

BELMONT & SOUTH CHEAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN - MAY 2006

As Acting Chairman, I have pleasure in presenting to Members the Annual Report, for the year ended 31st March 2006. The Annual Accounts are included.

MEMBERSHIP

Our current membership stands at 1,958 (albeit with 181 Members in arrears), very close to our target of 2,000 members. For this I thank the road stewards for calling on people and collecting subscriptions. A special mention should be made of our Treasurer, Brian Williams, for all his hard work, after Derek Breden, the former Membership Secretary, moved away from the area.

ROAD STEWARDS

Currently vacancies exist for Peshurst Way, Sackville Road/Wyndham Close/Station Road, Clifton Avenue, Old Barn Close, Peaches Close and Buckingham Court (Dorset Road). 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 are an important point of feedback 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

In November 2005 the Chairman, Tony Wallace, resigned with immediate effect, this for reasons of pressure of work. Since then I have acted as Chairman. Although I have enjoyed carrying out this role, I am unable to continue beyond the A.G.M because of other commitments. The opportunity has been taken to review the role of chairman, who has hitherto largely acted as the voice of the Association, so as to make it less onerous. Responsibility for representing the views of the Association to Sutton Council and to other bodies has been delegated to members of the Executive Committee, particularly in relation to planning matters. The Chairman is kept aware of such developments and presides at the six meetings annually of the Executive committee. Peter Matthey, who is currently a member of the Executive Committee and who has been involved in a number of important planning cases, has indicated his willingness to stand as our Chairman. I am very pleased to propose his appointment.

We still have a vacancy for a Membership Secretary and are therefore seeking a volunteer to continue this role of maintaining contact with the road stewards. I am pleased to report that the other officers and members of the Committee offer themselves for re-election, while inviting Association Members to consider joining the Committee to contribute to the work of the Association. To gain some insight as to what is involved, you may wish to attend initial meetings as an observer.

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

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.

MATTERS TO REPORT

TRAFFIC

Cycle Lanes on Belmont Rise (A217) – Nothing further has been heard from Transport for London (TfL) since the Association's initial response.

Driving Schools – Roads in the area, particularly in South Cheam, are widely used by driving schools, this often to the annoyance or inconvenience of Members. However, consultation with the Council and the Police indicates that nothing can be done to prevent such use, unless it results in road traffic offences. Indeed the police consider that the presence of learners in otherwise quiet residential areas is a burglary deterrent.

PARKING

Around Royal Marsden Hospital – The parking scheme referred to in the 2005 Annual Report, whilst welcomed as treating the immediate problem of parking in roads close to the hospital, has had the predicted effect of transferring parking to roads further from the hospital. However, most of these are not within the area of the Association.

Belmont Station – parking issues relating to commuters using Belmont station are mentioned in the Local Implementation Plan and Funding Submission for 07/08. A parking sample survey to identify parking problem areas is proposed in the list of Schemes for Funding.

HOSPITALS

The Epsom & St. Helier Hospital Trust has been working for some years on plans to restructure local health care in accordance with the latest national policy guidelines. These involve devolving non-critical and non-emergency services to GP centres and a number of small local care hospitals (LCHs), followed by the creation of a single critical care hospital (CCH) for the whole area. At the beginning of 2005, the Trust announced that Sutton Hospital was its preferred location for the CCH, taking advantage of the diagnostic resources of the Royal Marsden. This decision was welcomed by some Surrey local authorities, but not well received in Epsom and Ewell and by Sutton Council.

At the beginning of November 2005, the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment mounted a week's public consultation and design study on the development of a campus incorporating the CCH, the Royal Marsden, the Institute of Cancer Research and the mental health unit. The study found serious problems of road access to the campus. It tentatively proposed closing Cotswold Road to through traffic and creating a new access to the site as a whole from Brighton Road, parallel to Pelton Avenue, across the existing allotments. This plan caused great concern among residents in the area around the site, but before the study was completed, the Secretary of State for Health ruled at the turn of the year that the CCH should be built at St. Helier. That may not be the final outcome, as Surrey local authorities are trying to overturn the Secretary of State's ruling, and there are difficult issues over the St. Helier site. It should also be noted that, if there is no comprehensive campus development involving the Sutton and Royal Marsden Hospitals, rebuilding is likely to be piecemeal, perhaps including a LCH and disposal of some land for housing. In that case, there may be no opportunity for a solution to the local traffic and parking problems, especially in Downs Road.

PLANNING

It is government policy substantially to increase the density of housing in the south east and we are conscious of the increasing interest of property developers in the area of the Association. Unfortunately this is unlikely to diminish.

