

Summer 2021



EXPRESS REVIEW

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



**Blackfriars rail service ★ Beckenham Theatre building sale ★
Cherry Tree Walk gas works ★ Highways update**



The lake at Beckenham Place Park 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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| Contact Details | Email: hello@coperscope.org.uk Web: coperscope.org.uk Phone: 020 3732 5260 Twitter & Instagram: CCARA_Beckenham |
| 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, Dee Heatherington, Jen McArthur |

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.

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| Contact Details | Email: info@westbeckenhamra.org Web: westbeckenhamra.org Phone: 020 3732 5260 |
| 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

Welcome to the latest edition of the Express Review from our Residents' Associations, Copers Cope Area Residents' Association (CCARA) and West Beckenham Residents' Association (WBRA).



Chloe-Jane Ross
Chair CCARA



Marie Pender
Chair WBRA

Since the last edition our Associations have written to:

- Our MP about the new planning laws and asked for his support in protecting local consultation.
- Southeastern Rail and our MP to save the Blackfriars service from Beckenham Junction.
- Bromley Council to support the reinstatement of online streaming of Council Committee meetings.

CCARA have been pleased to welcome two new committee members, Dee Hetherington (Health) and Jen McArthur (Environment). There is always room for extra bodies on our committees, in particular:

- Helping with Market on the Green
- As representative for Safer Neighbourhood Panel in Kelsey and Eden Park
- Monitoring and reporting on particular specific areas that may be of concern to members.

IMPORTANT: Postponed AGMs and members meetings

We are emerging from lockdown, but again we have not been able to hold any public meetings this year. It remains to be seen whether our meetings can resume any time soon and we will continue to review.

WBRA include with this Express Review their accounts for 2020/2021 in the absence of their AGM, with a message to please check on your subscriptions this year. The committee members are willing to continue until we can hold the usual elections in a meeting. All existing CCARA Officers have agreed to continue on an acting basis for as long as necessary

and members are welcome to join the committee and/or put themselves forward for an office role.

Best wishes

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

LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the pandemic local councils were given authority by central government to hold committee meetings virtually. Earlier this year the authority ceased and councils were required to return to holding committee meetings in person, and so Bromley Council's live streaming of meetings ceased.

Although the Councillors now have to attend committee meetings in person, the meetings themselves could still be live streamed. Our Associations wrote to the Council in support of reinstating the live streaming.

The live streaming of Council meetings has been of great benefit to local people wishing to engage with Council decision-making. Those who could not otherwise attend Council meetings in person have been afforded the opportunity to participate.

We are pleased that the Council decided to reinstate the live streaming of committee meetings. At this time residents cannot participate remotely; if they wish to ask an oral question or make a submission verbally they will still need to attend the relevant meeting in person.

We hope that in the future remote participation will be available. Also, our Associations have requested that recordings of meetings be made available for a period of time after the meeting to give residents the opportunity to catch up on Council business.

To find out more about Council Committee meetings please go to the following link or the Council and Democracy menu on the Council website.

<https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/uuCoverpage.aspx>

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL - SPEEDING

Our local ward police have received feedback from residents about speeding. They have asked if residents can let them know the time and location of the speeding as this will help them identify hotspots and be able to schedule their patrols to those areas at targeted times.

Our Copers Cope dedicated ward officer can be contacted by email at Hicran.Robbins@met.police.uk and tel on 020 7161 8805.



BECKENHAM'S EMPTY BUILDINGS

Residents may be aware of a large fire that recently occurred in a long empty large residential property near Beckenham Place Park. This has raised the issue of how empty buildings are managed and what role the Council might have in ensuring they are safe and tidy.



CCARA have been contacted by two members who have been individually looking at and following up on some of the long-empty buildings in the Copers Cope Ward.

The Council have previously taken enforcement action to tidy up Beck House 36a, Copers Cope Road and the corner of Stumps Hill and Southend Road - however they confirm that no further action will be taken at this time in regard to the current state of both sites.

Empty buildings across the borough could be put to good use, and having them occupied would keep them well maintained, safe and tidy. Councils do have powers to bring empty buildings back into use as homes, and powers to deal with derelict buildings. However it does not seem that Bromley Council wish to exercise these powers with some of Beckenham's very long-empty buildings.

The Council had proposed charging more Council Tax on buildings that have been empty for more than two years, using the funds to help facilitate bringing them back into use, but earlier this year they agreed to delay implementing the proposal due to the pandemic.

If you have any concerns about an empty or derelict property near you please get in touch by email to hello@coperscope.org.uk

UPDATE FROM COUNCIL HIGHWAYS ON ROAD SCHEMES

We wrote to the Council for an update on schemes we have previously reported on in the Copers Cope Ward.

Albemarle Road

The Council advises that work is now complete to restore part of Albemarle Road to two-way traffic and circulation has been flowing very well in the surrounding area since this change.

However, our Association has been contacted by a large group of residents calling for the Council to reopen all of Albemarle Road to two-way traffic. The main areas of concern are:

- No clear right of way at the junction between Albemarle Road and Westgate Road where the one-way system ends, which is likely to cause accidents.
- Residents in the one-way section have longer and needlessly circuitous car journeys, adding to congestion and pollution. We have suggested the Council contact the emergency services and local bus drivers to assess congestion impacts.
- Concerns about emergency access. This has also been raised with our Association by other residents.

