



# EXPRESS REVIEW

Copers Cope Area Residents' Association & West Beckenham  
Residents' Association **working for Beckenham on your behalf**



**WBRA 75th Anniversary ★ Beckenham Library Update ★**

**New Cycle Route on Albemarle Rd ★ Air Quality Action Plan**



Beckenham Loos by Glenys Crane

## **COPERS COPE AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (CCARA)**

Founded in 1935 the CCARA covers the Copers Cope Ward including the Town Centre. CCARA organises the Market On The Green local produce and craft market and runs Beckenham Green Friends.

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Association Committee Members	Chair: Chloe-Jane Ross Vice-Chair: Stephen Parkin Secretary: Myra Jeffreys Treasurer: Robert Jeffreys Committee: Marsha Berg, Alan Old, Ben Soule, Rosemary Willsher

## **WEST BECKENHAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (WBRA)**

Founded in 1945, West Beckenham Residents' Association covers the Beckenham areas of Kelsey and Eden Park, Elmers End, Clock House and Penge and Cator.

Contact Details	Email: <a href="mailto:info@westbeckenhamra.org">info@westbeckenhamra.org</a> Web: <a href="http://westbeckenhamra.org">westbeckenhamra.org</a>
Association Committee Members	Chair: Marie Pender Secretary: Eileen Penfold Treasurer: Stafford Bunce Joint Presidents Janet Ambrose, Alan Freeman Committee: Sue Woodward, Arnjali Rowe, Shirley Civil, Diana Davidson.

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## **FROM THE CHAIR**

This is the second joint newsletter from Copers Cope Area RA and West Beckenham RA. We continue to work closely together and look for opportunities to share our resources enabling us to cover more.

There is always room for extra bodies on our committees, in particular:

- Green and environmental issues
- Safer Neighbourhood Panel in Kelsey and Eden Park
- Road safety
- Promoting your local shopping parade

If you are interested in these areas or would like to join either of the Residents' Association Committees please get in touch.

There is lots of news to update you on. Since the last edition our Associations have provided the following submissions to Bromley Council:

- Opportunities in Beckenham regarding the Council's 'Funding submission for highway measures to support social distancing during recovery from lockdown'.
- The impacts in Beckenham of Upward Development Permitted Development Rights and support of Beckenham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal
- Feedback on the revised Air Quality Action Plan 2020-2025 to that will deliver better outcomes in Beckenham.

## **IMPORTANT: Postponed AGMs**

Unfortunately, at the time of writing COVID-19 lockdown restrictions are still in place and we are not able to plan for our in-person AGMs for both the Copers Cope Area Residents' Association (due in March) nor the West Beckenham Residents' Association (due in June).

It is unclear when or if restrictions on public gatherings will be lifted, or indeed, if they are, whether the two Associations will feel it right to invite members to such meetings. When they are held, we are likely to hold our AGMs at the same time and venue, carefully managed to ensure propriety

of voting. We will keep the position under close review and issue another Express Review in good time.

All existing Officers have agreed to continue on an acting basis until further notice. Anyone that was intending to run for an officer position (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary or Committee Members) is welcome to get involved please contact:

- Copers Cope: [hello@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:hello@coperscope.org.uk) or phone 020 805 82885
- West Beckenham: [info@westbeckenham](mailto:info@westbeckenham) or phone 020 805 82885

Please keep in contact and keep an eye on our websites for details of any virtual meetings (which we are considering should in-person meetings not be an option before the year is out).

We hope you all have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Chloe Jane Ross (CCARA) & Marie Pender (WBRA)

## **FUNDING FOR HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS TO REDUCE CONGESTION AND PROMOTE ACTIVE TRAVEL**



There is no doubt that the early days of lockdown had a dramatic effect on the traffic and congestion in Beckenham. With a significant reduction in traffic, our roads were far less congested, less noisy, easier to cross, safer

for cyclists, more roomy for pedestrians and just more pleasant with improved air quality.

In May, as part of the pandemic recovery, the Government advised local authorities it expected them to make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians. The Council identified a number of schemes it may apply for funding. In Beckenham these included:

- Pedestrian crossing at Southend/Park Road (requiring the closure of Park Rd at Southend)
- More cycle routes
- Work to improve pedestrian safety at the Cornerways Surgery junction (Manor Road /Wickham Road / Bromley Road)
- 20mph signs at Worsley Bridge School

Our Associations wrote to the Council and our ward councillors with suggestions for other measures that local people have raised, which included:

- Dealing with speeding on Copers Cope Rd, Park Rd, Brackley Rd, The Avenue and surrounding roads
- Installing a pedestrian crossing on Copers Cope Rd by New Beckenham Station
- Installing a pedestrian crossing on Brackley Rd for Worsley Bridge School
- Installing a pedestrian crossing for Eden Park High School
- Resolving the problems at the junction of Park Rd and Southend Rd, without closing off Park Rd and displacing the traffic to Copers Cope Rd and Brackley Rd
- Investigating options to manage the congestion over Westgate Rd Bridge at peak times

### **Albemarle Road cycle route**

Bromley Council have been successful in securing funding to work up the design for a cycle route



along Albemarle Road. If the design is approved by TfL funding will then need to be sought to implement it.

At the time of going to print the final design of the cycle route was not complete. Our understanding of the route is as follows:

The cycle route will come from Bromley Town Centre, down Glassmill Lane to Shortlands Station. From the station it will go up Bromley Rd, then on to Albemarle Rd to Beckenham Junction. The cycle lane will be a segregated contraflow - this will mean Albemarle Rd will be one way for vehicles.

### **Park Rd Closure at South End Rd**

Bromley Council's Highways Team have confirmed that no funding has been received for the scheme, that includes a pedestrian crossing and also the closure of Park Rd at this junction. Although improvements to this junction are welcome (especially for park access), some residents have expressed concern that the closure would significantly increase traffic on the surrounding roads and alternate options should be looked at.

