



May 2017 Edition

The Review

You are invited to the
**WEST BECKENHAM RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION AGM**
on **MONDAY 5 JUNE**
at **8.00pm at Venue 28,**
Beckenham Road

There will be speakers on mental health and dementia services in Beckenham, and police use of helmet cameras. See you there!

This is Judith's last Review as editor, and so I would like to record our thanks to her for many splendid Reviews over the years and her support of WBRA in so many other ways. She will be greatly missed. Marie Pender, Chair.

BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE

by Marie Pender

At last the major works to improve the High Street are underway. The £4.4m scheme is funded by Bromley Council in partnership with Transport for London (TfL). Work will last until August 2018. At present the contractor, Conway, are making good progress and are slightly ahead of schedule.



This computer generated image shows what it should look like at Kelsey Square.

Buses

TfL have not been as good as they could have been in signing the bus diversions. A month into the diversions of the 54 and 354 from the High Street to Rectory Road the bus stops still showed the old routes for these services. The “in-bus” announcements are patchy. The signs letting people know about the changes are small and facing away from the bus shelters. TfL say they will correct this for the next phases.

What happens next

Phase 2 of the works, on the opposite side the road to that now being renovated, is due to start in June and run until late August. There will not be any changes to the bus diversions: buses will still run towards Beckenham Junction in the High Street, using the southbound carriageway, with a temporary stop provided nearby for the stop at Marks & Spencer.

Phase 3 of the works is due to start in late August and run until November. During this phase (and Phase 4, early 2018) buses will not be able to run towards Penge and Croydon in the High Street between Thornton's Corner and Village Way. The current diversion for routes 54 and 354 via Rectory Road will continue. Nos 227, 367 and N3 will resume stopping outside Beckenham Halls but then turn right into High Street, left into Rectory Road and then resume normal route at the War Memorial. No 367 will turn left at the war memorial into High Street and resume normal route at Village Way. The temporary stop opposite the tram stop and the one at Vicarage Drive in Rectory Road will be served by Nos 54, 354, 227, 367 and N3 during Phases 3 and 4 (as well as No 352), No 162 will return to its normal route when Phase 2 is complete. (This is correct at time of writing but may change.)

WBRA have publicised the changes on our notice boards and on our website. Conway produce weekly reports which are also on the website and notice boards, and emailed to members for whom we have addresses. If you would like these emails, please email info@westbeckenhamra.org

The grey paving at Beckenham Junction was very badly stained after just a few days. It was thought that a pressure wash and final finishing would repair the damage but it hasn't. These grey slabs were supposed to be laid at each of the major junctions along the High Street, but the council are re-considering whether it would be better to use the red stones instead.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

The red paving outside the Nat West Bank is looking good



Two trees outside Nos 47 to 71 (between the high level pavement and Manor Road) have been removed, but don't be alarmed, this only temporary. The pavement here is being extended and there will be six trees planted here.

Business As Usual

Beckenham Business Association (BBA) is keen to stress that local businesses along the High Street are open for "business as usual". Understandably, the local shops are worried that people will be put off going to the High Street while these major works are underway. If we want our local shops to survive and prosper, we must make sure we continue to use them during the work. The evidence from Bromley North is that many new shops and businesses were attracted to the renovated High Street after their major renovations.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led and business-funded body formed to improve a commercial area, such as our High Street. Businesses decide and direct what they want for the area, using money raised from a levy on the businesses in that area. As the council is no longer funding a dedicated Town Centre Manager, a BID for Beckenham will be very important to ensure that things we now take for granted, such as Christmas lights and street cleaning, can

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

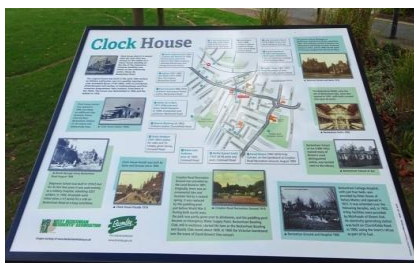
continue. The ballot of Beckenham businesses will take place next February, after extensive consultations. There has been encouraging interest from local businesses and a shadow steering group should hold its first meeting in May.