Scotts Lane junction

The Highways department advises that the date of the works to install the mini-roundabout planned for this junction safety scheme has not yet been programmed, so works will not be starting in the next couple of months.

Park Road closure at Southend

There is still no funding from TfL for any trial here, but we understand the Council and Councillors are still keen to see this junction considered for a

casualty reduction scheme. CCARA supports doing work to improve the junction, but not closing the road as the displaced traffic will cause congestion on neighbouring roads.

Crossing for Beckenham Place Park

Highways advises a crossing over Southend Road, adjacent to Foxgrove Road, will be considered as part of any scheme for the junction improvement at this complex junction (as above). Our Association has requested a proper signalled crossing here, not a mini-roundabout with a zebra crossing, as this will require Park Road to be closed. We believe there is enough foot traffic going to the park to warrant a signalled Pelican crossing.

Other news

Some of the social distancing measures in town centres and around schools will be removed over the summer, although some planters will remain in place for longer to support outside dining, and some schools will retain certain measures for a while longer (e.g. Clare House Primary School will retain its temporary School Street for a while longer).

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BECKENHAM JUNCTION/BLACKFRIARS RAIL SERVICE STILL NO CERTAINTY IT WILL RETURN!!

At the beginning of July CCARA submitted our petition to Southeastern Rail **signed by over 1600** people to save the Blackfriars service and copied it to our MP Bob Stewart, our ward Councillors, and the Leader of the Council.



Subsequently our MP has written to Southeastern Railways in support of the service and in recognition of our petition. Thank you Bob Stewart! We will be following up with Bromley Council to lobby to retain this service.

Unfortunately the news from Southeastern has been less positive, they told our Association:

“On the Beckenham Junction to Victoria route we’re now running the same level of service as before the pandemic – with four trains per hour at peak times. This is complemented by four Thameslink trains per hour between

Tulse Hill and Blackfriars, which provides an interchange opportunity at Herne Hill for passengers on the Beckenham Junction route. Passenger demand on this route is still significantly reduced compared to pre-pandemic, and the most recent data shows that passenger numbers are only at 37% of the levels we were regularly seeing in early 2020. As we're currently operating 67% of the pre-pandemic service, there is still available capacity on these trains – but we appreciate that the direct peak-time journey opportunity between Beckenham Junction and Blackfriars is not currently available.

As we have done throughout the pandemic, we're keeping passenger numbers under close review and carefully balancing decisions on where to increase capacity in partnership with the Department for Transport. This reflects the significant financial support the government has provided to ensure the railways keep running through the pandemic - up to £800 million per month across the country. Prior to the pandemic our data showed that demand for peak time Victoria services was around three times larger than for Blackfriars services, and that pattern is similar today – albeit with only around a third of the passengers. As passenger numbers continue to increase in the coming months, we will carefully monitor levels of demand and consider whether it would be appropriate to reintroduce some direct services between Beckenham Junction and Blackfriars.”

Unless local people fight for this service we fear it will be lost. Southeastern begrudgingly took it over from Thameslink in 2014 after our campaign, and the pandemic creates the opportunity for them to terminate it now.

Sign the petition at the link below:

www.ipetitions.com/petition/save-the-direct-train-service-from-beckenham

Write to Southeastern at:

George Paterson
Stakeholder Engagement Manager
Southeastern Railways
Floor 2, 4 More London Riverside
London SE1 2AU

Email: george.paterson@southeasternrailway.co.uk

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PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE HAYES / CANNON STREET ROUTE HAVE BEEN DROPPED



In our last edition, we reported that there had been a proposal to reroute trains from Hayes to Cannon Street, from 2022, so that they went to London Victoria instead. (Charing Cross services would remain.)

The Department for Transport has now confirmed that these proposals have been dropped. Covid has altered travelling patterns so much that the

whole network will be reviewed over time.

PLANNING RULES - PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

We have reported in the last few issues on the ever expanding categories of Permitted Development Rights (PDR).

Thankfully no new ones are proposed at present, as far as we are aware, but it is quite difficult to keep track of this ever changing scene.



A Parliamentary Select Committee for Housing, Communities and Local Government has investigated the proliferation of these PDRs and its report was published on 22 July. WBRA and CCARA made a joint submission to the enquiry.

The Committee's main recommendation is that the Government should

“pause any further extensions of permitted development rights for change of use to residential, including the new class MA right, which is due to take effect on 1 August, and conduct a review of their role within the wider planning system.”

The enquiry concentrated on PDR for conversions of commercial premises to residential. Sadly most of Beckenham's town centre offices have already been lost to PDR conversion. The plans for these conversions usually result in very poor quality housing with cramped conditions and lack of adequate light and outdoor space.

The Committee says

“When compared to the overall number of new homes being delivered, it appears that permitted development rights have made a contribution to the supply of new homes, although the precise number is difficult to calculate given the likelihood that some of these homes would have been built anyway. ... but we have serious concerns that some of these homes are of poor quality and that some of the people living in them do not have the option of living elsewhere. All new homes delivered through PDR must be truly fit for purpose and suitably located. A flat on an industrial estate is totally unsuitable for young children.”