### **More funding opportunities**

There may be more funding opportunities available in September from the Department of Transport. We encourage residents to contact their Councillors with any suggestions for highway improvements that will promote active travel - please let us know also.

## **BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**



Bromley Council have undertaken an appraisal of the Beckenham Town Centre Conservation Area, and produced a 21 page Conservation Statement setting out the conservation and heritage aspects of our town. Our Associations wrote in support of the

Conservation Statement and we are pleased the Council adopted it on the 14th of July. You can read the statement online at:  
<https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s50082559/Beckenham%20TC%20CA%20Statement%20-%20proposed%20adoption%20version.pdf>

### **Shop Front Guide for Beckenham Town Centre**

Our Associations are working with other members of the Beckenham Town Centre Team (The Beckenham Society, Beckenham Business Association and the Park Langley Residents' Association) to create a Shop Front Guide for Beckenham Town Centre that will use Beckenham Conservation Area status to encourage high quality shop fronts that retain the heritage of the town centre and are sympathetic to the existing buildings. We hope the Council support this as Beckenham has lost a number of heritage shop fronts in recent years as owners have undertaken work before seeking planning permission. Although the Council can undertake enforcement action - they can't bring back a heritage shop front from the skip.

### **PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS EXTENDED TO ALLOW TWO EXTRA FLOORS ON SOME FLATS**



**Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government**

We reported in our last edition on Government plans to extend permitted development rights (PDR). Some of these proposals are now enacted. New rights allow the construction of 2 additional storeys of new homes on the topmost residential storey of existing, detached, purpose-built blocks of flats of 3 storeys or more above ground level. The right applies to blocks built between 1st July 1948 (being those granted planning title under the current planning system) and 5th March 2018 when the intention to introduce a permitted development right to build upwards was first

announced.

Thankfully, the new provisions do not apply in Conservation Areas, such as Beckenham High Street, or to listed buildings, or to buildings that have previously been converted to flats from offices under previous PDR.

One small concession is that for new flats built under this provision and the previous PDR provisions for conversion of offices to flats, councils will now be able to take into account the provision of natural light in each flat. We have long campaigned against PDR that allow substandard housing to be built because they have no minimum space standards and many, including those proposed for Burnhill House, have very limited natural light. However the Government has not responded to criticisms that PDR allows housing that is far below minimum space standards.

There are many such purpose-built blocks of flats in and around Beckenham. We are concerned at the prospect of widespread upward development without the need for planning permission. The planning permission process provides the scrutiny required to ensure that local amenity is protected and the borough continues to promote appropriate good quality development - without it Beckenham may see upward development that is not of benefit to the community.

We have urged the council to adopt what are known as Article 4 Directions, which allow councils to disapply PDR in certain areas. Previously the council has been reluctant to use these directions, but at a Development Control Committee meeting on 14 July, officers were asked to investigate. The new regulations also remove some compensation rights for developers when a council issues a Direction, so that may help. We hope therefore that the council as a whole shares our worries about proliferation of upward development and will adopt Article 4 Directions where appropriate.

Other aspects of the Government's proposals are yet to be enacted - such as PDRs allowing the demolition of commercial, industrial and residential buildings and replacement with new residential units, and the upward extensions to a maximum of two storeys on top of existing houses to form additional living space, or completely new homes.



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## AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN 2020-2025



Bromley Council are undertaking a consultation on their draft Air Quality Action Plan. The plan outlines the actions the Council will take to improve air quality in the London Borough of Bromley between 2020-2025. We have submitted feedback on the plan which requests increased action on air pollution monitoring, enhancing biodiversity including more tree planting, and improving our trouble road hotspots to promote more

cycling and walking.

Identified in Bromley's draft Air Quality Action Plan document is a plan to change the "gyratory" (i.e. one way) system around Elmers End Green. This Green is one of only two Air Quality Focus Areas in Bromley ( the other one is around Tweedy Road in central Bromley). The council is researching the possibility of removing the one way system. This could be good or bad for the local area, but we will be watching developments closely and want to protect Elmers End Green.

The Council extended the consultation deadline until 10 August 2020, hopefully many of you will receive our summer newsletter before then. The council advises that feedback can be provided by completing a short survey. The links to the Plan and survey can be found at:

[https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/413/pollution\\_control\\_-\\_air\\_quality/548/air\\_quality\\_in\\_bromley](https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/413/pollution_control_-_air_quality/548/air_quality_in_bromley)

For more detailed responses residents may want to email the Council Pollution Team at [ehts.customer@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:ehts.customer@bromley.gov.uk) and copy in ward

councillors. We are interested in your views, please let us know by email to [hello@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:hello@coperscope.org.uk)

## **UPDATE: COUNCIL PLANS TO MOVE BECKENHAM LIBRARY INTO THE BECKENHAM PUBLIC HALL**

Since our last edition in March, little has happened publicly. But we understand that the Council has commissioned two consultants on the proposed changes to the library and Beckenham Halls.



To recap - Bromley

Council is proposing to move the library from its present site at Clock House and relocate it within the Beckenham Public Hall just off Beckenham High Street (shown below). The existing library building would be demolished and a five storey block of flats would replace it.

Local groups were outraged and the public gallery was overflowing with residents at the Executive Council meeting on 27 November. Nevertheless the Committee voted unanimously to proceed to the feasibility studies.

The Executive committed that the move would not take place unless the new facilities were at least as large and contain at least as many books as the current library. But they propose to use the two smaller rooms in Beckenham Hall, which we estimate to be about half to two-thirds of the floor space of the current library.

