

West Beckenham Residents' Association

The Review



Clock House Celebrates Autumn - 5 October

**ANNUAL COUNCILLORS FORUM
JOINT MEETING WITH
COPERS COPE AREA RA
8pm Wednesday 24 October 2018
Venue 28
28 Beckenham Road**

If you enjoy our Review and like what we do, why not spread the word and get friends and neighbours to join?

We hope the new mailing system is working well. Please let us know of any errors or problems. If your envelope was addressed to West Beckenham RA Member, we don't have your full name, so please let us know if you would like it added.

If you have email and do not already receive our regular updates, but would like to, email mpenderwbra@btinternet.com.

Marie Pender
Chair

CLOCK HOUSE NEWS

“Clock House Celebrates Autumn”

On 5 October a new outdoor event was held in the early evening in the area between the Library, The Spa and Venue 28 – which is beginning to be known as the Clock House Hub. Hopefully it will be the first of many.

It's great to see the Parade come back to life recently with new shops taking over empty properties. Sponsored by Purple Flag and WBRA this event owes huge thanks to Matt Walden of Three Hounds, Debbie Hoyte of Venue 28 and Zara Green of Link Asset Services for doing the organising and providing the stalls with all the supporting equipment.



The event was a great success with lots of children arriving from school in the early part of the proceedings to hear local author Glenn Lawrence read from his book for small children ***“Lauren Koala”*** and there was also PiCatso Drawing at the Library.

There was live music, craft stalls and lots to eat and drink. As the evening wore on and darkness came, people stayed for the bars and food stalls until the event closed at 8pm.



Historical window plaques for Clock House Parade Shops



At the ***Clock House Celebrates Autumn*** event, WBRA presented a window plaque, and photo of Clock House Parade in 1919, to Hannah of Love My Hound at No 55 Clock House Parade. Hannah's stall was packed with colourful, amusing and practical doggy accessories.



This plaque shows the first occupants of 'Love My Hound', between 1906 and 1938, were a chemist and dentist, and between 1910 and 1917, No 55 also housed one of the first public call offices of the fledgling national telephone network – the forerunner of street phone boxes where people who did not have a phone could make calls.

The Parade was built by local builders Syme and Duncan in 1906. Some of the Duncan family still live in Beckenham. The Parade cost around £11,500 to build and included building a bridge over Chaffinch Brook which flows below the road at this point. The west side of Queens Road was also built at this time – house numbers 2 to 34, at a cost of £11,300, meaning they cost £665 each!

WBRA have produced these plaques for all 13 shops on the Parade - please take a look at the plaques when you pass, and do go in and support our enterprising traders.

BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE



At the time of writing work is still ongoing with major disruptions around the War Memorial for the installation of new refuges and resurfacing. There is still a lot of work to be completed elsewhere and finishing touches will go on until the New Year, especially tree planting and planters.

Over the next months we will get new bus shelters outside the Wimpy and at the bottom of Fairfield Road. The forecourt at Sainsbury's is being resurfaced with the red pavement bricks and new screening for the shops' bins. There will be new benches and bike racks. Feature lighting will be installed at Hak's Barbers and the NatWest Bank (in the embankment, lighting the trees and well as the building). Regal Alley is also being resurfaced and the archway and mural will be lit. The pavement outside Zizzi's will feature the famous "Bowie Lightning Flash" which is still in the design stage.

Trees will be planted at Kelsey Square and along the High Street to the Odeon car park. A new seat in the shape of the art deco 'O' for Odeon will be installed on the refurbished car park next to the cinema, to encourage people to use that bit of land more. After pressure from WRBA and The Beckenham Society, the working group chaired by Cllr Tickner agreed to consider options for cleaning and repairing the wall around the War Memorial, which was not in the original plans. In contrast to the new light bright paving all around the Memorial, the wall is dirty and unloved, with the remnants of past collisions shown in various unmatching repairs.

WBRA has complained vigorously about the chaos of bus stop closures during the island refuge and resurfacing work at the War Memorial. With no warning, all bus stops around the Memorial were closed between 9.30 and 3.30 every day. The signs were as usual small and out of sight, and even then they did not say that the stops were sometimes open and sometimes closed, let alone when.



The only hint that the stop was closed was that there were green barriers in front, as in the photo, but judging by the people that still waited there, no-one knew that was why they were there.

This is on top of four days when the High Street was returned to two way traffic on 22 September, but TfL did not close the temporary stop at Beckenham Junction until 5pm on 25th. This left people standing for up to half an hour in the rain. A nearby resident went out repeatedly to tell them there were no buses. This is the perennial Transport for London failure, which we have witnessed for many, many years, to get their contractors to deal with closures in good time and with accurate and helpful notices at eye level.