The Committee particularly reports on two new use classes E and MA, the former brings together certain uses commonly found on high streets that were previously in different use classes so you can change from one to another without planning permission. This recognises that with the rise in online shopping, many traditional shopping outlets are no longer viable. However, a local authority cannot apply a test to see if several changes of use result in an over proliferation of one type of outlet.

Moreover, MA PDR permits any class E use to convert to residential use if the property has been vacant for just three months. The Committee is rightly anxious that this is probably less than the normal time it takes for a new letting to take place and is likely to result in landlords simply leaving premises vacant for this short time in order to get automatic PDR. Genuine potential occupants will therefore face a shrinking supply of premises. This change takes effect from 2 August.

The Committee says

“The Government should either extend the vacancy period or devise a test that can be applied to properties to make sure they are not still viable as class E premises.”

In the last edition we reported that LB Bromley were issuing “Article 4 Directions” on some residential areas which would prevent flats or individual houses having an additional two storeys without planning permission (see below). However, under the current regime any Direction must be given with 12 months notice, within which time the applicant can just get on and do it. The authority risks having to pay compensation if they implement the Direction in less than the 12 months specified. The Committee says

“We also recommend that the Government allow councils to apply Article 4 directions more quickly without having to pay compensation to developers.”

Finally, the Committee is critical that PDR does not attract the current Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy that requires developers to contribute to the community resources needed by the additional population. It says

“... we recommend [the Government] legislate as soon as possible to ensure that permitted development contributes towards the cost of providing the infrastructure and affordable housing needed to offset any negative impact on the local community.”

The report does not deal with one of our concerns about PDR for putting two additional storeys onto flats or houses built between 1948 and 2018. We hope that a future report will tackle this important issue.

To conclude, we think the Committee’s most pertinent comment is

“How can a local planning authority explain to local communities that its hands are tied and it cannot secure the future of its town centres? We note, too, that there is no scope for local communities to comment on permitted development schemes.”

UPWARD EXTENSIONS: ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS IN BROMLEY FOR PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Bromley Council has issued “Article 4 Directions” on some residential areas which would prevent flats or individual houses having an additional two storeys without planning permission. These cover just five small areas of Beckenham. While we argued that the choice of criteria for these Directions were misplaced, having few or no buildings that would have qualified anyway, we were very pleased that LB Bromley were at last prepared to grasp the nettle of Article 4 Directions.



We drew the council’s attention to at least one other area worthy of consideration, Court Downs Road, pictured above. The blocks of flats here are already mainly four or five storeys high. To add another two storeys to these, right next to our historic Kelsey Park and High Street Conservation Area, would create a high-rise eye sore.

However, the council officer replied that

“In terms of Court Downs Road, I note that while this area does fall within a local view, this is a panorama view from Addington Hills. Officers did assess the potential for adverse impacts on this view due to the upwards extensions PD rights, but considered that the nature of the view made such impacts unlikely.”

We were concerned about the view from Kelsey Park and Beckenham High Street - not Addington Hills!



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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE - removing your rights to object to planning applications

In previous issues we have reported that the government had proposals to **rip up our planning system** and replace it with a system based on data, maps and algorithms! Once a master plan is in place, any application that fits in with it would get automatic outline permission or presumed consent.



You will have no right to complain!

Opposition continues to grow, including among Conservative MPs. In a new alliance that we hope will continue, the four Residents' Associations covering Bob Stewart MP's Beckenham constituency (WBRA, CCARA plus Shortlands and West Wickham) jointly wrote to him to seek his support in opposing these proposals.

We were pleased to receive his prompt reply saying: "I am glad to say that I agree with your concerns about planning proposals and the "zoning" of local authority areas as well as the removal of the rights of residents to participate in planning decisions on a case by case basis." He also suggests

that the Government is on a big re-think on its proposals anyway. We hope that is the case.

WBRA also wrote to Lewisham West and Penge MP Ellie Reeves (covering Penge and Cator and Clock House wards) , who replied: “While I agree that the planning system needs to be reformed, I am concerned that the Government’s proposals amount to a “Developer’s Charter” that will remove powers from communities and hand them to Whitehall-appointed boards of developers.”

To recap - the proposals would require councils to come up with a master plan within six months, and approve a design guide in that time. The council would have to divide their area into three types of planning zones - Growth, Renewal and Protected. Subsequently, any planning application that complied with the master plan and design guide would get automatic approval in a Growth Zone, presumed approval in a Renewal Zone and only in a Protected Zone would planning permission be required.

HISTORIC BECKENHAM THEATRE MAY FACE DEMOLITION

The Beckenham Theatre is selling off its building at 46 Bromley Road.

Thankfully the theatre company itself is not closing, but they are selling off their current building due to high maintenance costs.



Naturally this site will be prime for residential development and given the high costs to fix up the existing building we anticipate a developer will

want to demolish it and build a large block that maximises every bit of space.

Unfortunately the theatre building is not listed, nor in a Conservation Area. Our Associations wrote to the Bromley's Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas (ACPA) to enquire about the possibility of listing the building or placing it in a Conservation Area but it seems it would not meet the threshold. Local community groups are carefully monitoring the development here for appropriate design and density.

Community groups are also investigating options to save the theatre building, but it may now be too late given the scale of the works and the sale timetable. It is the sort of project that would need Council support, but given the pandemic it seems unlikely the Council will have any funds to support such a project although the government has committed to investing in the arts post pandemic recovery.