There have been a number of changes to the planning approval process in recent months, largely due to central government pressures to make the process more transparent and speedier, which in general we welcome. However, change is not without its problems and the Association is in correspondence with the Council about their procedures relating to the planning consultation process, as we have had concern expressed from a number of Members about limited notice or not being notified at all about some applications. A significant change to the planning process is the establishment of the Council's online planning database in January of this year that enables details of planning applications to be viewed online. Also the responsibility for making decisions on planning applications that are not decided under delegated powers by the appointed Case Officer will, from May of this year, move from the relevant Area Committee to the Development Control Committee. This meets more regularly than the Area Committees (approximately every 4 weeks). Following the local elections, we will be carefully monitoring the constitution of this committee to ensure that the views of Belmont and South Cheam are suitably represented.

A major continuing activity of the Association is the scrutiny of the weekly lists of planning applications. Responsibility for this is split between three Planning Officers of the Executive Committee (see page 7). The speeding up of the planning process means we have to be even more vigilant and the Association's Planning Officer for your district welcomes early feedback from Members to advise us if there are any objections.

Planning Consultations

The Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan will be replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF) over the next 3 years. The LDF will consist of a 'portfolio' of local development documents, including a range of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The Association has contributed to the consultation process for one of the initial SPDs to be published in draft, namely the SPD for the Design of Residential Extensions. Whilst making some specific comments, we have been generally supportive of this document as it gives more controls to prevent inappropriate developments than its predecessor.

Specific cases:

Up to date lists of all current planning applications are available in the 'Local Matters' page of the Association's website (www.bsra.com).

Belmont:

75 Worcester Road – This application to demolish a five-bedroom house and garage, and replace them with flats and terraced houses with 32 bedrooms, including back garden development, was opposed and has been refused by the Council.

22A-24 York Road – This application, to demolish a house, garage and adjoining bungalow and replace them with 13 terrace houses including a back garden development directly overlooking gardens in Grange Road and Cornwall Road, was opposed and has been refused by the Council. The developers have appealed to the Secretary of State. The date of the hearing is not yet known.

Telecomms Mast, A217 near Beresford Road – The appeal against the refusal of this application has been withdrawn.

15/17 Cornwall Road – This large house, which occupies a double site, has been empty for some years. On the night of Saturday 1st April, it was invaded by squatters, who caused a disturbance and daubed graffiti on a neighbouring house. The Police were called. Representatives of the owners, who live abroad, have been contacted and it is understood that the house is to be sold.

5 Sackville Road – There were no objections from Members, or otherwise, to the demolition of what is the remaining house (multi-occupancy) in the road and to replace it with a block of flats. Accordingly the Association did not object to the application.

15/17 Stanley Road – The Association objected to this second application which was refused. The developers have appealed against the Council's refusal of this planning application.

7 Northdown Road – An application to demolish the existing property and rebuild a block of eight flats was refused in March 2006 following a campaign by local residents supported by the Association.

Avenue School – Residents in Avenue Road and Lymbourne Close learned with concern of a planning application by the governors to erect two classrooms and a new hall at the Avenue Primary School. The proposal was eventually clarified as merely involving the replacement of temporary classrooms and a hall off Belmont Rise to meet the needs for school assembly and indoor sports. Subject to approval by Transport for London, this would have access from Belmont Rise but only outside school hours. The scheme had no bearing on the continuing problems with roadside parking suffered by residents in Avenue Road. The episode illustrated the importance of liaison with local residents and explaining plans to them.

Dorset Road – The Association is watching developments in regard to the Council-owned properties on the south side of Dorset Road, one of which is in such a poor state of repair that it may be demolished.

The Crescent – The redevelopment of detached properties at the top of The Crescent continues. No objections were raised to the scheme for new houses at nos 52-56, as the back land was already built on. It is however of interest to note that the Delacy Court retirement complex is still half-empty. Four years ago, this replaced three detached houses, and the Association contested the planning application partly on the grounds that this is an unsuitable location for elderly residents. Since then this case has been reinforced by the closure in 2005 of Belmont Post Office.

Queens Road – The Association has drawn the Council's attention to the apparent misuse of Queens Road in connection with the sale of second-hand cars.

South Cheam:

Downs Lawn Tennis Club – The club appealed against the Council's refusal to grant permission for additional floodlighting. This appeal was dismissed by the Inspector in January 2006.

Downs Cottage, Cuddington Way - The appeal by the owners was upheld by the Inspector in December 2005, although with very strict conditions as to the nature of the business that could be carried out. Since the appeal decision, we have had no problems reported to us by local Members.

