

## **BELMONT & SOUTH CHEAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

### **ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN - MAY 2005**

I have pleasure in presenting to members the Annual Report, for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005. The Annual Accounts are set out on pages 7 and 8.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

Our membership has risen to 1,967, very close to our long-term target of 2,000. For this I thank the road stewards for calling on people and collecting subscriptions. But a special mention should be made of the work of our Membership Secretary for most of the year, Derek Breden, and our Treasurer, Brian Williams, for their persistent efforts.

#### **ROAD STEWARD VACANCIES**

Currently vacancies exist for Chiddingstone Close, Clifton Avenue, Old Barn Close, Peaches Close, Buckingham Court (Dorset Road) and Peshurst Way. To be a steward it is not necessary to live in the road concerned, although it is convenient to live nearby. It would be very helpful if members could volunteer to take on one of these. There are two deliveries a year – the Annual Report and the Autumn Newsletter. Subscriptions are usually collected every alternate year. Hopefully the task is not onerous and road stewards can be an important point of feed-back on any issues. A briefing meeting followed by a wine and cheese party is held every May as a thank you to the Road Stewards.

#### **YOUR OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE**

We have maintained the cycle of six meetings of the Executive Committee during the year. A summary of the main issues since the Autumn Newsletter is set out below.

Our Membership Secretary, Derek Breden, recently resigned as he is moving from the area and a vacancy now exists. We are therefore seeking a volunteer to continue this role of essentially maintaining contact with the road stewards. I am pleased that the other officers and members of the Committee offer themselves for re-election, but we have one vacancy in addition to the position of Membership Secretary. I invite Association members to consider joining to contribute to the work of the Association. To gain some insight, you may wish to attend initial meetings as an observer. We are keen to have representation from our area east of the Brighton Road, around the Royal Marsden and Sutton Hospitals.

I am grateful that our Auditor, Alison Griffiths, is willing to continue.

### **MATTERS TO REPORT**

#### **TRAFFIC**

Traffic lights at the Railway Bridge – Sandy Lane/Station Way – members will be aware of the road closure during April to make the alternate one-way system permanent.

Cycle Lanes on Belmont Rise (A217) – Since the Association's response to Transport for London (TfL) and their reply stating that they would investigate the provision of cycle facilities on the east side, separate from the main road, we have heard nothing further.

Station Road, Belmont – the two flat-topped humps have now been installed. The traders did not favour a reduction in the permitted parking time from two hours and so this arrangement will remain.

## **PARKING**

Around Royal Marsden Hospital – following further consultation by the Council, a scheme has been finalised. This involves an inner zone with parking meters and an outer zone with a one-hour restriction to counter all-day parking, the latter similar to that used in Cheam Village. Some of our members in roads just outside the scheme are concerned about transferred parking. Certainly there has been a real parking problem in roads near to the hospital but schemes of this type usually have issues over the optimum location for the boundaries.

Devon Road and Meadowside Road – the Council have decided to install double yellow lines on the corners of Devon Road and Meadowside Road. The Association wrote to the Council asking them to take note of the views of residents who, to our understanding, considered these unnecessary. We understand that the lines will extend 5 metres from some corners instead of the 10 metres originally proposed.

Champneys Close – Residents of Champneys Close have been concerned at the presence of commercial van parking from nearby businesses which have extended the rears of their premises, reducing their own parking provision. The Council has responded that any changes to the present arrangement within the Cheam one-hour zone will be considered along with other possible changes in a forthcoming review.

## **HOSPITALS**

The Sutton Hospital site has now been confirmed as the location for the new Critical Care Hospital (CCH) by the Merton, Sutton and Mid-Surrey Better Healthcare organisation. Whilst this may be of some advantage to many of our members not in the immediate vicinity, there are significant road access difficulties in this choice of site. We understand that it was possible because the adjoining Royal Marsden Hospital has made available some land for the CCH. We understand that a majority of the medical staff preferred the Sutton Hospital site.

We look forward to more information from the Better Healthcare programme. A key part is the provision of Local Care Hospitals for a majority of people's needs, near to where they live.

## **PLANNING**

Downs Lawn Tennis Club – the Club has lodged an Appeal against the latest refusal by the Council of a renewed application to floodlight the tennis court nearest the road and nearby properties. We had objected on grounds of light pollution and additional evening noise.

2 Wilbury Avenue – we are pleased to be informed that the Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate has been dismissed. Thus the Council's refusal stands. The decision gives us some encouragement that the status of the Cheam Special Policy Area in the Borough's Unitary Development Plan still has value following its re-writing by the UDP Planning Inspector.

Chegworth, 23 Downs Side – at the time of writing, the Planning Inspector has dismissed the Appeal against the Council's refusal of a large extension to the residential home. However, the Borough's planning department has recently refused another proposal for a somewhat smaller extension. A previous consent was on the basis that it set a limit to the acceptable size on this site.

Downs Cottage, Cuddington Way – in March a retrospective planning application was made for use of part of a garage for office/storage purposes. This followed many complaints by nearby residents of business use in a residential area, using large vehicles. Along with others, the Association objected and the Council has refused the application. We now look forward to enforcement by the Council against these business activities.