A history of Beckenham Theatre

The BECKENHAM THEATRE CENTRE, was initiated at the end of World War Two by a librarian working in the children's section of Beckenham Public Library, who discovered that reading aloud from play-scripts was a fantastic way of teaching English to young people.

As they grew older, the children she taught developed such an interest in drama that they took to writing their own plays and performing them in local church halls and the like.

At some point, late in the 1950s or early '60s, some of these children, now grown up, were able to acquire a large Victorian house at very little cost, and over the following few years they spent innumerable hours - and any extra money they could find - converting it into a real theatre.

The theatre had (and has) a proper stage, not only with wings but also with an open gallery above it, enabling pieces of scenery to be dropped in and out on pulleys. Above the back part of the auditorium, a sophisticated control-room was constructed so that the sound and lighting operators could directly see the action on the stage. An extensive costume wardrobe was instated. Rehearsal rooms, a foyer, kitchen, toilets, cloakroom, and even a small bar were also somehow carved out from the space - in short,

all of the features that one might expect from a professional theatre, albeit on a bijou scale (the auditorium seats 43).

Not surprisingly, these actors/playwrights were keen to introduce their own children to the joys of theatre, and children's theatre workshops were established at an early stage.

Over the subsequent years, hundreds and hundreds of plays were duly rehearsed and performed there - including dozens of new works - by an increasing band of teenagers and adults and, separately, by many, many children.

A sensible constitutional structure was set up, with a subscription system topping-up the takings from the box-office, meaning that the theatre was entirely self-financing, on an operational basis, almost from the start.

This model was successfully sustained for more than sixty years.

However, about two years ago, it was determined that asbestos had been used to fire-proof the basement and the outside storage shed. The complexity and cost of its removal, plus the ongoing maintenance of the quirky theatre conversion was too much for the amateur theatre company.

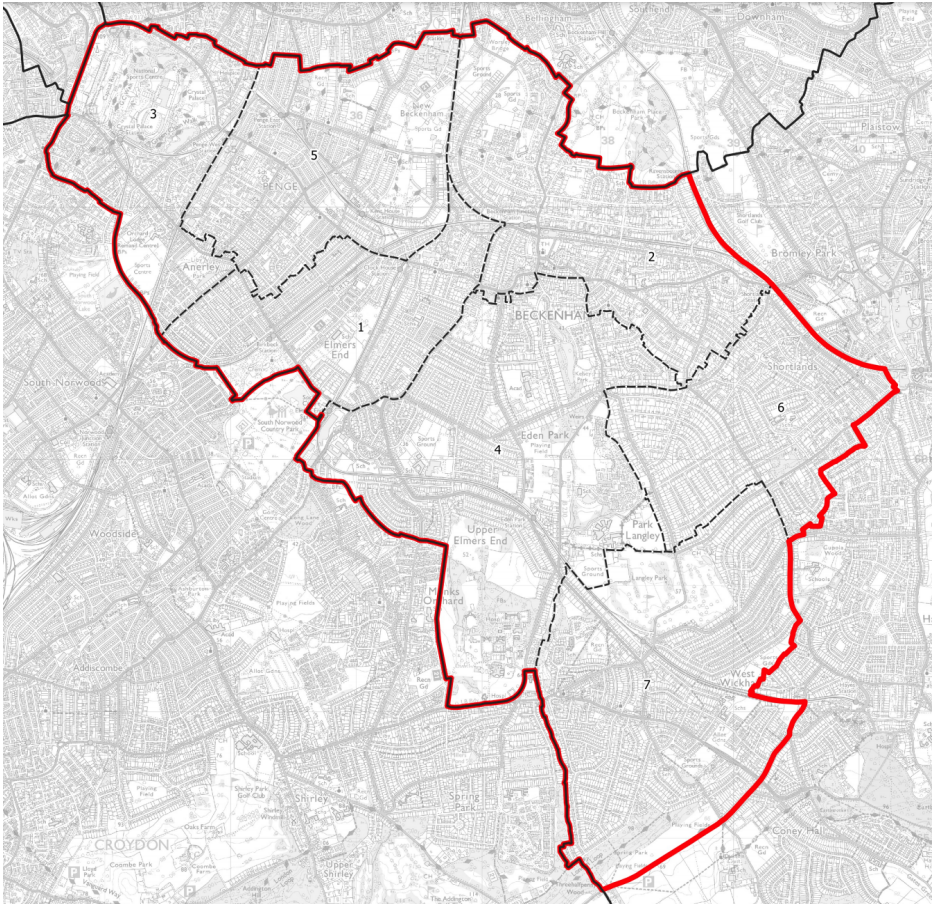
On the theatre's website, Malcolm Jones, Chair of Beckenham Theatre Trustees said "In the end, it is an old Victorian building, converted in 1960 by a group of enthusiasts for amateur theatre, and the fact that it was still functioning in 2021 is amazing and would have probably utterly surprised those pioneers, many of whom I knew well."

We are very pleased the Theatre Company will continue from new premises and hope that the site is developed with good taste.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES

The Boundary Commission has started a consultation on its proposals to change our Beckenham and Lewisham and Penge constituency boundaries, to take effect from 2023.