1-7 Upper Mulgrave Road - This was reported as granted in the last Newsletter. Members should be aware that demolition and rebuilding will be starting in summer 2006.

Ewell Road Cheam, Old Dairy site – The latest application by Linden Homes was rejected by the Council in February 2006.

45 Sandy Lane – The owner appealed against the refusal by the Council to grant permission for a 4 bedroom house in place of a garage. In the interim the owner has successfully applied to renew the outline permission originally granted to them in 2003. The appeal has since been allowed.

66 Burdon Lane – An application to demolish this property and replace it with a single 4 bedroom house was granted in November 2005 and the house was demolished in March 2006. While saddened to lose an original Burton house, the Association did not object on the basis that this was a one for one replacement.

9 Downside – We have supported neighbours of this property in objecting to the demolition of this bungalow and the rebuilding of two 5 bedroom houses on the basis of over-development of the plot. The application was refused in March 2006.

The Drive – Members within The Drive are very concerned about the high level of re-development being carried out and proposed in one of the most prestigious roads in our area. An application to demolish and rebuild Wylo was approved on Appeal last year, and more recently an application to demolish The Red House and replace it with two 6 bedroom houses has been approved and the property since demolished. More recently applications to demolish and rebuild Hazel Court and the bungalow Blue Cedars and replace both with 6 bedroom houses have been received and are due to be decided in May 2006. We particularly deplore the action by the owner to fell the two historic blue cedars, after which the latter property takes its name, prior to submitting their application, knowing full well their destruction would not be approved as part of the application. We will be taking further action on the status of The Drive and other roads in the South Cheam Special Policy Area (SPA) during the coming months and will welcome the support of Members.

Glaisdale School – An application was made in March 2006 to demolish all the buildings on this site and rebuild two blocks providing a total of 13 flats and 17 car parking spaces. We have supported the local residents in a campaign to object vigorously to this application, not only because of the impact on immediate neighbours, but also the precedent it would set. A decision is expected in June 2006. We thank the many Members who have joined with us in opposing this application.

The Avenue Nursing Home – An application was made in March 2006 for a major extension to this Home that would convert it to a 3 storey block and basement with over double the floorspace of the existing already extended building. We have supported the local residents in a campaign to oppose this application on the grounds of massive over-development of the site. A decision is expected in June 2006. Again we thank the many Members who have joined with us in opposing this application.

SUTTON POLICE CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Heather Shaw, who chaired this group for 19 years, continues to attend as the BSCRA representative. Her experience and network of contacts are invaluable and we are grateful for her continued involvement.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

The Cheam and Belmont Safer Neighbourhood Teams have been working exclusively on these wards since April 1st this year. Both Teams consist of a sergeant, two police constables and three police community support officers. They regularly patrol the wards, including local schools, focusing on anti-social behaviour, underage drinking, youth disorder and other local problems. They also try to visit victims of crime, especially those who are most vulnerable. If you wish to speak to any member of the teams, contact details are listed at the end of this Newsletter. Please remember that they work both early and late shifts but are not available 24 hours per day. If you require non-urgent police assistance, please contact Sutton Police control room on 020 8643 1212. If you require immediate police assistance, dial 999.

TRANSPORT

Heathrow Express Bus – The promised stop in Cheam Village for the X26 service has been provided and is well used. London Buses notify changes of route and schedule to the Association and invite comments.

BEWARE – FIRE DANGER

The following information has come from the London Fire Service, via Age Concern, and we believe it is of interest to all our Members. This information, which is supported by the insurance industry, states that plug-in room fresheners and small plug-in night lights may cause fires, due to their thin plastic cases and the working temperature of the items concerned.

ROYAL MAIL

Cheam as a Postal Area – You will recall that this item was featured in last year's Spring newsletter. In spite of many letters from residents urging acceptance of Cheam as a postal town, this has still not been confirmed by Royal Mail. It would appear that the original letters were 'misaid' and so the campaign continues. Paul Burstow M.P. has spent a number of Saturdays in Cheam Village, collecting signatures on a petition and handing out 'Proud to be Cheam' stickers. We are grateful for his continued involvement with this campaign and hope for a successful outcome.

ROADS

Highways Maintenance Work - The following are in the provisional lists for 2006/2007:

Carriageways – High Priority List : Burdon Lane, Glebe Road, High View, Manor Road, Meadowside Road, Northey Avenue/Sandy Lane, Onslow Avenue, Parkside, Sandy Lane, Shirley Avenue, Warren Avenue, Wray Road, Avenue Road, Bawtree Close, Bicknoller Close, Cornwall Road, Pelton Avenue, Penshurst Way, The Crescent.