CLOCK HOUSE PANEL

The Clock House History Panel, located outside Venue 28, opposite the Library, was unveiled by Cllr Sarah Phillips on a warm Saturday, 22 October, with many members looking on.



The panel shows the rich history of this part of Beckenham, including details of local landmarks and many famous local people – we could fit only 14 people from a potential cast of over a hundred!



Do stop to look at the panel next time you visit The Spa or the library!

PLANNING

Eden Park High School

Outline permission for this school on Balmoral Avenue was granted in January. The school may open in 2019 or 2020 and eventually take in around 1700 students. Residents who will be very much affected by this development spoke against the application at the Development Control Committee meeting. Balmoral Avenue is a quiet, fairly narrow residential avenue. The prospect of around 2000 people using it four times a day during term time is distressing for long term residents.

The portfolio holder for education, Cllr Fortune, said the Borough is short of several thousand secondary school places over the next 10 years. The council is legally obliged to provide secondary school places for all pupils across the whole of the London Borough of Bromley and not necessarily in a specific ward or location. Furthermore, the Council has no legal ability to prevent out-of-borough children applying for places at Bromley schools or to reserve places at Bromley schools for children who live in the Borough or in certain communities.

Peter Dean, Councillor for Kelsey and Eden Park and Chair of the Development Control Committee, moved that the application be refused. He acknowledged that LB Bromley is in need of school places to meet statutory requirements, but he said Kelsey and Eden Park Ward adequately covered for local students. While there is a responsibility to parents to provide school places, there is also a responsibility to local residents, their standard of living and enjoyment of life.

Nevertheless, permission was granted. WBRA continue to support local residents in seeking stringent conditions on the use of the site both for educational and community use.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

Coptic Church Dunbar Avenue

The appeal against the enforcement notice to remove poles and netting from the football pitch was dismissed, apart from the reduced height of the fencing around the pitch. The inspector required the applicants to submit a scheme for the reduction or dampening of noise from balls striking the fence within two months and to implement the scheme within one month of the council approving the scheme. Residents report that the noise continues to disrupt their lives. It is very frustrating that nothing seems to be done.

Rear of Station Parade Elmers End

An application for demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a four storey block of 8 flats (six 1 bedroom and two 2 bedroom) with undercroft car parking, refuse and cycle storage was refused. This land was until recently the depot for GCK van hire, which has moved to Elmers End Station. The appeal against refusal of permission was dismissed.

Rowden works

Construction on this site in Chaffinch Road is now underway.

Elmers End Station Parade

In our last edition we reported on our efforts to have a small area of land next to Station Parade cleaned up of disgusting rotting rubbish on Elmers End Road opposite Tesco. We are very pleased to report that so far the area has been kept clean and the rubbish and the bins kept behind the gates. We give our thanks to the council officers who doggedly pursued this problem.

ELMERS END GREEN TOILETS

At last work has started on the conversion of the toilet building to a medical consultancy. Of course, WBRA campaigned against the closure of the toilets. When it was clear LB Bromley would not keep them open, we would have preferred the building to be demolished and a flower bed or more trees planted instead. We were at least successful in having the sale changed from a freehold to a leasehold purchase. We felt strongly that the centre of a publicly owned space, designated as Urban Open Space, should not be privately owned.



The new owners of the building, Mr and Mrs Smith, came up against some strange obstacles in getting planning permission. The officers wanted to restrict use of the building to the couple themselves. As they are builders, not medics, this was impossible. WBRA lobbied for a sensible resolution to this conundrum. If we have to have a business use of the building, we are as confident as we can be that Mr and Mrs Smith will be good operators who will be sympathetic to our neighbourhood. So we are content that the work is underway.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Have you noticed cameras on the light controlled crossings? They have been installed by Transport for London to “detect vehicles and/or pedestrians to help make live adjustments to the signal timings, to maximise the efficiency of the crossings to benefit both drivers and pedestrians”. They are not enforcement cameras.