In Bromley as a whole, they propose a Beckenham constituency, a Bromley constituency, and an Orpington constituency.



The proposed Beckenham constituency comprises four wards from the existing Beckenham constituency (Copers Cope, Kelsey and Eden Park, Shortlands and West Wickham), and three wards from the existing Lewisham West and Penge constituency (Clock House, Penge and Cator and Crystal Palace).

Despite these changes to the existing Beckenham constituency, they consider that the name 'Beckenham' would still be appropriate for the proposed constituency, given that it would still include the centre of Beckenham and its surrounding areas.

They also propose to move two wards that are currently in the Beckenham constituency (Bromley Common and Keston ward, and Hayes and Coney Hall ward) to a new Bromley constituency.

This initial consultation ended on 2 August. They will then consider responses and issue revised proposals towards the end of 2022.

Find out more at the link below:

boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review

BECKENHAM LIBRARY BUILDING

There is again little to report on the Library building as far as Bromley Council are concerned. There is no news on any repair programme.

Sadly, an application to Historic England to give statutory listed status to the building was refused in 2020, and in January this year an appeal against this decision was also dismissed by DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).

However there is a proposal discussed at the Renewal Recreation and Housing Policy Development Committee to build houses on the rear



car park to the Spa leisure centre. The site is kite-shaped in plan, is bounded by railway lines and is accessed from Turners Meadow Way across Council-owned land.

The site is owned by the Council. However this car park is well used at busy times for the Spa. It appears that Lewis House, which is an adult services facility may be demolished and the services relocated.

FUTURE OF BECKENHAM PUBLIC HALL

The Council published a tender document seeking expressions of interest for Beckenham Public Hall in January 2021 and “multiple” enquiries and submissions - we are not allowed to know how many. Officers recommended one of the tenders to the committee - again we aren't



allowed to know which one. The successful occupant will have to provide only 15% community use - whatever that means.

The new occupant is expected to apply for listed building consent for whatever work needs to be done or changes they want to make early in

2022. They are expected to start operating early in 2023.

With few affordable and accessible buildings available for community use for clubs, civic groups and associations like ours, we hope the Public Halls will continue to meet the needs of the community.

Once again, some vigilance is required to keep up with developments and start a 'Save Beckenham Public Hall' campaign should the Council not safeguard it for community use.

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



Working in partnership with the London Borough of Bromley, Beckenham Together has lobbied for and received grant monies to allocate in the Beckenham Together BID area. The grants are for independent retailers and if you know anyone or think you might be entitled to apply please make contact via email. The grant amount will depend on rateable value and ranges from £450 to £1400. Closing date for applications Tuesday 31st August 2021 midnight.

We have already paid over £15000 out in grants and really want to ensure that it goes to all those who are eligible.



Screen on the Green was once again a highlight for many of the residents and wider community in Beckenham showing Wimbledon matches during the day and films in the evening. Whilst there will always be people who

delight in a moan this year the majority of emails and comments received were overwhelmingly in favour of this event. Thank you for your support and encouragement.

We are now actively working on developing more events now that the COVID situation seems to be easing and are working in partnership with Beckenham Business Association to bring a Business Day to the town in October 2021.

To get in contact with Beckenham Together please email us at hello@beckenhamtogether.co.uk

BECKENHAM GREEN FRIENDS NEEDS YOU!

email: greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk

facebook: www.facebook.com/beckenhamgreen

The Beckenham Green Friends group has been working hard again over the last few months to help keep some of the borders looking good for us all to enjoy. The labours of bulb planting have given us lots of colour with the daffodils, tulips and alliums, and now we are enjoying a great display of Day Lilies and Nasturtiums in the centre of The Green.

Our friends at M&S Food in Beckenham have also donated a large amount of plants for The Green which otherwise would have been wasted. These have been recently planted so should see some of them flowering soon.

The Friends group has eight members so far, as featured in pictures below - Ian, Mary, Dinah, Jane, John, Matthew, John, Janet and Stephen (not in pictures). We

have some great ideas to do more on The Green and are looking for more volunteers to come and join us. You don't have to be green-fingered, we're just looking for more enthusiastic and committed volunteers to help us continue our work. Volunteers are needed to help weed, prune, tidy, plant and water where possible, as well as to help us achieve bigger 'group' projects to make more of a difference to our community green spaces.

If interested, please contact us at greenfriends@coperscope.org.uk or message us via our facebook page [facebook.com/beckenhamgreen](http://www.facebook.com/beckenhamgreen)



MAJOR GAS WORKS IN CHERRY TREE WALK AREA

Major SGN gas works started in the Cherry Tree Walk area on 23 June. This is the replacement of old metal gas mains with new plastic pipe.

Over the coming six months they will be progressing through Cherry Tree Walk, Beck Way, Bramerton Road, Groveland Road, Croydon Road, Westbury Road, Glanfield Road, Wellhouse Road, Eden Park Avenue and Lloyds Way.