But – we are nearly there! After eighteen months, on schedule and to budget, the works are drawing to a close. Feedback we've heard indicates that most people think it looks very good. I certainly do. We all hope that the investment will bring along new shops and attract people to Beckenham to keep our town vibrant and prosperous.

BECKENHAM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT – ‘BID’

Long term Beckenham resident and experienced business woman, Zoe Brown, has been announced as the manager of the Beckenham Business Improvement District (BID).



Zoe has a career spanning 30 years which includes supporting small businesses and start-ups, running her own business, and consulting with a wide variety of organisations such as global companies, government departments, charities and small businesses.

The BID has the ultimate goal of ensuring that the town continues to prosper and flourish over the next five years with an investment of £940,000. Zoe will be driving the project forward by implementing the strategic plan which has been put in place by the Board.

CHRISTMAS IN BECKENHAM



Beckenham BID, together with Copers Cope Area RA, is organising this year's Christmas celebrations on Saturday 1 December. A Christmas market will be held on Beckenham Green and there will be a candlelit parade for local schoolchildren starting at 4pm from Beckenham Recreation Ground, Croydon Road to Beckenham Green with the Christmas lights switch on around 5pm.

The lovely Christmas tree on the Green will again be the focus of the switch on of the town centre's Christmas lights. WBRA contributed £500 to the purchase of this tree, which can be used year after year and is a wonderful addition to the town centre Christmas decorations.

PURPLE FLAG RENEWAL

Beckenham has successfully renewed our Purple Flag award. The assessors visited Beckenham on Saturday 4 August and spent the evening walking round the town, right up to 3am. Their report commended the way the various organisations in Beckenham worked together to improve the attractiveness and safety of the town for the night time economy.

The assessors found Beckenham to have a strong identity as a community place with natural and built features complementing the town. They found the town very clean, well lit and attractive. They said “Much of the arts and culture offered is led by the community groups and they appear to be very proud of their local heritage and people who have lived in Beckenham.”

They commended our strong and enthusiastic partnership, with businesses involved in the town initiatives. “There’s a strong community spirit in Beckenham, with all parties being involved and included. The engagement of residents in the Purple Flag process and assessment is very high and to be commended – this is the best example the assessors have seen of positive resident engagement.”

As part of the ongoing programme to further improve the safety of Beckenham in the evening, Cannon Cars, who play an active part in the Purple Flag team, have sponsored the latest of our beer mats offered to local pubs and clubs, with a Halloween theme.



Purple Flag's Halloween theme beer mat

Purple Flag also organised a meeting between licensees of clubs and bars around Beckenham Junction and local residents, in late September, to discuss ways to cooperate on reducing noise and antisocial behaviour outside their premises. This was the second such meeting which both licensees and residents have found helpful and beneficial. The Purple Flag team thanks these licensees for their active engagement with residents leading to positive and practical actions.

Purple Flag also sponsored the Clock House Celebrates Autumn event on 5 October, reported above.

CROYDON CAT KILLINGS

The Metropolitan Police have recently closed their investigations into a spate of cat killings which have taken place in the Croydon area over the last three years, concluding that they were carried out by foxes. This was in spite of the fact that some of the attacks had been carried out using a sharp blade indicating that it was humans, not foxes, who were the culprits. Recently, a Beckenham cat (the second in the town) was found with injuries bearing such human 'hallmarks', which prompted cat-lover and WBRA President Janet Ambrose to pen the following poem, addressed to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner...

'...and a cat was killed in Beckenham

Commissioner Dick
You make me sick
You've no respect for us.
Don't you believe
That we who grieve
For cats would make this fuss

Our lovely Kitten
Sadly smitten
By a killer – not Reynard.
Not mutilated
But suffocated
Our grieving now more hard.

Her mouth and gullet
Crammed up tight
With rubbish, dross and tat.
So tell us, Cressida Dick, how did
A fox accomplish that?'

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUPS AT YOUR LOCAL GP SURGERY

A Patient Participation Group (PPG) is one of the ways that Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group consults with and involves patients in planning and running GPs surgeries.

Anyone can join – why not find out about your GP practice and join in?

PPGs are a way for patients and carers to:

- work with GPs and practice staff to improve local services and the quality of care
- improve communication with patients
- promote health and wellbeing
- ensure practices remain accountable and responsive to patient needs.

Why are PPG members valuable?

PPG members suggest ideas for improvements and voice any concerns about how services are organised or managed to best meet their needs and the needs of the local community.

How does a PPG work?

A PPG obtains the views of patients about the services in the practice and contributes to decision making in the practice. It acts as a sounding board on patients' needs, concerns and interests and helps patients to understand the practice viewpoint. It helps to promote information which may assist with health or social care.

