

March 81

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

Graham Jenkins

Inevitably now we face yet another winter of discontent. The perennial state of industrial conflict again reaches crisis proportions. We, the long-suffering public, are the victims. This, and the cutbacks in public spending mean that services will deteriorate even further. The hardest hit will be those least able to defend themselves; the elderly and sick will be especially vulnerable.

I don't think we delude ourselves when we claim that Mottingham is a village. It certainly retains coherence and corporate identity. Let us hope that it is a caring village because things are unlikely to improve in the near future. At times like this it is the responsibility of the young and healthy to care for those less fortunate.

OBITUARY

Mr. Stanley Smethurst

Well known in Mottingham for over 20 years, Stan Smethurst passed away in Queen Mary's Hospital on 25th September. Born in Southampton in December 1914, he moved to the London area in the 1930s and was employed by Standard Telephones and by the then well-known Kolster Brand, for which firm he was Area Sales Manager R.A.D. Division. In 1966 the firm S.E. Smethurst Ltd., of which he was a director, acquired Woolwich Radio in the New Road.

He was a member of Woolwich Rotary Club, the Warren Golf Club for a number of years and, more recently, of the Royal Blackheath; latterly he was Treasurer of Mottingham Residents' Association. Stan had very many friends by whom he will be sorely missed for many a long day.

Castlecombe Youth Centre

The Education Committee felt that all education services must share in the £900,000 cut in their costs - including the Youth Service - and there was a proposal to close Castlecombe Youth Centre. It was argued that, using a crude measure of dividing running costs by average attendance, Castlecombe was the least cost-effective Youth Centre.

Both Mottingham Councillors attended a special meeting and argued that though the other proposed cuts could be replaced in happier times, the closure and sale of the Youth Centre would be final. This argument prevailed and Castlecombe will not be closed - though there may be some changes in opening hours.

School Meals

Recently I attended a meeting of a group of Mottingham residents - at their request - to explain Bromley's school meals proposals.

As part of their cost saving, Bromley propose two things - to raise the price to 50p and to cut out cooked meals. From April 1981 it is proposed that school meals shall consist of soup or yogurt, a filled roll and fruit.

The Mottingham parents heard this with dismay and said that many parents would not pay 50p but would prepare their own sandwiches and an apple - which confirmed my own feelings. But since the proposals must involve the purchase of ovens (to heat the soup) and fridges (for the yogurt) in every school, if parents make other arrangements this doesn't seem a very cost-effective method of saving money. We are advancing these arguments.

122, Mottingham Road

This is a privately-owned house, sublet to tenants on each of its three floors. Complaints were made about the state of the house and garden and I had these taken up. Matters

came to a head when the electricity was cut off. To get the lighting and heating restored the Council has the power to pay unpaid utility bills and recover from the rents. But it emerged that the sum required exceeded £3,000 and it is not clear why arrears so large could accumulate. But, whatever the reason, it seemed wrong to use ratepayers' money to pay so large an amount.

Accordingly, it has been necessary to find other accommodation for the tenants. The future of this property is not clear - we may not have seen the end of these problems.

Planning

"Lindenhurst" is dealt with elsewhere in this issue but following hard after it come two further appeals against Bromley's refusal of planning permission - No. 1 Court Farm Road and the land adjacent to 37 Grove Park Road. As in the case of Lindenhurst I have tried to consult with Mottingham Residents' Association and with others who are interested in these matters.

There is also an application in respect of 12 Court Farm Road which is one of the oldest properties in Mottingham and will need special care.

So far there is no news of the alleged further proposal to develop the YMCA sports ground.

In respect of Planning I can see a difficult decision coming up. The expense of having every application, even the very smallest, decided by Councillors, is considerable and a rational man would say "Delegate". This would save thousands of pounds, and yet I am in no doubt that ratepayers want every application determined by elected Councillors. All Bromley Committees are public but few members of the public attend - except for Planning. That Committee is usually packed out by interested members of the public.

MOTTINGHAM WEEK 1981 - MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY. MOTTINGHAM WEEK 1981 STARTS ON 13th JUNE AND IS FOLLOWED BY A WEEK OF ENJOYABLE EVENTS. LET'S ALL HELP TO MAKE IT ANOTHER SUCCESS!

GETTING THEM TOGETHER

by Mr. C. Pryke

WE HAVE!

When trying to get some attention for our road and traffic problems, we are usually faced with the problem of putting suggestions and requests to two authorities - Bromley and Greenwich; occasionally a third - Lewisham. Getting them to meet has been beset with delays - but now SUCCESS.