- From Monday 26 July for approx five weeks - Groveland Road closed at the junction with Croydon Road. A signed diversion will be in place for motorists.
- From Monday 26 July for approx four weeks - temporary two way traffic lights along Croydon Road, between Eden Park Avenue and Westbury Road. Eden Park bus stops (L&K) will be temporarily suspended during the works.
- From Monday 25 October for approximately six weeks temporary traffic lights will be installed around the work area in Lloyds Way.
- Work will be suspended over Christmas.
- At the start of January 2022, work will progress through Broomfield Road, Merlin Grove, Eden Park Avenue, Stanhope Grove, Ronald Close and Ernest Grove, for approximately three months. The aim is to maintain traffic in both directions around the work areas for the majority of the work. However, to access the gas pipe safely whilst working along Stanhope Grove, temporary traffic lights will need to be installed around the area.
- From Monday 3 January for approximately eight weeks, Merlin Grove will be closed at Stanhope Grove.

GRAFFITI AND THE RETURN OF FLY-POSTING AND FLY-STICKERS!

Sadly since the last edition of the Express Review there has been an upsurge in the amount of graffiti appearing. Such a shame to see our shop fronts and private property damaged. CCARA have reported the ones pictured on www.fixmystreet.com for the Council to remove. Fixmystreet is a great way to alert the Council to many kinds of street issues.



Unfortunately the scourge of fly-posting and stickers is back throughout the Town Centre. There seems to be nothing the council can do about it - they have previously advised it being too costly to take legal action.

The best way to deal with it is to remove the posters and stickers. Two of our committee members spent a few hours in the High Street removing as much as they could. We encourage all residents and businesses to remove what they can. A few years ago when we consistently removed them the fly-posters stopped coming to Beckenham, so we know it works.

WHAT'S NEW ON THE HIGH STREET

Sadly, there have been a few closures on the High Street over recent months.

Julienne Dancewear shop has closed down, after more than 30 years. It isn't yet known what might be taking its place.



Creative Interior Designs Ltd vacated their showroom on the corner of Manor Road earlier this year, and the premises are still vacant.



Beckenham Cricket Specialists, the last sports shop in the town centre, along the approach to Sainsbury's, has also closed. The business is continuing to trade online only at beckenhamcricketspec.com

The unit has since been taken over by J's Hair and Beauty.

Belmont Dry Cleaners has closed, and it appears Cosy Kitchen Cafe next door will be expanding to take over the vacant shop.

Beckenham's branch of **Santander** closed in early August.

The old **Halifax** premises at the corner of Village Way remains empty, although the agent's sign indicates an offer may have been made on the unit.

A new restaurant, **Firefly** has opened in the former Leo's Kitchen by the War Memorial and is offering shisha, cocktails and amazing steaks.



UPDATE FROM BECKENHAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Following Beckenham Business Association's (BBA) successful rebrand earlier in the year, we have been delighted by the support from the local business community in contributing to our online networking events.

We have hosted an interesting array of speakers, including:

- Gary Parker of CNT Associates on funding options
- Several local businesses on how they adapted to new ways of working
- Local author Rob Kerr introduced his book, Project Future, and his project management approach to business
- The newly launched Start Up Bromley introduced their services and facilities for local businesses.

We hope to hold face-to-face networking events again later in the year and are working with Beckenham Together BID on reintroducing Beckenham Business Day in the autumn.

Our next event will be 'BBA Pops in the Park' on 19 August – an informal evening gathering in Beckenham Place Park, weather permitting.

Beckenham Business Association is for all types of businesses based in or serving people within Beckenham. Membership starts from just £30 per year.

To find out more, sign up to our events or become a member, please visit our website: www.beckenhambusinessassociation.co.uk

bba

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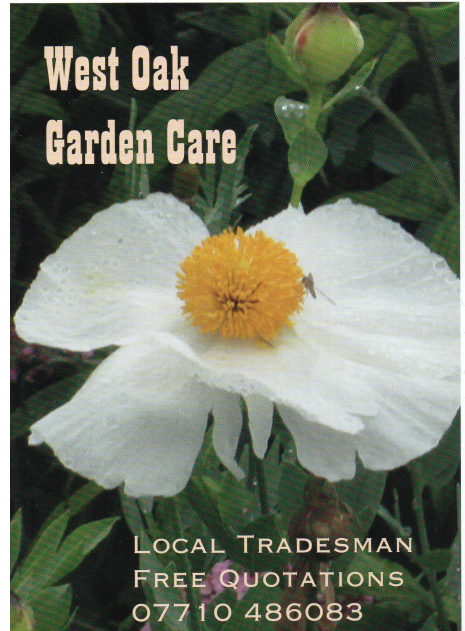
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PLANNING AND LICENSING UPDATE

Local people may lodge comments online on any applications below that are currently being considered by Bromley Council.

Go to www.bromley.gov.uk then click on the following menu options environment & planning /planning /search planning applications and enter the case reference in the search box. You must give your name & address, otherwise your views may not be considered.



British Gas Sports Ground, Worsley Bridge Road

A major new housing development is being planned at the former Sports Ground, at the junction with Copers Cope Road.

The proposed development, situated on Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), is for 121 new homes comprising 39 three-bedroom houses and 82 one and



two-bedroom flats, and 100 car parking spaces. Half of the homes are proposed to be affordable.

The land is not presently open for public use and is screened from the road by a high hedge. The scheme suggests opening up the site by planning an open space facing the road, a play area and community garden that would be accessible to the public.

In June, the developer held three live online question and answer sessions. We attended the third session and asked the following questions:

Question 1 You say affordable housing will be included in the development. What precisely do you mean by ‘affordable housing’?