Carriageways – Low Priority List : Champneys Close, Wray Road, Bicknoller Close, The Crescent

Footways – High Priority List : Burdon Lane (part), Devon Road, Downs Side, Northey Avenue (part), Sandy Lane (part), Shirley Avenue, The Dene, Upper Mulgrave Road, Cornwall Road, Penshurst Way, Sackville Road

Footways – Low Priority List : Glebe Road, Onslow Avenue, York Road

Where roads are mentioned in both high and low priority lists, different works are referred to.

TREE SURGERY

Members have contacted us with concerns about the number of road side trees being cut down in the South Cheam area. We have written to the Council and they have informed us that these trees were suffering from disease, brought on in some cases by the lack of rainfall over the last couple of years. We will continue to press the Council to replace all the trees that have been removed, although in reality this is probably unlikely to happen. However, please note that if a resident complains that a tree is causing damage to property, the tree may be removed without reference to neighbours. The Council are in the process of producing cards to leave at neighbouring properties to inform them of proposed work, which we hope will improve communication and allow residents to make comments if necessary.

BELMONT REST GARDEN

Some progress has at last been made on this matter. In 2002, the Council received Section 106 money, amounting now to £5,554, from St. John's Church to be available for the restoration of the Rest Garden. At the time of printing, the path has been repaired and added to, the fence repaired and shrubs pruned. The Association is pressing the Council to install a bench together with litter and dog-waste bins. To complement this, the Association has agreed to fund a second bench. An ornamental tree has been planted with money provided by the Sutton & Cheam Society.

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, and one bonfire can spread smells a long way. Please use the Council's green waste collection or take big items to the Council's Recycling Centre on the A217. And most leaves make good compost!

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION

The Association has lobbied the Council for an extension to the garden waste collection service, and as a result, this has now been extended to December this year. Hopefully this should make the disposal of Autumn leaves a little easier!

BSCRA LOGO

As part of our drive to make the Association more visible with external bodies, and to be seen as the natural point of consultation for matters affecting Belmont and South Cheam, we commissioned the design of a new logo. The design brief was that the logo should represent a residents' association existing in leafy suburbs, and wanting to offer support and guidance to its members. The logo should be simple and easily recognised and should work in both colour and black and white. The selected design is shown at the top of the newsletter in black and white. In colour, the logo is in green and terracotta. We will be using the new logo on letterheads, newsletters and all other external documents from now on. We hope you like it.

BSCRA RULES REVIEW

The Rules were formulated when the Association was formed more than 30 years ago. They reflect the concerns which led to its formation, in particular the possibility that, if the Abercrombie Report was implemented, a third, outer, London ring road would run through the area. The opportunity has been taken to review and revise the Rules where this appears necessary. The changes relate to the following matters:

- a) The boundary definition. This previously referred to the Wards of Belmont and Cheam South (as at December 1977) which have changed radically
- b) The need to state, for the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the purpose for which the limited records of Members are kept
- c) Factual inaccuracies and clarifications.

Copies of the revised Rules and details of the changes made will be available at the A.G.M., they can be requested in advance from the Secretary, and they are available on the website (see below).

A motion to adopt the revised rules will be voted on prior to the election of Officers.

WEBSITE – www.bscra.com

In the past the Association has been available to help Members by phone and we have published newsletters like this one twice a year to give you information about what is happening in our area. We have recently launched the BSCRA website to complement this service. In addition to being another way for the Committee to make information available to Members quickly, the website now offers a major new facility whereby Members can share local information with each other via the Forums available, rather like a community noticeboard. We hope that Members will add new items to these Forums regularly to make the site interesting and relevant for us all. At this time there are three Forums on the website:

- ?? Local Matters Forum is for you to post questions about any local issues that matter to you
- ?? What's On Forum is to enable you to add details of anything happening in the surrounding area that might be of interest to other Members
- ?? Website Forum is for you to post suggestions about the website itself

In addition to the Forums, there are many other pages of information that we hope you will find useful. These include:

- ?? The rules of the Association and a map of our membership area
- ?? Some information about the history of the Belmont & South Cheam area (this is still under construction and we would welcome input on this)
- ?? Hints and tips on how to construct an objection to a planning application
- ?? A summary of undecided planning applications for our area
- ?? What's on in our area
- ?? Contact information (Association Executive Committee, Councillors, etc)
- ?? Useful links and telephone numbers for a range of Council and other services

While many items are available directly from the website, the Association's newsletter, which is only available to subscribed Members, will not initially be available on this site, but can be delivered to you via email if you subscribe.

