

Mottingham Residents Association Newsletter – Summer 2019



Welcome to our summer newsletter.

This is intended as a means of distributing information and matters of interest to members. Much of our information distribution is now via the website (www.yourMRA.org), but we acknowledge that a number of us may not have computer access.

It has also been recognised by the Committee that the wider membership may not have any information or feedback from the April AGM until they see the minutes 12 months later. Hence a précis of the AGM now appears on the website and also below.

REPORT OF THE 87th AGM OF THE MRA – Wednesday 1st May 2019

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Laurie Bell reported that it had been another busy year for the MRA and went on to mention a few topics including the creation of a footpath around Foxes Field and the new memorial Plaque on the festival bench in the north corner. There is continual monitoring of planning applications and the making of representations to the respective Council where felt necessary. There are ongoing efforts to improve the Christmas Lights, with particular thanks to Rebecca Young and Liz Keable, who have taken over their coordination. We are grateful to all those residents and shopkeepers that responded to the appeal.

Eltham College

The planting of over 200 trees in the grounds is broadly welcomed although some residents might have experienced present or future view and light issues. Two proposed new gatehouses have been approved, but blue signs on the corner of Mottingham Lane and Grove Park Road were erected without planning permission and have been scheduled for removal or alteration. A recent proposal to erect a security fence around the entire college grounds in response to safety issues raised by the Schools Inspectorate is causing some concerns.

Police Issues

There is continued lack of Police coverage in the Bromley part of the village where one PCSO (Sue Kennedy) is, to all intents and purposes, having to cover the area on her own. Of the two dedicated PCs we should have, one has never been on the ward and the other, after numerous extractions for other duties leaves the Borough on May 3rd. (See also Cllr Cartwright's comments below).

War Memorial

The War Memorial has undergone a clean and repair following continued pressure on the Council from the MRA and Cllr Cartwright. The Chairman also thanked Churches Together, the Band, Warr's for allowing the use of their forecourt, and the police for closing the roads and controlling traffic, all of which went to make last year's memorial service a successful event.

West Hallowses

The problem of excessive traffic using West Hallowses as a cut through to the A20 was discussed as an ongoing battle, notwithstanding Greenwich Council's plans to impose a 20 mph speed limit in the area (See also comments under AOB below).

Credit Unions

Bromley residents were encouraged to use the new Credit Union facility being run on a

Thursday morning in the Church at St Edwards Hall. Cllr Hartley pointed out that a similar facility run by the Greenwich and Bexley Credit Union is available to Greenwich residents.

Porcupine Update

The MRA recognise that everyone is fed up with the blue hoarding around what is becoming a derelict site. Unfortunately, we are not in the driving seat here although Lidl does appear to have put the site up for sale again. Bromley are also considering a Compulsory Purchase order, but no further details are known at this stage.

The Chairman closed his report with thanks to the Executive committee for all their hard work in ensuring the MRA runs as smoothly as possible.

STOP PRESS – 6th June 2019 – Have your say

Lidl have reapplied for planning permission to demolish the Porcupine and build a superstore. The issues which still concern the MRA Committee are represented on the flyer you should have received. The application Ref : 19/01670/FULL1, can be viewed and commented on line at <https://searchapplications.bromley.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lesley Robins expressed appreciation to the hard-working Road Stewards without whom we would not be able to operate. She was also pleased to report that two new volunteers have come forward following the appeal in the AGM Notice. It was noted however that more volunteers were still needed as some Road Stewards currently cover several Roads. Membership was down again last year; it was felt that this was due to a number of factors, not least an ageing population but also to the increasing number of rental properties. Unfortunately, those renting tend not always to consider themselves as Residents. A question was raised about the labour-intensive methods of subscription collections and whether an on-line facility might be made available through the website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Audited accounts for the year to 31st March were presented showing total income for the year of £2272, down by £293; £258 of which was a reduction in Membership income. Costs had been controlled but showed an increase in total expenditure, mainly due to a 5 year renewal payment of £240 for website support, which saved the MRA some £200 over the term. Mr Hawes was thanked for his timely work on the audit, enabling the accounts to be available for the meeting. In summary, the year provided an overall surplus of £665 taking total cash reserves to £15,743. The Treasurer reported that the stated policy is to create sufficient fighting funds to enable us to pay for professional help should it be required. As an example, we may need to buy expertise should Lidl put in another planning application for the Porcupine site.

The recommendation is that subscriptions continue at the current level of £2.50 p.a.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN	Laurie Bell
TREASURER	Laurie Bell
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN	Richard Mainwaring-Burton
SECRETARY	Robert Blanks
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Lesley Robins
AUDITOR	Bernie Hawes

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS :

Sally Bettesworth
Jane Cornish

Carol Borhani
Liz Keable

Edmund Cavendish
Rebecca Young

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noticeboard. There is a new Noticeboard on the corner of West Park and West Hallows and an appeal was made for more information to include on it.