Answer: the developer stated that half of the homes would be transferred to a registered provider, or possibly even the Council, and then allocated for affordable rent or shared-ownership.

Question 2 Many recent developments in Beckenham have provided dwellings of a size which barely meet the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) national space standards. Lots of developers tend to use the minimum space requirement (for example 50 sq m for a 1-bedroom flat) as a target to aim for rather than being a base-line to be improved upon. Can you make a commitment to provide dwellings that exceed the bare minimum space that is required?

Answer: The developer said that they follow the space standards in the London Plan [these are identical to the DCLG standards] and they believe the minimum space requirements are workable and adequate.

Question 3 What is your justification for building on an area of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), essentially greenfield land, rather than a brownfield site?

Answer: The developer said that planning policy allows building on MOL in very special circumstances. They consider the special circumstances to be the delivery housing needed by the Council, providing public open, amongst others.

You can view the recorded video consultation sessions by going to <https://caerusbeckenham.communityuk.live>

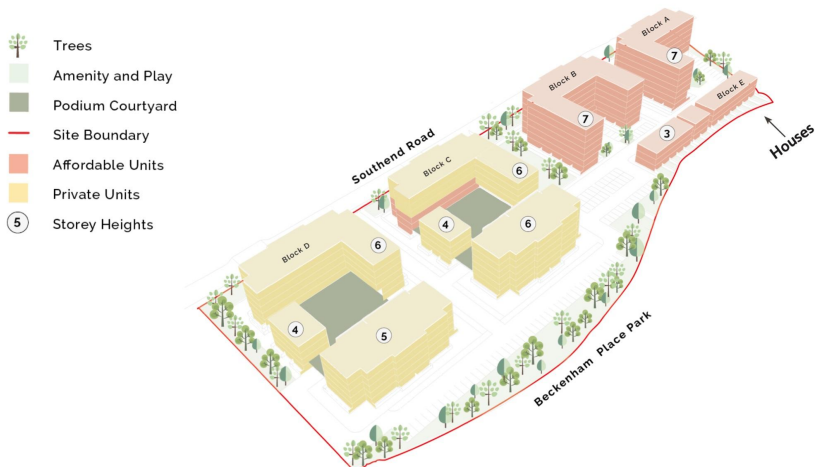
Calverley Close, Southend Road

Plans for the entire redevelopment of the estate, built in the 1980s and situated near the brow of Beckenham Hill, have been gathering pace in the last few months. In early August, a residents' vote was held and the result was 60% were in favour of complete regeneration of the estate (based on an 80% turnout of the 155 residents eligible to vote).

The estate currently has about 200 homes and is operated by Riverside Housing Association, which manages the Borough's council housing. They also operate Coleridge House at 79 Bromley Road, which is also proposed for demolition and redevelopment.



According to information published in April by Riverside, the existing homes at Calverley Close are proposed to be demolished and replaced with several new blocks ranging in height from three to seven stories. The total number of new homes would be 358, half of which would be allocated for private sale. The remainder would be for social rent. Demolition and construction would be phased over four stages of redevelopment.



Consultations have been held recently with existing residents, however a number of tenants have complained about the lack of maintenance and general repairs over recent years, with some seeing this as a process of managed decline until redevelopment becomes inevitable. Others have reported frustration with clarity and communications from Riverside. Meetings have also been held between Riverside and ward councillors about the scheme. A public consultation about the scheme is expected this autumn, prior to a planning application being submitted at the end of the year.

Riverside's brochure from April 2021 showing current proposals, consultation process and timescale for the redevelopment can be found at this weblink:

<https://www.riverside.org.uk/redevelopment-projects/calverley-close-revitalising-your-neighbourhood/>

77b Bromley Road 20/03581/FULL

Another planning application has been submitted and approved for the demolition of this family house and replacement with flats. An earlier application for 8No flats was withdrawn when the case officer recommended the scheme for refusal.

The new application is for 7No flats in a new block which has a traditional exterior appearance similar to existing houses adjacent to the site, rather than the contemporary design of the previous application.

79 and 79a Bromley Road 20/03881/FULL

A planning application made last December for 27 No flats and involving the demolition of a large Victorian house, is still being considered by the Council.

Situated in a prominent location at the brow of the hill between Beckenham and



Shortlands, at the corner of Downsbridge Road, 79 and 79a Bromley Road is a distinctive Victorian house from the mid-1800s and one of the last remaining grand villa houses that once lined Bromley Road.

The three-storey building is run by Riverside Housing Association (which also runs Calverley Close on Southend Road) and currently accommodates 13 flats and an adjoining, four-bedroom single family house. The £12M development involves the demolition of the entire building, replacing it with a five-storey block of 27 flats, and underground car park. The proposed scheme comprises 5 No. one-bedroom, 17 No. two-bedroom and 5 No. 3-bedroom flats, providing space for up to 95 occupants.

It is very disappointing to see in their Affordable Housing Viability Statement that the developer, like the others involved in residential schemes in Beckenham at the present time, doesn't include any affordable housing provision. The smallest one-bedroom flat in the £12M development is expected to market for £325,000. The developer's claim that they can't afford to provide affordable housing in the scheme, is unacceptable in our view and the proposed Section 106 payment of £120,000 to the Council, insubstantial.