However, the phasing of the lights, eg at the crossing near Elmers End station, has changed, so that instead of a pretty quick response to a pedestrian pushing the button, it now takes 20 seconds for the red light. That doesn't seem long, but is it counterproductive? If there is gap in the traffic, people dash across anyway, and then the traffic is halted for no good reason. If the cameras do allow “live adjustments”, maybe TfL will adjust them back to a quicker response when they see this happening.

CLOCK HOUSE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

The Panel has expressed huge thanks to retiring long-serving officer, PC Alastair Fleming and great regret at seeing him go. In his place the Ward welcomes new Dedicated Ward Officer (DWO), PC Dean Palmer.

The main issue of current concern is theft from motor vehicles and interference with motor vehicles (often indicating an attempted theft). Seven thefts occurred in one day around the

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

Elmers End/Queens Road area. An arrest has been made of a person from outside the Borough and the police are cooperating cross-borough to attempt to identify possible other members of the group responsible.

Car owners are asked to ensure they secure their vehicles, especially at night on driveways. During the day builders are particular targets, with tools being stolen from unlocked vans when left unattended. Both commercial and private vehicles should be locked at all times, even if being left for only a short period in the day.

CLOCK HOUSE PARADE



Cllr Vanessa Allen has secured more funding for improvement work for Clock House Parade from the Parades Improvement Initiative. This will include:-

- 1) Pavement improvement, including targeted repaving of the private forecourts to the front of the shops.
- 2) Improving the look of empty units in the parade by the use of shutter art and window vinyls.
- 3) Deep clean of main pavement including removal of weeds
- 4) Repainting of lamp posts and bollards.
- 5) Provision of more bike racks.

In addition, some street trees are under consideration, but sadly we will not be getting flower towers or hanging baskets.

PURPLE FLAG



The Purple Flag is awarded by the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM). Similar to the Blue Flag for clean beaches and the Green Flag for great parks, the Purple Flag is for towns with diverse and safe evening and night-time economies.

Beckenham achieved the award in January 2016. The flag was raised on 19 May by PC Russell Edwards and Chloe Ross of CCARA (centre right) outside **Beckenham Junction station**. Cllr Michael Tickner (third left) made the speech.



At the time, Beckenham was one of only 42 places in the country to have been awarded the flag. ATCM was most impressed by the collaboration from the two residents' associations representing local people (CCARA who chair the Town Centre Team and WRBA who provide the secretariat), and wants to use Beckenham as a case study. Usually applications are driven by the council or businesses.

The ATCM were also impressed by the diverse offering of Beckenham's evening economy, including the programme of

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

events at St Georges Church, the mix of old pubs and new bars and the variety of restaurants. The Alleyway Naming Project (delivered by the Copers Cope Area Residents Association with support from the Town Centre Team) had demonstrated a local interest in heritage and the plan to make these alleyways attractive and safer, especially at night.

To promote the application, the team undertook upgrading of the radio system and all licensed premises signed up so they could remain in contact with the police throughout the night. A taxi queuing system was introduced by New Regency Cars to streamline the queues for taxis on Friday and Saturday nights. Taxi marshalls have been deployed at Regency cars and at the taxi rank outside Marks & Spencer. Door staff have been retrained to spot problems and help people leaving the clubs. The Kebab shop on the bridge now employs a door-person on Friday and Saturday nights. The CCTV was reviewed to ensure better views. Wellbeing packs were provided to all late night establishments to ensure they had the minimum kit to deal with revellers who had over indulged.