The Library is much loved in its present location where families often combine visits to the library with visits to the Spa. Beckenham Halls too is a much loved local resource, even if it has suffered from neglect in recent years. It is used by a wide range of local societies and clubs – children's activities, adult dance, exercise classes, bridge, philatelic, arts, church

activities mainly in the smaller rooms proposed to be converted to the library.



The proceeds of the sale of the library site for redevelopment of the library site as a five storey block of flats would be used to fund the Beckenham Halls conversion. The flats would extend to the pavement, covering much of the current green space.

## **101 flats to be built within 100 meters of the library**

The Council has advised the need for housing is the main driver for the library's relocation. However, in June the huge office building close to the Library and opposite the shopping parade got planning permission for a whopping 101 flats. It could be argued that the need for housing in this area has been met and therefore Beckenham can retain its purpose built library.

## **English Heritage Listing**

There is now an application to English Heritage to list the existing library, which is a distinctive building in the Elm Road Conservation Area. Its demolition would be a great loss to the area and contrary to the principles of the Conservation Area.

There appear to be two sets of consultants engaged to assess the feasibility of these proposals. They were scheduled to report to the council in June, but we have heard nothing so far. One consultant was engaged to hold focus group meetings with resident groups, but these were scheduled for early March, just as the Coronavirus hit us. Instead the consultant used

phone conversations to gauge local attitudes to the proposals. CCARA and WBRA were among the local groups contacted.

We understand that a second consultant was engaged to assess the physical implications of the proposals, ie, as we interpret it, the ability of Beckenham Halls to accommodate the current provision of library services.

## **Campaign to Save Beckenham Library and Public Halls**



The vigorous local protests that took place in early 2020 are re-starting with a new banner outside the library on Beckenham Road. The online petition achieved over 6300 signatures and the paper version 900. More will be planned when the consultants' reports are published by the council, though we understand that they may not be considered until September. To sign the online petition go to **Change.org.uk** and search 'Save Beckenham Library'.

There are also regular protests outside the library on Beckenham Road. Keep up-to-date with the campaign here:

- Facebook **SaveBeckenhamLibrary**
- Twitter **@SAVEBeckLibrary**

## **DERELICT SITES AT BECK HOUSE 36A, COPERS COPE ROAD AND CORNER OF STUMPS HILL/SOUTHEND ROAD**

Thanks to one of our members, Rod Reed, who has lodged a formal complaint with the Council to bring the 4 years derelict block of flats (Beck House) on Copers Cope Rd and the 25 years disused land at Stumps Hill into housing usage.



With the borough under such pressure to provide housing that it is proposing to demolish the current purpose built Library to create space for a housing development (see previous article) it is imperative that already vacant sites be brought into use. We will keep you posted.

## **BECKENHAM TOGETHER - BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT** **By Zoe Carr, BID Manager**

Isn't it great to see Beckenham High Street, Chancery and Clock House parades buzzing again as lockdown eases?

Throughout lockdown the BID team has continued to support, guide and advise our local businesses and worked closely with the London Borough of Bromley and continues to do so in supporting the reopening of the businesses and to support the local economy get back on its feet.

Essential businesses open in lockdown were the mainstay for all of us, be it food or pharmacies and the queuing systems suggested in government guidelines were well adhered to to ensure everyone's safety.



The BID worked together with Bromley Council to ensure that businesses entitled to the government grants were made aware that these were available; to address social distancing guidelines and public safety including implementation of the barriers on the roads to widen pavements and signage; to support the reopening of bars and restaurants safely. Several zoom meetings were held with the Councils Public Protection Team and the Metropolitan Police. Beckenham Together have put in place a security team to support the door staff of these businesses and they are still working every Friday and Saturday throughout July.

**Eat Out to Help Out** is now actively being promoted to all our outlets that are selling food, as well as on social media to encourage residents and visitors alike to support our local hospitality businesses.

Throughout August when eating at participation establishments on a Monday – Wednesday discounts are offered to diners and the business can then claim the money back from the Government. Businesses do have to register first and will be sent information to show that they are participating to put in their windows.

It's lovely to see businesses open again and most recent reports are that activity on the High Street is now

The poster is set against a dark blue background. At the top left is the HM Government logo. In the center is a large white circle with a red border. Inside the circle, the words "Eat Out" are written in a large, blue, cursive font, followed by "— TO —" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font, and "HELP OUT" in a large, red, blocky font. Below this, there is a red circle containing the text "UP TO £10 OFF\*" in white, with "PER PERSON" and "Mon-Weds" in smaller white text below it. At the bottom of the poster, the text "Welcome back – we've missed you!" is written in white, followed by "Come in, relax and enjoy up to £10 off food and non-alcoholic drinks per person." in a smaller white font. At the very bottom, in small white text, it says "\*Terms apply".

steady throughout the week as those people who are working at home or on furlough are shopping locally. We hope that you have seen our Shop Local campaign and are recognising the benefits of supporting the local businesses.

Zoe Carr, BID Manager  
hello@beckenhamtogether.co.uk

## **SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PANELS**

### **Copers Cope, Clock House and Kelsey and Eden Park wards**

Theft from motor vehicles has been set as a priority for both Copers Cope and Clock House wards, with shoplifting in



Copers Cope and gangs in Clock House also being targeted.

During the COVID lockdown the SNP meetings have not taken place. Also, since this time all our ward Police Officers have changed due to promotions and transfers. We look forward to being introduced to our new teams soon.

The Safer Neighbourhood Panels (SNPs) usually meet one evening about every twelve weeks to discuss local criminal activity with the Ward police teams, share neighbourhood information and together set one borough-wide and one local policing priority for the next period.