76a and 76b The Avenue 20/05047/FULL

An application made last Christmas for the demolition of two 1930s houses, replacing them with a five-storey block of flats, and houses to the rear of the site, is also still under consideration by the Council. The application also includes the resurfacing of The Avenue between the site and the junction with Westgate Road, which is an unmade road.



The new block of 18 flats comprises 10 one-bedroom and 8 two-bedroom units. 3 three-storey terraced, mews-style houses are proposed behind, providing accommodation for up to 70 people. Car parking is provided for 16 cars behind and in front of the block.

A consultation was held with local residents and groups last autumn by the developer, Devonshire Developments, which also plans to redevelop the two neighbouring houses at 76c and 76d in a second phase. Disappointingly, CCARA was not invited to contribute to this consultation.

The Avenue has been heavily developed over the last 70 years and these four existing houses are among few remaining inter-war detached houses left on the road.

The three houses appear fairly well appointed, however the layout and size of the flats is cramped and many barely meet the minimum space standards required.

Again, this development doesn't include any affordable housing provision. The smallest one-bedroom flat in the £9M development is expected to market for £330,000.

Some residents on the road are concerned about the size and height of the development, that it is an over-development of the site and the traffic problems that could result from any resurfacing of the road. It is difficult at present to see how the developer will achieve consensus from all other residents on The Avenue, whose joint responsibility it is to maintain the road.

114 Bromley Road 20/05008/FULL

A planning application submitted seven months ago for a large residential development on this site, situated on the corner of Crescent Road, is also still being considered by the Council. The scheme, by Woolbro Group, involves the demolition of the existing Victorian building, last used as a



care home, and construction of a part-three part-four storey block of 27No. flats. The new building comprises 12No. one-bedroom and 15No two-bedroom flats with the capacity to accommodate up to 82 people. Only 19 parking spaces are provided.

Despite a requirement in the Bromley Local Plan for affordable housing to be provided in every new development of 11 units or more, here is yet another example of a development being proposed in Beckenham which provides none at all, because the developer claims they can't afford to include it. The market value of the smallest 1-bedroom flat in the £10M development is expected to be £300,000.



Last autumn, the developer held a consultation with local residents and groups, although CCARA was not invited to contribute.

At the time of writing, the Council had received more than 300 letters of objection to the proposals.

Land and Highway at Canterbury Close 21/00292/FULL

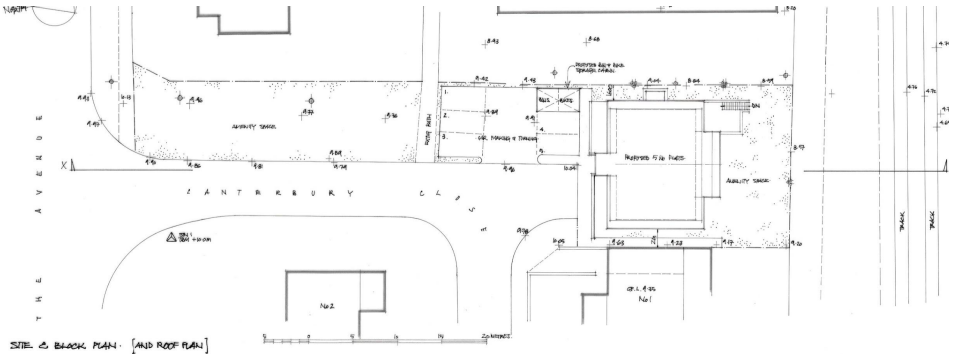
An application submitted in January for a residential development on land at Canterbury Close, off The Avenue, was refused permission at a planning committee meeting on 5th August.

A three-storey block, with basement, of 5No flats comprising 4No two-bedroom and 1No three-bedroom units is proposed.

It's understood that when this part of The Avenue was originally being considered there was an idea to provide a road bridging the rail lines to the

south, at the point where the land is situated, however this was never realised.

The planning case officer had recommended the scheme for approval. The reasons for the committee's decision to refuse had not been published at the time of going to press.



TELECOMS MASTS

A second application was made for a telecoms mast on Elmers End Green - the only concession being a reduction in height from 18 metres to 15 metres, still higher than the tallest tree. Thankfully this was also refused, and we send our thanks once again to all of you who objected. However, the applicants have appealed against the refusal. They have also appealed against refusals of permission for masts at Croydon Road next to the petrol station and at Hayes. WBRA will of course be very vigilant in making representations to the Planning Inspector.

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JOIN YOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Information about how to join either the Copers Cope Area 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.

[Copers 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.

Join online at: coperscope.wordpress.com/join

If you cannot join online we accept standing orders - for a form get in touch by email to chairman@coperscope.org.uk or call 020 3732 5260.

Affiliate Membership – Reduced Subscription

If you live in a block of flats and all the households wish to sign up together, you can join as an affiliate member and each household will only pay £2. As an affiliate you would receive a bundle of the Express Review for your group to be distributed to each household by a resident in your block or left in a common entrance way.

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.

WBRA NEW MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM

Please send this form with payment to Stafford Bunce, WBRA Membership Secretary, 1 Shaftesbury Road, Beckenham, BR3 3PW. **Do not send to your own bank.**

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