973, at the Bridgeman Hall (rear of New Eltham Conservative Club), 71, Southwood Road, S.E. 9, at 8 p.m. Mrs. Fenner will be speaking and answering questions on food and prices. Anyone interested is most welcome to attend. There will be a small charge for refreshments.

If you have any announcement about a local activity that you would like included in the next Newsletter, please contact your nearest Officer or Committee member.

All other correspondence should be addressed to:-

The Hon. Secretary,
Nottingham Residents' Association,
55, Leysdown Road,
Nottingham, S.E. 9.