The Chair of Kelsey and Eden Park SNP, Colin Hughes, is trying to revive this Panel. If you can help please contact Colin Hughes, 1 Walled Garden Close, Langley Park, Beckenham BR3 3GN [www.kelseyandedenpark.co.uk](http://www.kelseyandedenpark.co.uk)

Copers Cope and Clock House Panels are well attended and would like to welcome new members. Anyone interested should make contact on [coperscope@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:coperscope@met.pnn.police.uk) or [clockhouse.SNT@met.police.uk](mailto:clockhouse.SNT@met.police.uk) or [chairman@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:chairman@coperscope.org.uk)

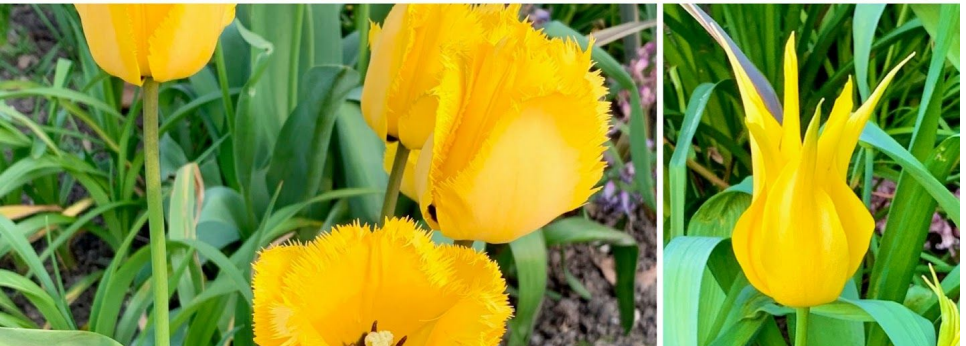


## BECKENHAM GREEN FRIENDS

[greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk)

[facebook.com/beckenhamgreen](https://facebook.com/beckenhamgreen)

Beckenham Green has provided a great open space for many of us throughout the lockdown period. Initially a tranquil space to be enjoyed as we embarked on a new routine of daily walks, but gradually getting busier as more of us needed a local space to sit, relax and catch up with friends & family (at a safe distance) as we continue to return to the 'new normal'.



The rewards of our bulb planting last autumn gave the Green a welcome splash of colour throughout spring / early summer with vibrant yellow Daffodils and Tulips, followed by the deep purple Alliums.

The Beckenham Green Friends have not been able to meet as a group since 21st March, but where possible, individual members have continued to work on the Green, in isolation, to help maintain and tidy some of the borders we look after.

There is still plenty of work we would like to do on the Green and plan to hold our next 'Action day' on Monday 7th September which will focus on clearing out more of the brambles, nettles and weeds. If you would like to join us and help improve our 'Green space' even more then contact us on [greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk) or via our Facebook page [facebook.com/beckenhamgreen](https://facebook.com/beckenhamgreen).

## MARKET ON THE GREEN

Unfortunately our May market was not able to go ahead due to lockdown.

Our next market planned for 10am to 4pm, Sat 26th September, will go ahead if safe to do so and by agreement with the Council.

Market On The Green is a community market run by volunteers of our Association on Beckenham Green (next to St George's Church). The Market has street food, craft and produce stalls, fun fair and free entertainment on stage. We love to host local schools, clubs, musicians and troupes.

If you would like a stall or are a local music and dance act that would like to perform please get in touch at [localmarket@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:localmarket@coperscope.org.uk)



# WBRA celebrates its 75th Anniversary

## 1945 to 2020



**West Beckenham Residents' Association was formed in 1945, as the war was ending, but none of us are quite old enough to remember exactly when or by whom! So 2020 marks our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We had planned a small celebration at our 2020 AGM, but unfortunately Coronavirus has put a stop to such gatherings for the time being. So**

**we have put together a few thoughts to mark the occasion. Janet Ambrose reminisces about her long years on the committee which she joined in the 1960s. And our most distinguished long standing member Lionel Sawkins gives us recollections of music in Beckenham that go back to 1959.**

But first from me - I became chair of the Association in 2006, taking over from Ian Muir. My first few years as WBRA Chair from 2006 were very quiet, with our main occupations being the redevelopment of Beckenham Hospital into Beckenham Beacon and two parks - Crystal Palace Park and Beckenham Place Park. Funnily enough, neither park was in WBRA's area but both are valued and thanks to strongly interested members Alan Freeman and Nick Goy, we did all we could to protect them and stop the redevelopment of a large part of Crystal Palace Park for housing, and eventually the proposed takeover by a Chinese development company fell by the wayside.

During my 14 years as chair we have also had a running battle regarding Kings Hall Country Club and cricket ground becoming derelict and its eventual regeneration as housing and tennis courts. Local residents Garnet



Frost and Cliff Wilkins led a long hard battle to rescue what was The Studio arts venue on Beckenham Road from ruin when water was pouring through the roof. Eventually it was taken over by CityGate Church, who did a marvellous job of restoring the Grade II listed building as multi-use Venue 28.



We have also fought to retain our local toilet facilities but sadly those campaigns for both Elmers End and Thornton’s Corner toilets did not succeed against total insistence by LB Bromley to no longer provide public toilets. In the case of Elmers End, WBRA did however succeed in

persuading LB Bromley not to sell the freehold of this small piece of land in the centre of the public space of the Green. Sadly, four years on, both this ex-toilet building and the one at Thornton's Corner in the centre of Beckenham remain empty and neglected.. The Elmers End building was bought but nothing has happened. At Thornton's Corner, the fate of the building remains as uncertain as ever.

As it happens, I was secretary to the Elmer's End Residents' Association prior to its merger with WBRA in the early 2000's. Many WBRA members were previously with EERA and will remember battles about the Twinlock and Muirhead factories and proposals for a huge Asda 'out of town' type supermarket on their sites, which is now the more acceptable Tesco store. And also against the proposals for a waste station at what is now South Norwood Country Park. Before EERA closed, we commissioned the Elmers End sign on the Green.