Last Christmas the number of incidents related to late night drinking fell significantly in Beckenham whilst the rest of the borough saw an increase. Purple Flag status lasts for two years and the town will need to maintain and hopefully improve standards in order to re-qualify.

Please help us to re-qualify by completing the survey on your feelings about the town centre on

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7CN3D5J>

BECKENHAM POST OFFICE

Beckenham Post Office moved from opposite the War Memorial to WH Smith in August 2016. There is no news about the future use of the old building, but it is “listed”, so that should prevent any radical changes to its structure or appearance.

TRANSPORT

Please offer me a seat

TfL have launched a new card and badge to help people who are less able to stand. The badge says “Please offer me a seat”. Packs can be ordered by calling 0343 222 1234 or on line at <https://tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility/please-offer-me-a-seat?intcmp=46988>

No trains to London Bridge and Charing Cross in August Bank Holiday week

The massive redevelopment of London Bridge continues. There will be big service alterations over bank holidays this summer. This will be particularly so in August, when there will be no South Eastern services to London Bridge, Waterloo East or Charing Cross, between 26 August and 2 September. There will be fewer trains generally and they may be diverted to other stations. Listen for platform announcements.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

BROMLEY AND BECKENHAM PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Are you interested in stamp collecting and postal history? Bromley and Beckenham Philatelic Society are looking to welcome new members. They meet in the Beckenham Public Halls at 7.30pm on the second and fourth Wednesday evenings each month.

Meetings in 2017 are:-

June 7 – Summer Lunch

June 14 - Members: Postcards

July 14 - Members: Thematics

August 9 – South Africa 1910 Union stamp and postal stationary – speaker Chris Board

13 September – Four in One - speaker Jeremy Gaskill

27 September – Ceylon - speaker Cliff Hurst

11 October – Victoriana – Chris Drakes

25 October – auction

They are particularly encouraging general stamp collectors who want to expand their interests to join, and as a special incentive, free membership until the end of August is being given to any collector coming to a meeting and buying a copy of their recently published book "History of Bromley & Beckenham PS; Part 1 1932-1945"..

More details from David on 020 8778 7001 or Chris on 020 8402 1263. or on their web site at

[<http://www.beckenham.net/leisure.asp>](http://www.beckenham.net/leisure.asp)

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

**"THE GHOST AT BIRKBECK STATION AND
OTHER TERSE VERSE" by JANET AMBROSE**

Review by Shirley Civil

Janet Ambrose, the valued President of WBRA, has published a book of her poems.

Janet has had a very interesting and varied career, starting as a secretary, then working as a Judo teacher and physiotherapist. She spent many years involved with Lewisham Council and the GLC in various posts and in addition gained a degree in music at Goldsmiths College and learnt to play the mandolin.,

This book of poems I find impressive. It contains poems on many different subjects, some quite long, others just a few lines, all very cleverly constructed and usually with a humorous little twist or two. The first section of the book is full of interesting ideas, the second poem for example is only four lines long but for me is probably one of the most simple and amusing, although also sad!

In Memory - a childhood tear

Alas poor Doris -
I loved her a lot
But she was a chicken
And went in the pot.

The second section of the book, written more recently I understand, is somewhat different with some poems getting a bit political. There is a lovely one about Nelson Mandela being seen in London, although others; one about the Falklands War, and another about a very noisy letting of a church hall didn't really do it for me.

One of the final poems regarding a girl in a wheelchair, who in spite of her disability shows that life can go on, "What 'ere fate

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

throws at us!", making one think again about life, as do so many of the poems in this remarkable little book.

I recommend this book and congratulate Janet, hoping that we can look forward to even more verses in the future.

The book is on sale at Beckenham Bookshop.