PPGs can work in a number of different ways. They usually include volunteer patients, the GP practice manager, and maybe one or two GPs. The GP practice may provide some administrative support.

Most groups have regular meetings at the surgery. Some also involve a wider group of patients using e-mail to communicate news and seek patient views. Some GP practices run only a 'virtual group', using email only as the most effective way to engage with local patients and carers.

PPGs can also provide an area in the waiting room with up-to-date information on current activities and opportunities for patients to comment (e.g. suggestion box). This can raise patient awareness of the range of services available at the surgery and help patients to use services effectively.

PLANNING

13 Blakeney Avenue

This Victorian family house has been the subject of numerous applications to extend the premises and divide it into flats. In September, the Planning Inspector dismissed the latest two appeals because of the impact of parking requirements. However, he did appear to leave open the possibility of yet another application that might address the parking issues.

255 Elmers End Road



A planning application to demolish an attractive bungalow and replace it with 7 flats, on the corner of Elmers End and Ancaster Roads has been approved. There are no parking provisions and in contrast with the Inspector's views on 13 Blakeney Avenue reported above, LB Bromley did not consider the impact on Ancaster and surrounding roads which is already 120% overused, by the applicants own admission, by commuters using Elmers End station. Two of the supposed flats are merely bedsits with room for only a single bed in the living/kitchen area.

Carlton Court, Beckenham Road



Permission for demolition and rebuild of 30 flats was refused in October 2017 on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site, its bulky design and inadequate parking. The Planning Inspector dismissed the appeal because of the effects of the bulky design on the character and appearance of the area. At the time of writing, the developer's agents have proposed a meeting with neighbouring residents to discuss new plans.

Chinese Garage



There will be a public hearing of the appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on 8 January 2019. The application is to extend the permitted operating hours to allow a Tesco express to occupy part of the building. The appeal was for 'non-determination' ie failure to make a decision within the specified time period.

Coptic Church, Dunbar Avenue

A new application for a community hall with basement space has been approved by LB Bromley. The hall will be on the site of the disputed football pitch that has caused so much distress to neighbours. We hope that the new building will remove the noise nuisance of balls hitting wire fencing. The applicants must submit a detailed Noise Management Plan to include a timetable of the uses, description of the activity, number of persons attending and mitigation measures to protect residents from exposure to excessive noise. WBRA asked that this plan also include lighting, because neighbours have been badly affected by floodlights in the football and car park area, but LB Bromley did not accept our proposal.

Kia Service Centre, rear of Goodwood Parade

Kia has appealed against refusal of permission for the installation of a car wash for service customers at the end of the car park. The car wash would be within inches of the back gardens of neighbours in Dunbar Avenue. The application was refused on grounds of flood risk and detrimental impact on neighbouring properties including noise, spray and disturbance, as pointed out by WBRA whose objection was again fully quoted in the delegation report. We hope that the Inspector will agree that car washing could easily be accommodated within the building or elsewhere on this large site away from residents. Kia continue to wash cars at this location in their car park, and as an appeal is in progress the council's enforcement officer has suspended enforcement action.

Ye George Inn, High Street



There is an application to fully refurbish the interior and repaint the exterior of this Grade II listed building. The layout will not be much changed but it will give the pub a much needed facelift.

Kelsey House, High Street



This office building has consent under Permitted Development Rights for conversion to residential use, but there are now plans to convert it into a hotel. Beckenham is indeed in need of a hotel in a central location. A hotel would occupy the current office space and be extended out to the rear of the building and one floor on top. The space between Kelsey House and Village Car Care would be built at first floor level and above to provide flats. Under the flats there would be access to a small car park at the rear, but only 16 parking spaces, which worries local residents. Hopes that hotel customers will not have cars may be overly optimistic! Most

importantly, these plans do not include the previous toilet block and flower beds. We have been very concerned that the sale of the toilets and re-development of Kelsey House would lead to these, especially the flower beds being swallowed up.

Elmers End Green Toilet Building

Still no work on the toilet building. We were told that the new owners were waiting for better weather, but they have been too busy with other projects over the summer to start work. It is now approaching winter again and the planning permission states that work should start by July 2019, so we hope to see progress soon.

Clock House Safer Neighbourhood Panel

Geoff Brooks, Chair Clock House SNP

Clock House Safer Neighbourhood Panel meets at Beckenham Police station every 6-8 weeks. We review crime statistics in the ward and discuss any matters or concerns that residents may have relating to crime, graffiti, traffic and much more. Residents are always welcome to come along to join in or just listen.

If you have any local policing concerns please contact your Clock House SNT on 0208 721 2615 or email clockhouse.snt@met.police.uk. Follow the team on Facebook: Clock House Snt and onTwitter: @MPSClockHse Remember, your dedicated Safer Neighbourhoods team is here to make a difference in your community.