WBRA has continued to celebrate local history in both Elmers End and Clock House, commissioning plaques setting out their past and, especially in the case of Clock House, the amazing list of famous people who have lived there. We also funded stickers for the shops in Clock House Parade showing their first few occupants between 1906 and 1938.

WBRA have also played key roles in issues of local importance – most recently as members of the working group overseeing the High Street improvements and as part of the campaign about the move of the Post Office from the locally listed building on the War Memorial to WH Smith's. We also worked with CCARA and LB Bromley to achieve the Purple Flag award for Beckenham. We have promoted, within the Town Centre Team alongside Copers Cope Area RA, The Beckenham Society and Beckenham Business Association, the designation of Beckenham's High Street as a Conservation Area in 2015,

and jointly produced a Conservation Area Guide which has been adopted by the Council to guide planning decisions.

I would like to thank our immediate past President, Geoff Slater, (2002-2011) for his recent letter saying:-

*I have now been a WBRA member for some 60 years at the end of this calendar year..... I have enjoyed my long membership and was pleased, and proud, to undertake several roles within it in my younger years. ... I send my best wishes to you all and wish you success in all your future activities on behalf of this area. Much has changed in these last 60 years in the locality, not a lot of it for the better! But WBRA soldiers on, and will do so, I hope, for many more years after I am no longer here to offer my token support.*

All throughout our 75 years, we have helped individual members with such issues as neighbours' planning applications, unneighbourly business operations and disruptive building sites. Long will we continue to do so.

Of course, right now one of the most important issues is the fight to stop the move of the library to Beckenham Halls and the demolition of the existing library building – see more in the main ER.

I thank present and recent past members of the WBRA committee, many, especially Eileen Penfold and Alan Freeman have given decades of service, alongside, of course, Janet Ambrose, and newer members who contribute greatly to the cause. It has been, and is, a privilege to work with you!

I hope to see members, old and new, at the next open meeting, whenever that might be. And I look forward to WBRA's next 75 years working on behalf of the people of Beckenham as part of a town-wide Residents' Association.

Marie Pender

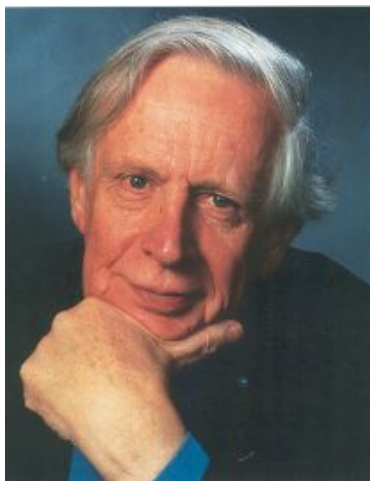
## **Reflections on Sixty years of Music in Beckenham**

Lionel Sawkins

Arriving at Holy Trinity Church, Lennard Road in 1959 as their Choirmaster & Organist, I little thought I would still be in the parish 60 years later. I found a fine choir of men and boys and a magnificent Lewis organ (the latter since destroyed by fire). In July 1963, the first Beckenham Summer Choral Festival at Holy Trinity brought together the choirs of the church and that of St James's, Elmers End, the Manor Choir (later the Beckenham Chorale) and an orchestra of local musicians with students from the London music colleges, in a programme of Bach, Britten and Fauré. The choral festival moved to St George's Church in 1965 and in 1969, this burgeoning event moved to the Fairfield Hall, Croydon. Also, in 1963, Britten's Noye's Fludde was staged at Holy Trinity, with children from Hackney and local schools.

Beckenham Chorale also continued to give concerts on its own, as did the then Beckenham Orchestra, a group of local professionals, teachers and amateurs. In the 1970s, Beckenham Chorale began to spread its wings into central London and Oxford (including the English Bach Festival).

In late 1976, I resigned from the Chorale and Choral Festival to concentrate on my researches into French Baroque music to publish modern editions of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century works (including 5 operas) and also a catalogue of the music of Lalande, composer of sacred music for the Sun-King, Louis XIV. In this, as in so many other ventures, I was ably assisted by John Nightingale, the distinguished Beckenham pianist and conductor. Ultimately, all of these editions (researched, engraved and mostly printed locally) were played by some 100 groups worldwide, and



CDs have appeared on several labels. I recently travelled to Hamburg for a wonderful performance of one of these editions, printed in West Wickham!

Today, Beckenham is fortunate to have one of the most distinguished church choirs in England at St George's Church (for 36 years under Nigel Groome, now Marcus Wibberley) as well as Beckenham Chorale (Mark Griffiths) and the St George's Chamber Orchestra (Dominic Moore) not to forget the excellent Bromley Schools' Orchestras, so we are well served with excellent music at a very high standard. For over 20 years, postgraduate students from the Royal College of Music and elsewhere have lodged with us, including the celebrated organist, Sarah Kim (now organist of the Oratoire du Louvre in Paris) who has been heard several times at St George's; the latest is the virtuoso pianist, Arina Lazgiiian, from Russia, giving concerts in Penge Congregational, St George's, and at St John's, Smith Square with St George's Choir and the excellent Chameleon Arts Orchestra to commemorate Beethoven's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday this year; Arina is also giving a solo recital at the Wigmore Hall.