52-56 The Crescent – an initial application for town houses was refused by the Council but a second application was recently granted. The town houses will be in an area between The Crescent and Brighton Road in place of three existing properties.

Belmont Garage – the use of Queens Road as a car park for Belmont Garage has been investigated by the Council's Planning Enforcement Officer. This was requested by the Association in support of members. Unfortunately the Enforcement Officer has advised that as there are no planning conditions that restrict the parking of vehicles on the road, they are unable to assist.

Telecomms Mast, rear of 13 Manor Road, Belmont Rise – the Association objected to a proposed increase in height from 10m. to 15m. because it would stand above the lighting columns with undue prominence. This was refused but a new application has been made for an increase to 12.5m.

Telecomms Mast, A217 near Beresford Road – T-mobile have notified residents of their plans to install another mast. This would be quite close to the mast at the rear of 13 Manor Road. BSCRA are supporting residents' objections.

1-7 Upper Mulgrave Road – this is a proposal to demolish four houses and build flats, adjacent to the shops and close to the station. The external appearance on the application drawings seems satisfactory and the Association has not objected, given the location.

Hare Wall – a portion of this listed wall has been removed to widen a driveway and the Association has taken this up with the Planning Department. The wall is believed to be Tudor and enclosed the hare warren which existed before the main building of houses in the South Cheam area.

15,17 Cornwall Road – a large house covering a double site has been occupied only intermittently since the late 1960s and not at all for the last few years. There have been approaches to neighbours by developers seeking to contact the owner.

Ewell Road, Cheam – there have been recent planning applications for three adjacent sites. The location is not within the BSCRA area but these proposals are no doubt of interest to our members.

- a) Old Petrol Station – a proposal by Majestic Wine Warehouse Ltd. is for bulk wine purchase on the ground floor with flats above. A similar application was refused in 2004 because of the scale and impact in a conservation area, privacy and insufficient parking.
- b) Travis Perkins timber yard – the proposal by Travis Perkins is to demolish the existing shed structures of the warehouse and yard and replace it with a new single building. The committee report states that Travis Perkins has a number of problems with the layout and safety of the existing buildings. It recommends that planning consent be granted.
- c) Old Dairy Depot – Linden Home have applied to demolish the existing depot and to build 13 town houses and 33 flats, all within 5 buildings on the site. The report to the Development Control Committee recommends refusal. It considers that the existing buildings are in keeping with the Conservation Area and the proposal is overdevelopment with lack of usable amenity space. The scale and bulk would affect the privacy of neighbouring properties.

Leylandii Trees – We understand that legislation is at last to be introduced to protect against neighbours' excessive tree heights close to boundaries. Further details will be requested from the Planning Department.

Planning Enforcement – the Association is pleased to note an increase in staffing for Planning Enforcement, reported to the Area Committees. We consider it important that the Council is able to act on breaches of planning conditions within a reasonable timescale. Such breaches are unfortunately a fact of life and can cause considerable problems for others. Time will tell if the new staffing level is adequate.

Planning Users' Group – Mrs. Jean Hamilton has taken on the role of our representative on the Planning Users' Group. Whilst there are some doubts how meaningful this may be, the opportunity to meet other residents' groups has been useful.

Planning Decisions – the Strategy Committee of the Council has decided that more planning decisions should be made by the planning officers (delegated decisions), rather than going to the Area Committee. Another residents' association has objected but our experience to date has been that where we have objected to applications which are unsatisfactory on planning grounds, many have been refused. Further, appeals to the Planning Inspectorate have been subsequently dismissed.

At the other end of the spectrum, more of the larger applications are going to the Development Control Committee, rather than the relevant Area Committee.

## **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ORDERS**

Members may have read in the local press of the serving of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) on Mr. Trotman of 31 Devon Road. This follows his pursuit of one particular family over Mr. Trotman's view of the parking arrangements near his house. Other residents and the Cheam Fields Club have suffered from

his attentions over the years. The Association is grateful to the Police for taking action in this matter, which has been a difficult one for them. There has been a series of allegations against particular police officers, all of which appear to be intimidation and abuse of the system. This all adds up to the unnecessary use of public money because of one individual. The ASBO has kept Mr. Trotman away from Devon Road in order to protect neighbours from nuisance and does appear to be an appropriate measure in such circumstances.

There has been one other ASBO served in our area. This was also to protect someone from the attentions of another who was not permitted to come within 400 metres of the residence.

### **SUTTON POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP**

For 19 years Heather Shaw has been the Association's representative on the Sutton Police Consultative Group. For 17 of those years, she has chaired the group and last year stepped down. At the meeting last October she was thanked for her many years of valuable work for the Group and the residents of the Borough.

Heather had steered the Consultative Group through a number of major changes to policing in London. She had represented Sutton's views on policing at regular meetings with senior police officers at New Scotland Yard and had represented the Sutton Group at the London-wide Consultative Group. She continues as the Association's representative with our secretary, Alys Shale, attending when necessary.