Traffic in West Hallows

The Committee was asked what more the residents could do. Councillor Hartley responded by saying that both the MRA and then the Greenwich Councillors themselves had carried out surveys amongst the residents and reported the results to the Council. All three Greenwich Councillors agree with the MRA that the 20 mph speed limit will not solve the issue of the volume of traffic using West Hallows. He, along with Mrs Roberts a resident of West Hallows, had attended and spoken at a Council Meeting on the issue. The Council were however going ahead with their planned traffic calming measures but had agreed to review the situation again if they did not solve the problem. It was proposed to bring the Councillor responsible down to the site to see the situation for herself.

COUNCILLOR'S ADDRESSES

Cllr Hartley (Greenwich) expressed his gratitude to residents for re-electing himself, John Hills and the new Councillor Roger Tester at last year's elections. They had been prevented from taking an active role in last year's AGM because of the elections. However, all three Councillors were in attendance and were pleased to be able to support the MRA in its activities. They hold open surgeries in the Library on the last Friday of every month. Crossrail (Elizabeth Line) is expected to have an impact on the north of the borough. Councillors are keen to try and extend those benefits to the Eltham area as well. They have proposed a new X161 bus route, but it is not yet clear whether it will be approved.

A £30,000 Council Fund exists for community initiatives and Cllr Hartley is in touch with Liz Keable with a view to trying to secure some of this funding for the lights. He is also open to supporting any other funding requirements that might qualify and asked for suggestions. Friends of Coldharbour open Space is a new volunteer group seeking to protect and maintain open spaces throughout the Eltham area.

Cllr Cartwright (Bromley) stressed that Bromley is one of the safest boroughs in London, not seeing an increase in gang activity evident elsewhere. Burglary was on the increase and residents are urged to be careful and not to leave doors open, even if they were just in the garden for a few minutes. Serious crime in the area is down but anti-social behaviour is on the increase with increasing pressure on police to take note of it. That said, it appears to have plateaued in Mottingham, although this may be due to a reduction in reporting. The 101 telephone reporting system was slow and cumbersome, so the system is being improved and residents were urged to report incidents, as more reports mean more resources. The fact remains that Bromley is unable to provide the resources needed to meet the Mayor of London's plans and County Hall has been notified of that fact.

Bromley Council is still having to provide savings and the regrettable increase in Council Tax will be taken up entirely by increased statutory duties such as expenditure on adult and social care. Bromley is however free of debt, so every penny of the Council Tax goes to provide

services, unlike some boroughs, where significant amounts are spent on servicing debts. Parking in Mottingham Lane remains a problem and there are currently attempts to get some temporary cameras installed to try to alleviate the issue. Fly tipping is also a perpetual problem and residents are urged to use 'fix my street' to report issues as they tend to be dealt with very quickly and efficiently.

Cllr Cartwright is also receiving reports of the new 'Econo Pizza' staying open until the early hours in contravention of their licence. There have been reports of use of the back door for motorcycle-based deliveries but they are difficult to catch in the act. Cllr Cartwright asked that if anyone sees evidence of this please report it.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Following a break for refreshments the Chairman introduced Mr Ian Small who is a volunteer at Severndroog Castle. Mr Small gave a very enthusiastic talk on the history of the building, by whom and why it was built and the more recent efforts to fund its restoration. [See 'Places to go' page on MRA website – Ed]

The meeting thanked Mr Small for a very entertaining talk.

FESTIVE LIGHTS REPORT

An appeal goes out with our Autumn News for donations to the Festive Lights Appeal. The annual cost of mounting the display is currently around £2700, and may well increase this year. The organisers are grateful to all those who contribute. In 2018, contributions were received from 60 households. We are also particularly grateful to the local traders listed below as well as to the **Duke of Kent Court Bowls Club** who made a generous contribution in their centenary year.

Cockburns Estate Agents	Co-Op Funeral Services	Court Carpets
Harpers Hairdressers	Jarman & Dixon Pharmacy	Mottingham Fish Bar
Rippin Ink		

This year we will need to raise additional funds to cover some replacement features, and to compensate for rising maintenance costs.

Please be generous in November and continue to support local traders.

The Mottingham Horticultural Society's Autumn Show - Sat. August 24th

will be held once again from 2:30 pm in King George's Hall at Eltham College, with tea and cakes available in good company all afternoon, with live music adding to the relaxed atmosphere.

Anyone can enter and the exhibit categories vary from flowers, pot plants, fruit, vegetables, cakes, bread, jam, photographs, embroidery, painting, flower arrangements.

Of course, there are awards for each category and also silver cups for the champions. Presentations will be at 4:30 pm.

If you have never entered an exhibit before, why not have a go ? Even if it's only one photograph or one flower this time.

Show schedules and entry forms will be available at the library, from MHS officers, at Mottingham Floral Arrangement Society or on the MRA website (www.yourMRA.org)