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*Lionel was born in Australia and already had a sparkling musical career in Sydney and Brisbane before coming to England in 1958, when he was appointed Organist of Holy Trinity, Beckenham and Head of Music at Upton House. Lionel initiated the Beckenham Summer Choral Festival to enable local choirs to join together to perform major works. Throughout an amazingly busy career packed with honours, he has always found time to promote music and the arts in Beckenham. See <http://lionelsawkins.co.uk/index.html>*

## **Recollections of 50 years of WBRA**

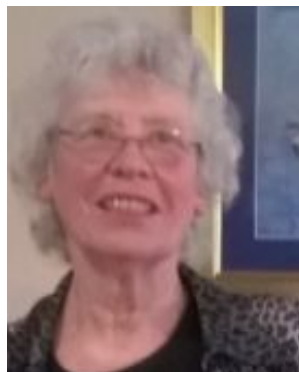
**Janet Ambrose**

**“Once in the days way back beyond recall  
When on the earth the mists began to fall...”**

– that's around the time I joined the WBRA straight on to the committee, possibly just as an onlooker. This must have been in the 1960's. I recollect



there was a great to-do about ‘Ringway 2’. Would you believe that the then conservative Greater London Council planned to build a motorway which involved destroying all the houses on the south side of Warwick, Witham, Mackenzie and Kent House Roads and Kent House Lane, joining the dual carriageway at Sydenham. WBRA membership soared at this time and one of our most active campaigners was George West – a local politician, later a councillor and then WBRA Chairman. I think it was George who persuaded me to join.



The Chairman at that time was Councillor Foster. I understood he was a WBRA founder with the aim of getting council and residents working together, and there were certainly two councillors at all committee meetings.

By common consent committee meetings were held on ‘neutral’ ground – ie the first house in Elm Road owned by the Church. Wow – what tense occasions they were! I gradually became aware that two members were going through a divorce and the secretary (extremely efficient) would bite anyone’s head off at the slightest question of anything she disagreed with. I assure you I didn’t open my mouth for at least the first two years. Also I remember I particularly admired the planning officer who gave thorough informative reports to each meeting. Sometime later I took on this role myself.

We had two vice presidents then – Winnie Evans and Dot Piper-Bowen. Winnie was part of a subgroup which would retire (led by George West) after each meeting to a local hostelry to “assuage our thirst” enthusiastically but I particularly remember her always trying to sell me tickets for our annual cheese and wine party which I think may have followed the AGM. Dot Piper-Bowen was a tiny lady, a remarkable World War 2 heroine with a most powerful soprano voice which would have filled the Albert Hall without any amplification. She hosted our annual Christmas party in her Queens Road house complete with grand piano and

hired pianist, and everyone was required to perform a party piece. I thought this was fun but there was a heck of a lot of stage fright amongst other committee members.

Tony Pomeroy was another ebullient chairman, ably supported by George West as vice chair, until I succeeded Tony. I visited George in the old Bromley Hospital just before he died in 1989. His last words to me (and possibly in this world) were “Look after the WestBecks for me”. I guess I’ve done my best.

The big campaign in the 1980’s was the development of the old disused South Norwood sewage farm, now the South Norwood Country Park. Bromley Council wanted it to become a rubbish transfer station, but it was an important bird and wildlife sanctuary. We joined forces with the South Norwood Residents Association and it became the most wonderful community-led campaign, with both residents associations submitting their own planning applications. The wonderful facility remains. It shows what a community can do if it gets its act together. (Remember this while trying to save Beckenham Library!)

I became chairman of WBRA in 1984 and was wonderfully supported by the then president Major Frank Heaney who lived in Beckenham Road. He dealt with the ceremonials (and we were closer to the council then, entertaining the Mayor at our cheese and wine party) and I just dealt with the business.

I stood down as chair in 1986, but remained involved in the work of WBRA and eventually I found myself acting chairman again in 2001. Membership was dwindling, so I called an extraordinary general meeting and it was made clear that WBRA would be wound up unless more people volunteered to take up offices.

This was our re-birth. I think you know the rest.

*In 2012, Janet Ambrose was elected as one of our joint Presidents in recognition of over 50 years of service to WB*



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**BECKENHAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**  
**For local small businesses across Beckenham**  
**By Jackie Groundsell, BBA**



Since COVID-19 struck, to support and help Beckenham business-owners and decision makers to get through the challenges, the Beckenham

Business Association has been holding regular weekly online meetings with guest speakers and opportunities for attendees to introduce themselves and network. Some of the highlights have been:

- Michel Eusden, owner of EuroWeekly News, shared experiences of Spanish lockdown to help UK & Beckenham businesses, giving us confidence that we would get through it when we locked-down.
- Build Your Mighty Resilience! - Zeenat Noorani.
- 5 Top LinkedIn Tips -Sherry Bevan
- Beckenham Summertime Quiz - Kat Webb, Beckenham tour guide
- Surviving & then Thriving – collective views from business owner – Nick Howe, NatWest London HO
- Holding retail events on Instagram during the pandemic – Alan Old, local businessman
- How to Make a Plan to Get Paid – Annabel Kaye, Irenicon
- Today's Practical Advice for Small Business - Paul Bailey
- Zoom virtual background presentation – Dave Henson
- 50 Years of Teeth – Nick Patsias
- Unleash Your Diamond – Bhavya Arora
- Communicating in a Crisis – Jackie Barrie
- 5 Top Tips in for Social Media Excellence - Gary Cooper
- Manage Energy and Invoices Tips – Jodie Johnson, local businesswoman

Now that shops & businesses are opening and people's work-days are changing, these online meetings will be held fortnightly, as of end of July.

In September the BBA will hold its annual conference, with guest speakers giving talks on business skills and strength to soldier on. Details to follow soon.