Among the items for consideration are the amount of heavy traffic using Mottingham Lane; the speed of vehicles leaving the War Memorial roundabout into West Park; the lack of parking proper in the village; the improper parking; the difficulty of crossing the roads and the position of the 126 Bromley-bound bus stop. Our suggestions include cutting a "Short stay" parking lane into the wide pavement from the fried-fish shop as far as the crossing zone; cutting a South bound bus stop into the pavement outside the Post Office; moving the ridiculous "Z" marking on the small parking bay from the pavement out to the road line (I wonder who put it on the pavement side in the first place?), squaring off the over-generous corners of the roundabout and giving us a zebra crossing at the "Porcupine" end of the village.

A lot of opposition has already resulted, for it seems that the sole concern of the authorities is to promote the flow of traffic, even though they must be aware that to some motorists this seems licence to go even faster - disregarding safety, pedestrians and speed limits. Perhaps I am unfair, for the same thoughts obviously do not apply in Bromley High Street with its multitude of crossings. It has been mooted that a bus bay in Court Road would not be allowed, for the buses would have to pull too far out into the road on leaving the bus stop. They have now - to go to Chislehurst! 126 buses would soon be able to position themselves for their turning.

"A zebra crossing at the "Porcupine" end would restrict the flow" - I wonder if the observers have ever tried to cross

the road from the Bank on a wet October morning in order to reach the paper-shop? If they were not soaked by the time they crossed the road they would be thoroughly sodden when they tried to walk along the narrow pavement because of cars charging through the puddles and potholes on road and pavement. Yes they do, together with cyclists, drive along this very narrow pavement. When you reach the shop sometimes you cannot even get through the gap left by parked cars - parked on the pavement with engines running while the driver is inside the shop. If you haven't even reached that point - look sharp - for as well as the water fount he throws up from the pavement he is often going fast to get back into the stream (of traffic!) and is not watching for you, the pedestrian, but the traffic coming up behind.

Finally. Nobody wants to upset the Police. But what sense is there in spending a lot of time (and money) daily patrolling our village street (and with their new rates of pay it is a lot of money) at what seems to be the same time every morning; disregarding the rest of the day. More important, from the point of view of safety, never looking round the corner into West Park where vehicles, parked on the yellow lines outside the Bank, restrict the view of pedestrians trying to cross. For the curve of the road is such that you have to move far out into a vulnerable position before you can see the traffic. Ever tried to see through or round that van which is often there? A low-level kerb has been provided for mums with prams but it is difficult, to say the least, to use it if a car is parked across it.

You may not believe it from the above, but I am a motorist, and like a lot of others risk car and limbs when trying to leave West Hallows to turn into West Park. For regulations concerning parking near corners are either forgotten or have never been learnt. If the Police are too busy, surely they can get Traffic Wardens to give us a bit of attention from time to time.

Now that the initial meeting has taken place perhaps we can hope for some practical answers to our problems.

(On the subject of Road Safety - all children should be issued with a copy of THE GREEN CROSS CODE and parents are urged to see that they all understand it and follow the rules.)

ONE THING AND ANOTHER...

BROMLEY IN BLOOM

Think of a petrol station and the image that comes to mind is not usually one of something beautiful - unless you have seen Mottingham Service Station's garden in full bloom. In the summer months their flower beds and the front of their forecourt have been a riot of colour which must have brightened the day for many a passing motorist. Even though drainage works demolished a large part of the garden it emerged looking as lovely as ever once the grass had been replaced. We are delighted to learn that the money and effort put into its creation have been recognised by the Second Prize in the Forecourt Section of this year's Bromley in Bloom competition. May we add our local residents' congratulations and say how much we appreciate the brightening of this corner of our village.

EYESORE

It is very sad when a house and garden falls into such a state of disrepair that neighbours find it unpleasant to live with. Number 122 Mottingham Road has become so dilapidated that it is an eyesore and a source of distress to residents living nearby. On their behalf Councillor Macdonald has approached Bromley Council who are now taking the necessary steps to get the nuisance removed. The Planning Department, the Environmental Health Department and the Housing Department are all involved so the matter is not going to be quick or simple to resolve. With homes in short supply we cannot afford to lose any through neglect.

RECOUPMENT OF FEES FOR ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

The Education Committee has now decided not to pay recoupment to other local Education Authorities for Bromley students attending non-vocational courses of Adult Education. This decision will enable the local authority to save about £320,000 in a full year, which they feel can be better spent on aspects of the educational services within the Bromley area.