### **TRANSPORT**

Heathrow Express Bus – the Association wrote to TfL asking that the new X26 service should include Cheam Village as a stop. TfL replied, advising that Cheam Village and other intermediate centres such as North Cheam and Worcester Park would also have stops. We understand that representations were made by our MP and GLA members on this issue. In reply to the Association TfL advised that Countdown was not provided at present because of cost issues. This is the system which shows when the next bus is due, which we stated was more important on an infrequent service.

### **POST OFFICE AND ROYAL MAIL**

Post Office Closures – all the proposed closures have now gone ahead. We are now left with only a sub-office in Upper Mulgrave Road within our area. It seems as if the whole matter had been decided before the so-called consultation, with a very negative attitude to service provision to the end-users.

Cheam as a Postal Area – Paul Burstow MP has advised that the Royal Mail have agreed with most of the proposed boundary. Part, outside BSCRA area, was not accepted. Paul Burstow now has to consult with the Council, the Business Federation and London Post Watch. The latter have agreed and replies are awaited from the others. Once all have agreed, Royal Mail will consult residents and if less than 20% object, Cheam will be accepted as a postal district in its own right.

### **ROADS**

Re-surfacing – although several roads in our area were listed in Area Committee reports, the final list only includes part of the roadway in Brighton Road and the footway in Meadowside Road.

Street Cleaning – the Council have allocated an additional £300,000 for street cleaning in the year starting April 2005. This is to implement the arrangements reported in the last newsletter, including a sweep of residential roads every two weeks except where particular circumstances require a greater frequency. Some of our members have expressed concern that too much will be spent and residents should attend to their own frontages. To their credit, I believe that many of our members already do this. Long may they continue as this usually deals with litter more quickly and reduces the work load in the Council. Often the problems are where the road is not 'owned' by anyone, terra nullis, and so more attention is needed by the Council.

### **BELMONT REST GARDEN**

Proposals for the Belmont Rest Garden were not put forward at the January meeting of the Sutton Area Committee, as previously advised to the Association, and the delay is most unsatisfactory. I have written to the Director of Environment and Leisure to express our concern.

### **BONFIRES**

A reminder, as summer approaches, to consider your neighbours if you are thinking of lighting a bonfire. Residents like to be able to leave doors and windows open, especially in warmer weather, and one bonfire can spread smells a long way. Please use the Council's green waste collection or take larger items to the Council's refuse and recycling centre on the A217. Of course, most leaves make very good compost.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

We have invited Dr. John Peacock, the Chairman of the Banstead Commons' Conservators, to speak to us this year. As Sutton's representative on the Conservators, I have gained a great respect for Dr. Peacock's knowledge and commitment to the protection and enhancement of the Commons to the public benefit.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I wish to thank all who have contributed to the work of the Association during the year. We should be grateful for the commitment and efficiency of our General Secretary, Mrs. Alys Shale and our Treasurer, Mr. Brian Williams. Our Membership Secretary, Mr. Derek Breden, was most effective and with his departure, we now need someone to pick up this role. Our three Planning Officers, Mr. Graham Peters, Mr. Dennis Baldry and Mr. Victor Jordan, have given careful and thoughtful consideration to the issues that have arisen. Mr. Victor Jordan has also served as Vice-Chairman, giving strong support to myself and always a pillar of wisdom when the occasion demands. Thanks are also due to the other Committee members who have given their time to us.

I thank our Councillors and Member of Parliament who have supported us when needed. Finally a particular thank you to our road stewards for distributing the report and newsletter, collecting subscriptions and keeping the Committee in touch with matters of concern.

I hope to see you at the AGM. Have an enjoyable summer.

**TONY WALLACE**  
Chairman

## **Belmont & South Cheam Residents' Association**

### **Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2005**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Membership</b>		
Members at start of year	1752	1803
Change in year	215	(51)
Current membership	<u>1967</u>	<u>1752</u>
<b>Subscriptions received</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Arrears	96	85
Current members at 50p each	983	876
Donations	85	24
Deposit interest received	127	96
	<u>1291</u>	<u>1081</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Printing & stationery	645	618
Postage & telephone	33	92
Meeting expenses	172	163
Insurance	50	50
Sundries	54	85
	<u>954</u>	<u>1008</u>
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<u><b>337</b></u>	<u><b>73</b></u>

**Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2005**

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
National Savings Bank deposit	4781	4253
Cash at bank	218	384
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	4999	4637
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Subscriptions received in advance	(538)	(487)
Creditors	(40)	(66)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>4421</b>	<b>4084</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by:		
General Fund at 31.3.04	4084	4011
Surplus for the year	337	73
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General Fund at 31.3.04	4421	4084
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Approved on 19 May 2005

A.S. Wallace – Chairman

B. Williams – Treasurer

**Report by Auditor**

I certify that the above Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account are in accordance with the books and records of the Belmont & South Cheam Residents' Association. In my opinion, the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at 31 March 2005.

13 Queens Road  
Belmont, Sutton SM2 6BZ

A.J. Griffiths  
19 May 2005