If you're a Beckenham based sole trader, SME, maybe working from home, or hot-desking, Beckenham Business Association is for you. For further details on Beckenham Business Association and events – contact [info@beckenhambusinessassociation.co.uk](mailto:info@beckenhambusinessassociation.co.uk), 020 8650 8015 [www.beckenhambusinessassociation.co.uk](http://www.beckenhambusinessassociation.co.uk)

## WHAT'S NEW ON CLOCK HOUSE PARADE

### **art-K are back!**

This new shop offering arts training for adults and children obviously had to close in March but has re-opened on Clock House Parade - just behind the bus stop! Summer Art Workshops for children aged between 6 and 16 are available to book for all of August. There are plenty of projects to choose from: Pop-Art Cupcake Canvas', Clay Chimpanzee's, Ink-Blot Monsters and Underwater Watercolour Scenes, find our more online at [art-k.co.uk](http://art-k.co.uk)



### **Alexander Stores No 61 Clock House Parade**



A first for Beckenham, the recently opened Alexander Stores offers plastic free shopping. Take your own containers and fill them up from the produce bins. They will stock pulses, grains, herbs and spices and cleaning and beauty products.

## WHAT'S NEW ON THE HIGH STREET



**SAS Group Holdings** has moved into the former Thakery Williams site. It appears to represent more than one company, one of which undertakes wholesale trade of motor vehicle parts and accessories.

**Flock + Herd**, Beckenham's first butchers on the High Street in many years opened in July and has been quite popular (the BBQ box has been recommended!).



**Sapores Vero's** long awaited refurbishment is complete and the restaurant reopened with a new shop front. **Xentro Kitchen**, Beckenham's awaited sushi restaurant, has not yet opened. **Andreas** (closed down clothing shop at 34 High Street) is due to become a nail bar. There is no news on the vacant shops where **Halifax** and **Istanbul Barbers** were.

### Former Public Conveniences set to become a coffee shop



Back in February Bromley Council advertised for rental offers for the leasehold of the old public loo block. The tender exercise was successful and a prospective tenant has been selected. There is no certainty yet, as the lease process needs to be signed a planning application

approved, however if it all goes as anticipated the building agents have confirmed the opening of a new coffee shop facility. Let's hope the new coffee shop signs up to the Community Toilet Scheme to bring back public loos on the site.



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## **PLANNING AND LICENSING UPDATE**

Local people may lodge comments online on any applications below that are currently being considered by Bromley Council - go to [bromley.gov.uk/environment & planning/planning/search planning](http://bromley.gov.uk/environment&planning/planning/searchplanning) applications and enter the case reference in the search box. You must give your name & address, otherwise your views may not be considered.

### **The Parade, 78-80 Croydon Road 20/01823**

Prior approval has been granted to convert the old NatWest Bank, laterly an office for the police, to flats.

### **313 - 315 Upper Elmers End 19/01136**

Permission has been granted to convert the Co-op shop (which moved over the road to the new housing development) to a restaurant.

### **The Registry, 32-32 Beckenham Road (old Link/Capita offices) 20/01276/RESPA**

Permission was granted through PDR in June for the conversion of the five/six-storey office building close to the Spa and Library, and currently



occupied by Link Group, who took over Capita nearly three years ago.

101 No. flats are planned, comprising 47 No. one-bedroom, 41 No. two-bedroom and 13 No. studio units. 87 No. car parking spaces are provided at ground and basement floor levels, and externally at the rear. 174 No. cycle parkings are also provided.

### **Carlton Court, 23 Beckenham Road 19/01637/FULL**

Permission was granted in April for the most recent application to redevelop Carlton Court, an existing two-storey block of six two-bedroom flats situated diagonally opposite the Fire Station, on the corner with Hayne Road.

The development will involve the demolition of the existing building and garage block and the construction of two three-storey blocks of 24 No flats, comprising 6 No one-bedroom, 18 No two-bedroom units.



The existing block provides accommodation for up to 24 people, whereas this new scheme will increase to a maximum to 74 people, although only 12 No car parking spaces are provided for future residents!

### **Benedict House, 63 Copers Cope Road 19/03027**

Approval was granted in June for an application to convert the building into private residential flats, including the addition of a three-storey side and rear extension, following a withdrawal of the previous application in early last year.

Three years ago, this closed nursing home was granted temporary permission to be used as a residential support centre providing accommodation, care, support services and training for people who had

been made homeless.

The development will comprise 20 No. flats: 9 No. two-bedroom, 10 No. 1-bedroom and 1 No. studio flats.

### **Land between 1 and 1c Copers Cope Road 19/03145**

A decision is still awaited for an application to demolish the existing low-rise building and erect a three-storey building containing 5 apartments (4No 2-bedroom and 1No 1-bedroom) with associated car parking, refuse/cycle storage and amenity areas.

### **NatWest Sports Ground, Copers Cope Road (Gambados) 19/04644**

A large scale redevelopment of the site surrounding, and including the former Gambados childrens' play centre, by Crystal Palace Football Club was granted planning permission in June. CPFC's plan is to upgrade and consolidate their Youth Academy facilities that currently occupy part of the overall site.



The old Gambaos building will be replaced with a sports hall, and the adjacent gym and ancillary areas would be remodelled. A full-size, football pitch, covered by a large, fully enclosed building, will sit next to Copers Cope Road where there are currently 10 smaller artificial pitches. The remainder of the

site will be filled with a full size artificial pitch with floodlighting, a full-size show pitch with spectator seating and 6No training pitches - 2No full size, 2No ¾ size and 2No ½ size.