HOMES INSULATION ACT 1979

The Secretary of State for the Environment has announced that from the 26th August 1980 alterations to the existing Homes Insulation Scheme will come into effect. These are:

1. Increase of the present grant from £50 to £65 or 66% of the cost - whichever is the less.
2. A special level of grant of £90 or 90% of the cost for persons of pensionable age who are in receipt of supplementary pension, rent allowance, rent or rate rebate.
3. All new applicants will have to complete the work within four months of the Council approving their application, otherwise the application will be automatically cancelled. It will be possible to make a fresh application at a later date.
4. The number of approved materials has been increased.

These new grant levels will be available to all existing approved applicants where no claim has been paid by 26th August 1980.

Local residents are urged to take advantage of these grants to cut down on future heating bills.

MOTTINGHAM STATION PARKING

Local travellers have been annoyed by the amount of space taken up in the station forecourt by large juggernauts which used the space for overnight parking. A letter from the Secretary of Mottingham Residents' Association gave the Area Manager the necessary impetus to do something about it and lorry drivers have been told that "this facility will not be available after 29th February, 1980". We will have to make sure that the lorries do not gradually drift back into bad habits after a little while.

WARNING - CARBON MONOXIDE IS A KILLER. Make sure that all

flues and chimneys are clear to prevent build-up of fumes.

LINDENHURST

by B.M. Powell

A planning application which has aroused great concern in neighbouring householders is the proposed development on the site of "Lindenhurst" in Mottingham Lane. For those who do not know it - "Lindenhurst" is a large, detached house with well-wooded grounds opposite the side entrance to Eltham College. In place of the present house the applicant wishes to build three 3-storey blocks of flats plus garages and parking spaces.

Although the present house is far too large for modern family living and cannot be considered of any architectural merit it blends so perfectly with its surrounding mature trees that the impression is one of harmony between building and nature. To fit a larger number of buildings onto the site would obviously require the felling of numerous fine trees and the extra height of the flats would alter the whole effect of unspoilt countryside.

Neighbouring householders in Mottingham Gardens, Mottingham Lane, College View and Highcombe Close are upset at the thought of being overlooked by several taller buildings and losing the view of trees and wildlife. The introduction of blocks of flats where the surrounding houses are all detached or semi-detached will alter the whole character of this part of the village.

Anyone using Mottingham Lane in the morning or evening "rush hour" will know how busy this road can be every weekday. The site of the proposed development is on the Lane's narrowest part where there is also a dangerous curve. Both present exits from the site are dangerously situated for anyone trying to join the flow of traffic in either direction. Delivery vans calling at Eltham College already have difficulty turning into or out of the gateway and parents dropping off their sons at this point will find it even more hazardous.

Another problem which will be aggravated for local residents

is that of drainage. Already the sewers are unable to cope in very wet weather and several gardens are subject to flooding. Extra pressure on the drainage system can only increase the nuisance unless it is radically improved.

When the application was made public Bromley's Chief Planning Officer was inundated with letters of protest citing the above reasons for their objections. Councillor Alistair Macdonald was left in no doubt about the feelings of residents in the area and using these letters as ammunition he was able to put forward a very compelling argument against the proposed development. Listening objectors were delighted to hear him gain the backing of the rest of the Planning Committee so that the application was rejected on the following grounds:

1. The development of this site with 3-storey blocks of flats would be inappropriate, out of character and out of scale with the adjoining development and detrimental to the appearance of the surrounding area of predominantly detached and semi-detached properties.
2. The proposed development would be detrimental to the amenities now enjoyed by the residents of property adjoining the site by reason of loss of privacy and visual impact.
3. The proposed development would intensify the use of Mottingham Lane and would be likely to lead to conditions prejudicial to the free flow of and general safety of vehicles and pedestrians along this and adjoining roads.
4. The proposal would result in the loss of trees detrimental to the amenities of the area.

The objectors were very pleased with the decision of the Planning Committee but their relief was short-lived. The applicant has exercised his right to appeal against the decision and a Public Enquiry will be held in the near future.

Once again objectors will be able to voice their reasons for opposing the development and a final decision will be made by an Inspector appointed by the Department of the Environment after hearing evidence from both sides.

Can a strong enough case be put to convince the Enquiry?

It remains to be seen.

MOTTINGHAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: 1980/81

PRESIDENT: Mrs. D.V. Kirk: 10, Scotsdale Close, Orpington, Kent
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VICE-PRESIDENT: Mr. H. Lynn: 24, Ashdale Road, SE12

CHAIRMAN: Mr. G.W. Jenkins: 61, Court Farm Road, SE9 857 8705

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Mr. G.D. Podmore: 32, Lavidge Road, SE9 857 4111

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs. M.V. Gardner: 55, Leysdown Road, SE9
857 6654

HON. TREASURER: Office vacant

HON. AUDITOR: Mr. E.C. Botell: 18, Highcombe Close, SE9 857 1745

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Mr. L.D. Bannister: 68, Leysdown Road, SE9	857 2497
Mr. B.J. Barker: 78, Grove Park Road, SE9	851 9209
Lt. Cdr. G.L. Bond: 38, West Park, SE9	857 3306
Mr. R.C. Cambridge: 7, Lavidge Road, SE9	857 1291
Mr. J.L. Gold: 9, Lulworth Road, SE9	857 4475
Mr. J.R. Hearn: 10, Pickwick Court, West Park, SE9	851 2523
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Mr. J. Hollingum: 33, Devonshire Road, SE9	857 5856
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Mr. C.R. Pryke: 76, West Hallowses, SE9	857 3005
Mr. L.H.A. Rickson: 203a, Mottingham Road, SE9	851 9622
Mr. F. Winpenny: 12, Grove Park Road, SE9	857 1251
Mr. D.G. Woodhouse: 8, Hallview, Grove Park Road, SE9	851 9622

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Bromley: Cllr. A.H. Macdonald: 79, Oakdene Avenue,
Chislehurst 857 8219

Cllr. R.W. Huzzard: 37, Hollingsworth Road,
Petts Wood 467 5367

Greenwich: Cllr. R.L. Martin: 11, Crouchcroft, SE9 857 3340
Cllr. D.M. Richards, JP: 10, West Hallows, SE9
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Road Safety Advisory Committee: Bromley: Mrs. D.V. Kirk

Cllr. D.M. Richards

Greenwich: Mr. C.R. Pryke

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J. Gold, G.D. Podmore

Town Planning: Bromley: Mr. T.W. Hodges

Greenwich: Mr. F. Winpenny

Publicity Sub-Committee: Editors: Mr. J. Hollingum

Mrs. B.M. Powell

with Messrs. Barker, Cambridge, Pryke, Winpenny.

Mrs. Gardner and Mr. Jenkins ex officio.

Greenwich Borough Council Committee: Mr. F. Winpenny

Eltham Social Services (Area 5) Group: Mr. L.H.A. Ricketts

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Court Road (West): Mr. J. Gold: 9, Lulworth Road

Court Road (East): Mrs. Corrigan: 18, Lulworth Road

Evelyn Court: Mrs. Currie: 131, Mottingham Road

Highcombe Close: Mrs. Roberts: 4, Mottingham Road

Luxfield Road: Mrs. Forrester: 41, West Hallows

Mottingham Road: (1 - 93a): Mrs. Currie: 131, Mottingham Road

Mottingham Road: (2 - 56a): -

Priory Leas: Mr. Bond: 38, West Park

Sidcup Road (N.W.): Mr. J. Gold: 9, Lulworth Road

Sidcup Road (S.W.): Mr. Wedderburn: 13, West Hallows

West Hallows: -

West Park: Mr. Bond: 38, West Park

Woodmere: Mrs. Cornish: 29, Lavidge Road

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Evans Court: Miss E. Walker: 8, Bourdillon Court

Section Leader: Mr. G. Podmore: 32, Lavidge Road

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Avondale Road: Mr. Gardner: 38, Chapel Farm Road
Beaconsfield Road: -
Court Farm Road: Mr. G. Jenkins: 61, Court Farm Road
Crossway: Mr. G. Jenkins: 61, Court Farm Road
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Elmhurst Road: Miss Barker: 80, Beaconsfield Road
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Porcupine Close: Mr. Bannister: 68, Leysdown Road
Portland Crescent: Mr. O'Manby: 25, Devonshire Road
Portland Road: Mr. O'Manby: 25, Devonshire Road

Section Leader: Mr. R. Cambridge: 7, Lavidge Road

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Leysdown Road: Mr. R. Woods: 44, Highcombe Close
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Cedar Mount: -
College View: Mrs. H. Davis: 1, Cedar Mount
Colview Court: Mrs. H. Davis: 1, Cedar Mount
Clarence Road: -
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Grove Park Road (even): Mr. Winpenny: 12, Grove Park Road
Hall View: Mr. Willes: 56, Grove Park Road
Lulworth Road: -
Mottingham Gardens: Mrs. H. Davis: 1, Cedar Mount
Mottingham Lane: Mrs. H. Davis: 1, Cedar Mount