Please Subscribe to the website (www.bscra.com) so that you can receive future Newsletters and Bulletins electronically.

By Subscribing you will receive your copy of Newsletters more quickly and will help us to reduce costs.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We have invited Gerald Smith, a local historian, to speak to us this year. Mr. Smith's interest lies particularly in the Nonsuch Estate and we look forward to finding out all about its history and any future plans for this important open area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank all who have contributed to the work of the Association during the year. We should be particularly grateful for the commitment and efficiency of our General Secretary, Mrs. Alys Shale and our Treasurer, Mr. Brian Williams. Our three Planning Officers, Mr. Peter Matthey, Mr. Dennis Baldry and Mr. Victor Jordan, have given careful and thoughtful consideration to the issues that have arisen. Mr. Peter Matthey has taken over from Mr. Graham Peters as a Planning Officer and has put a great deal of extra work not only into that role, but also into other areas, such as the review of the Association's Rules, producing the new logo and building the Association's website; we are very grateful for all his hard work. I have served as Acting Chairman since Mr. Tony Wallace's departure in November 2005. We would like to thank Tony for all his hard work and commitment during his time as Chairman. 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. The Association could not function without their support.

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

VICTOR JORDAN
Acting Chairman

BSCRA CONTACT DETAILS (see www.bsra.com for the latest details)

<u>Acting Chairman:</u>	Victor Jordan 43 Cornwall Road Cheam SM2 6DU 020 8642 2635	<u>General Secretary:</u>	Alys Shale 24 South Drive Cheam SM2 7PN 020 8643 8396
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Committee Members:

Brian Williams	020 8642 3719 (Treasurer)	Jean Hamilton	020 8642 7320
Victor Jordan	020 8642 2635 (Planning Belmont North)	Derek Hurden	020 8643 2332
Dennis Baldry	020 8642 9038 (Planning Belmont South)	Ian Munro	020 8642 8707
Peter Matthey	020 8643 0635 (Planning South Cheam)	Heather Shaw	020 8642 5406
Mahmood Bhatti	020 8661 9762	Ron Young	020 8642 0469
Irwin Chernin	020 8395 9698		

<u>M.P. for Sutton:</u>	Paul Burstow www.paulburstow.com	020 8288 6555
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<u>London Borough of Sutton:</u>	020 8770 5000 www.sutton.gov.uk
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<u>Safer Neighbourhood Team:</u>	PS Brendan McWilliams 020 8721 2830 cheam.snt@met.police.uk	PS John McClelland 020 8721 2499 belmont.snt@met.police.uk
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COUNCILLORS **As elected on Thursday 4th May 2006**

Belmont	Peter Geiringer	8647 7681	David Pickles	8642 1629	Pamela Picknett	8770 5040
Cheam	Eleanor Pinfold	8644 8041	Graham Whitham	07816 979783	Misdaq Zaidi	8770 5028
Sutton South	Barry Russell	8647 0795	Paul Newman	8642 9248	Tony Shields	8642 4264
Sutton West	Ian Chapman		Simon Wales	8643 0952	Myfanwy Wallace	8643 6568

Belmont & South Cheam Residents' Association

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2006

	2006	2005
Membership		
Members at start of year	1967	1752
Change in year	(190)	215
Current membership	<u>1777</u>	<u>1967</u>
	£	£
Subscriptions received		
Arrears	8	96
Current members at 50p each	888	983
Donations	29	85
Deposit interest received	<u>146</u>	<u>127</u>
	1071	1291
Expenses		
Printing and stationery	902	645
Postage and telephone	71	33
Meeting expenses	139	172
Insurance	50	50
Sundries	<u>10</u>	<u>54</u>
	1172	954
(DEFICIT) SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>(101)</u>	<u>337</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2006

	2006	2005
	£	£
Assets		
National Savings Bank deposit	4526	4781
Cash at bank	<u>363</u>	<u>218</u>
	4889	4999
Liabilities		
Subscriptions received in advance	(430)	(538)
Creditors	<u>(139)</u>	<u>(40)</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>4320</u>	<u>4421</u>
Represented by:		
General fund at 31.3.05	4421	4084
(Deficit) Surplus for the year	<u>(101)</u>	<u>337</u>
General fund at 31.3.06	<u>4320</u>	<u>4421</u>

Approved on 4th May 2006

V. C. Jordan - Acting 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 2006.

13 Queens Road
Belmont, Sutton SM2 6BZ

A. J. Griffiths
4th May 2006