JANET'S 80th BIRTHDAY

by Judith Niechcial

Janet turned 80 this spring. Her enthusiasm was responsible for preventing WBRA from folding in the 1990s when membership was at a low ebb. She has moved from Beckenham to a retirement flat in Addiscombe, where she hosted a very well attended 80th birthday party for her neighbours and friends from the many interests she shares



Marie Pender and Judith Niechcial represented WBRA at the party, and presented Janet with a beautiful card, hand-made by Eileen Penfold, to mark the occasion.

20 MPH SPEED LIMITS

by Zoe Telford

Over the last few years, 20mph speed limits have been gradually introduced across residential streets in much of London, bringing quieter and safer streets to the Capital. With consultations now taking place in several outer boroughs, Bromley is lagging behind.

Critics argue that a slower average speed will increase pollution, or conversely, that drivers *won't* drive more slowly, that a 20mph limit is "unenforceable". Bromley's Portfolio Holder for the Environment insists residents "already experience amongst the lowest accident rates of anywhere in London". What are the facts, and how do they bear on the residents of West Beckenham?

What is indisputable is that a reduction in speed leads to a reduction in serious injury. But what about other health benefits? Recent research in the UK indicates that slower speeds encourage more people to walk and cycle, which in turn reduces congestion - *and* pollution.

We are policed 'by consent' in this country, and all speed limits have to be largely self-enforcing. One might ask, how many of us resist wearing seatbelts today, though many argued in 1983 the new law was 'unenforceable'? A change of culture is required, a shared desire to improve the quality of life for all of us, be we on foot, on a bike or in a car.

Road collisions statistics have remained fairly stable across Bromley's 500 miles of road over the last few years, though this is not consistent across the borough – Penge and Cator has seen a significant rise in traffic collisions causing injury.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

Is it not time we ask Bromley's Portfolio Holder for the Environment to act on the recommendations of the Department for Transport, NICE, the Faculty of Public Health, Public Health England, REPOD, Alzheimer's Society and - surveys would suggest - the majority of local residents, to introduce 20mph as a default speed on residential roads across Bromley; to begin in West Beckenham?

"GALLERY 206 "

by Arnjali Rowe

A new Art Gallery opened a few weeks ago in Beckenham. It is called "Gallery 206", and is opposite the HSBC Bank at 206 High Street, next to the Hairdressers. The gallery is fairly small but it is lovely to be able to see beautiful works on our doorstep!

Some of the artists represented here, mainly contemporary or abstract artists, have had their work displayed at the Tate Modern. Well-known artists whose works are displayed here include Henri Matisse, John Hoyland, Tracey Emin, Adrian Heath, Bruce McClean, William Gear, Alan Davie, Stephen Farthing, Henry Cliffe and Gabriel Weissman.

I was informed that the Gallery is also able to source different works by specific artists on request. The opening times are Tuesday – Thursday mornings from 11am. to 2pm. The friendly staff make you welcome and if you enjoy modern art it is well worth dropping in for a browse.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK



With the help of funding from the Greater London Authority, Lewisham Council, and a posse of local residents, have planted hundreds of saplings around the edge of what was the golf course.

There was an event on 29 April 2017 to celebrate the daily opening of the Mansion.

There will be a free 'Parkrun' on Saturdays 3 & 10 June at 10.00am starting at the Ravensbourne Avenue entrance. You can walk, jog or run for up to 5km.

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

CARLTON COURT, 23 BECKENHAM ROAD

There is a development proposal to demolish the red brick block of flats on the corner of Hayne Road and Beckenham Road and build a modern block of 30 new homes. Several local residents visited an exhibition held on Thursday 27 April at Venue 28 when plans were available and the development team was present to answer questions, and importantly to take on board any views and suggestions. The architect is still in discussion with Bromley planners.