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS ON THE HIGH STREET**

### **3 Beckenham Road (Barclays Bank) 16/04145**

Applications for discharge of conditions are gradually being submitted, suggesting that construction work to add two storeys on top of the bank

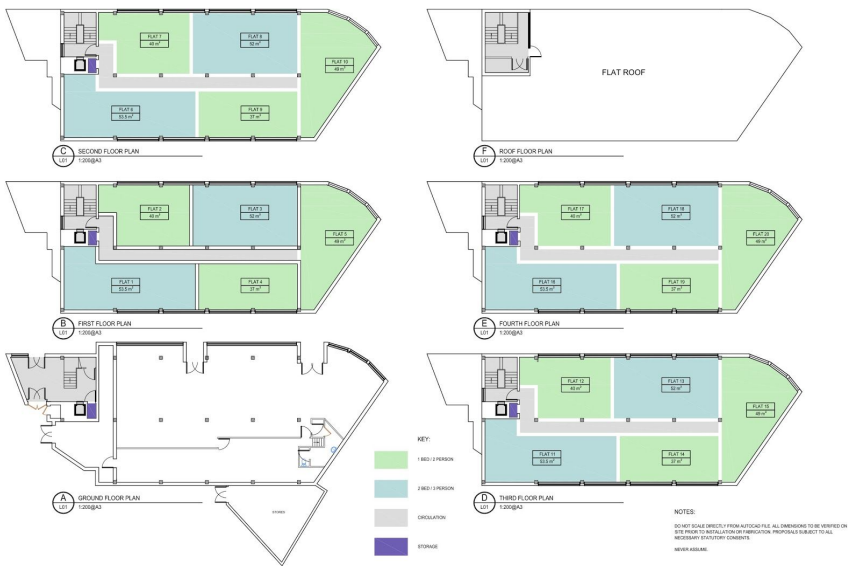
(six new flats) is imminent, although there is currently no evidence of work commencing at the site.

**Kelsey House, 75-77 High Street 19/00286/FULL**

The decision last year by LBB to refuse planning permission for an application to convert the existing four-storey office building into a hotel and flats, is still currently the subject of an appeal by the applicant, though no date has yet been set for a hearing.

**Kelsey House, 75-77 High Street 20/01749/RESPA**

However, a separate application, using Permitted Development Rights (PDR), to convert the upper four storeys of the building into flats has recently been granted prior approval. There will be twenty flats in total comprising 12 one-bedroom and 8 two-bedroom units. As is often the case with conversions of this nature, the majority of the flats in this development fail to meet the minimum space standards required for new dwellings - all of the two-bedroom flats are 15% smaller than what should be provided and four of the one-bedroom units undersized by 5%. The drawings also show most of the party walls (walls that separate flats from one another) extending up to and against the windows, making it difficult to see how acoustic and fire separation will be achieved.



### **210 High Street 19/03638**

An application to use these premises as a massage parlour has been refused, and the appeal that was made has been withdrawn.

### **122-124 High Street (old Cartridge World shop) 19/01048**

There are no further developments regarding the immediate future of this long-vacant shop unit. Last autumn a planning application for the change of use of the shop to a restaurant was refused. A planning enforcement case is currently in progress concerning unauthorised building works at the rear of the property.

### **128 High Street (old Allure shop) 19/02948**

An application made shortly before Christmas for a replacement shop front for a restaurant that already has permission for change of use. Yet again, an owner or leaseholder of a shop in the High Street Conservation Area has proceeded with carrying out building works to a street frontage before securing planning consent. What was a traditional arrangement, with symmetrical shop frontage and recessed entrance door, has now been changed to a completely flush frontage, in a dark grey metal frame with a door set to one side and an uncharacteristic stall riser (plinth beneath the shop window) clad in modern yellow brick. A retrospective application to render and paint the stall riser in Anthracite Grey to match the doors has now been approved.

### **49 High Street (Branded) 20/02148**

Work is already underway to change the frontage of the old 'Frock Follies' shop and extend the Branded restaurant, following the company's purchase of the next-door unit several years ago. This is despite an application for change of use only just recently being submitted for approval.

### **34 High Street (old Andreas Boutique) 20/01319**

Permission was granted last month to change the use of the shop to a nail salon. No detailed drawings of the proposal, the new frontage or signage were submitted, so the leaseholder is required to make a separate application for any proposed changes to the shopfront, and an advertising application for any new signage.

**Burnhill House, 50 Burnhill Road (Kelsey Square)**  
**20/00065/RESPA**

The appeal against LB Bromley’s refusal of approval for yet another application to convert the existing offices to 22No one-bedroom flats and bedsits has not yet been decided.

The approval granted in 2016 for conversion to 14 flats (just the existing office building) has now expired, but would have permitted development rights if it were re-submitted.This latest application that has been refused is identical to the one which was dismissed on appeal last year and still does not appear to contain the signed legal document required by the Planning Inspector to ensure the occupants of the flats cannot obtain residents’ parking permits. However, this could not prevent occupants having cars and still parking on roads that don’t have parking restrictions. There are also concerns for road safety with a large increase in pedestrian footfall straight onto the narrowest point in Burnhill Rd.

The proposed units are mostly quite cramped, as there is no minimum space requirement and natural light, ventilation and privacy is very poor. The Police commented on the proposal with regard to safety and security of the building, making reference to the lack of compartmentalisation, large number of interconnecting corridors/stairs and inadequate entrance.

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Information about how to join either the Copers Cope Areas Residents Association (CCARA) or West Beckenham Residents Association (WBRA) can be found below. As a member you will receive up to three editions of the Express Review a year.

### **Coper Cope Area Residents' Association Joining Instructions**

Copers Cope Area Residents' Association predominantly covers the Copers Cope Ward of Beckenham. The annual subscription cost per household is £5. The simplest and most secure way to join is online.

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If you cannot join online we accept standing orders - for a form get in touch by email to [chairman@coperscope.org.uk](mailto:chairman@coperscope.org.uk) or by post to

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### **Affiliate Membership – Reduced Subscription**

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### **West Beckenham Residents' Association Joining Instructions**

West Beckenham Residents' Association covers the Beckenham parts of Clock House, Kelsey & Eden Park and Penge & Cator wards. The annual subscription per household is £5 or £2 for the unwaged. See the membership and renewal form overleaf.

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