ANTI-LITTERING STRATEGY

The Government has published a new strategy with proposals for new enforcement, and to fine litter louts with fines up to £150, Here in West Beckenham we have a big problem with discarded drinks cans and plastic bottles, fast food wrappings and cigarette boxes. Please take your litter home, and if you would like to help keep our streets clean and tidy, the council can give you a 'litter picker' to take on your walks around the area. If you come across dumped or fly-tipped material, you can report in on the 'Fix My Street' website at <https://fix.bromley.gov.uk>

MARKET ON THE GREEN

The most recent Market of local produce and crafts and was held on Saturday 20 May on St George's Green, Beckenham. A new initiative this time was a novelty dog competition. There is always live music, and a fun fair. These regular fairs are organised by our friends in Copers Cope Area Residents' Association. The next ones will be on 8 July, 23 September and a Christmas market on Saturday 2 December, with a lantern parade through town and the turning on of the lights.

WALK OF WITNESS



Traffic in Beckenham High Street came to a halt, and all was quiet on Good Friday this year as hundreds of people walked in silence from St Edmunds RC church in Village Way to Beckenham Green where a short service was held. A Priest of the Coptic Church spoke about the deadly bombings that had happened on Palm Sunday in Egypt and money was raised to help the victims and bereaved families. This walk was organised by Churches Together in Beckenham

LIVING WELL BROMLEY

This charity is running at Holy Trinity Church, Lennard Road, SE20. It is 'a caring community which aims to be a place where people feel accepted, loved and valued'. Free support is provided to people with different needs, including social isolation, addictions, mental health problems, debt or homelessness. There is a food bank, a community meal, art therapy music therapy, a community garden. Volunteers are welcome. You can contact the project at hello@livingwell.life or 8778 7258

CARROT CAKE

Recipe by Eileen Penfold

Ingredients

- 1 cup wholemeal flour
- 1 cup cooking oil
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups caster sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 cups grated carrot

Method

1. Sift and mix dry ingredients
2. Add oil and stir well
3. Add carrot and mix thoroughly

This mixture will make either 2 x 8" sandwich tins, or 24 cupcakes

Bake in moderate oven, gas mark 5 for about 30 minutes.

Icing

Mix together:-

- 4 oz cream cheese. (Do not be tempted to use low or half fat, it just will not work.)
- 2 oz butter
- 2 cups icing sugar, sifted
- 1 tsp vanilla essence

<http://www.westbeckenhamra.org/>

NEW BECKENHAM STATION

2017 is the 150th anniversary of train services beginning from New Beckenham Station. A celebration event was held at the station on 13 January to which Bob Stewart MP and local councillors were invited, and WBRA was represented.

WBRA have pressed Network Rail to install wind breaks on this very cold station, but, to date, we have had no response.

THE FOOD ASSEMBLY

There is now a network of communities across the country selling fresh food bought directly from local producers and farmers - fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy products, fish, you name it. The movement originated in France, and has been here since 2014. By buying in this way you are supporting local producers who in turn create local jobs, the food air miles are much reduced, and the food is high quality and fresh.

We are lucky that there is now a branch in Penge. How it works is that you register as a customer, log into a very user-friendly website, choose your weekly shop and pay online, and then collect your order on Thursday evening between 5.30 and 7.30 at the Goldsmiths Arms pub on Croydon Road. The farmers in this scheme are usually in Kent or Sussex, with very local people making such things as chutneys and jams, bakery products, honey. There is no obligation to buy every week, or to buy more than you need or want. It's well worth giving this local scheme a try. The website is www.foodassembly.com.

OXLEAS NHS TRUST

Oxleas provides a range of services particularly to people with mental health issues or a disability in Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich. Last year the Care Quality Commission (CQC), after a full review, rated the Trust as 'needing improvement'. The good news is that the most recent inspection has rated a wide range of services as 'good', which is a testament to hard-working NHS staff.

PLAWSFIELD ROAD

The previously unmade street leading from Beckenham Road to Kent House Station, which was a mud bath in wet weather and a dust bowl in dry, is being surfaced with tarmac, including the pavement.



Traffic is diverted into Barnmead Road. Walking and driving on this road will be a lot easier when the works are finished.