

Belsize Residents Association

Newsletter

May 2017

Notes from your Chair

Welcome to the May Newsletter.

Thanks to many of you for attending the AGM in March. In this Newsletter, there is a report about what was discussed. Highlights included a discussion about the future governance of the BRA, which we will be working on this year. The report also introduces the Committee for the next year. We're welcoming two new members: Lelia Sector and Michael Jampel.

This issue of the Newsletter is accompanied by Tradesmen You Can Trust, which has numerous local businesses recommended by members. We know that members find this very valuable, and hope you can continue to contact us about any new potential entries and recommending the tradespeople you have used.

We have recently heard about the proposed closure of the NatWest branch in Belsize Park. Barrie Tankel writes about some of the ways the services we need may be accessed after these changes.

You'll see with this Newsletter that there is a form for you to complete should you wish to help the BRA. Please – if you can spare some time – do complete this as we're in need of new helpers for several aspects of our work.

Finally, I hope to see many of you at the BRA Garden Party on 2 July.

www.belsize.org.uk

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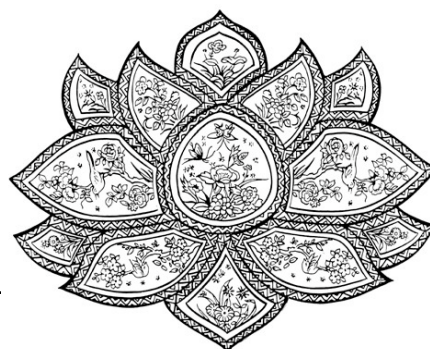
BRA Annual Garden Party

All members are very welcome to
our annual party

Sunday 2 July 2017
3pm to 4.30pm

Garden Flat, 8 Parkhill Road
Tea, cakes, strawberries

Members only but you can join on the
door



Have you looked at the BRA website recently?

Belize Residents Association

HOME ABOUT US ABOUT BELSIZE EVENTS CURRENT ISSUES CONTACT US



Home



Welcome to the Belize Residents Association website.

The Belize Residents Association is a group of over 500 households who live in the area by keeping a close eye on planning and environment issues. We aim to improve the quality of local services and we promote a greater sense of community.

During the last months, we've added new pages and updated others. Here's the flavour of a few:

Did you know that the BRA morphed from the "Three Roads Association" over 40 years ago?

Have a look at our history on the **About Us** pages: what we try to do and what has been achieved during those 40 years. Read our **Newsletters** and **Committee meeting** minutes, learn what happens at our **AGMs** as well.

There's lots **About Belsize** too: its environs and **History**, some of its **Notable Residents**, **The Belsize Walk** and others, with **Maps**, both current and historic, to guide you.

Current Issues is a favourite page for visitors so we've added **Forthcoming Meetings** to tell you where and when there are public discussions on matters such as 100 Avenue Road, bus routes, HS2 and other topics of local and community interest.

Dates for your Diary, under **Events**, is also for meetings, but this time for purely pleasurable reasons such as concerts, talks, community singing or film shows.

Tradesmen You Can Trust 2017

Q. Has your boiler broken down during the coldest snap of Winter, has the family pet ruined the sofa, does the garden need sprucing up this Spring?

A. Use the new TYCT, enclosed with this newsletter, to find gas-registered plumbers, cleaners, upholsterers, gardeners and more, much more.

You frequently tell us how much you value this booklet and should know that it can only be produced thanks to your contributions and endorsements. So, a big "thank you" from all members to all contributors, especially those who responded so swiftly to our late email plea to prevent the booklet becoming a thinner edition this year.

Category and entry numbers are now the same as last year but you may want to note the five new entries in the Security & Glaziers category which may reflect the spate of thefts and burglaries in our area. We would also like to draw your attention to revised wording for our "three year rule" and a new statement on conflicts of interest, both in the lower part of the Contents page.

Thinking forward a little to next year, you might like to consider new areas for recommendations such as car clubs and dog walkers. And please remember that contributions are welcome at any time, whenever you find a worthy tradesman, by completing the form enclosed in the centre of the booklet, by downloading it from the website www.belsize.org.uk>AboutUs>Publications, or by sending an email with full details to TYCT@belsize.org.uk.

YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOU...

The BRA could not survive without the very many members who generously donate their time and efforts to our activities and events.

Members who sit on our Committee, host events in their homes and gardens, keep our noticeboards up to date, produce our publications and posters, deliver the Newsletter, make cakes, serve tea, lead walks and tours, attend meetings in Camden on our behalf, work on planning objections, support our legal activities through drafting documents or giving evidence... we could not manage without you.

A very big thank you to you all.

Getting involved with the work of the BRA is a great way to meet neighbours and to contribute directly to the health of our community.

We are particularly looking for an additional person to help with our noticeboards and an additional Committee member to help with our work on community action such as transport, traffic, the police, recycling and other events hosted by and in Camden for local residents' groups.

If you have time for either of these roles,

please contact info@belsize.org.uk. And if you want to help in other ways, please fill in the leaflet enclosed with this Newsletter.

IN AND AROUND BELSIZE:

Transport Matters!

Each year, Camden Council holds a public meeting to discuss local transport issues in the borough. The meeting is attended by Transport for London (TfL) and local public transport providers (such as bus and rail operators), and it is an opportunity to discuss directly with them issues that relate to their operations.

The types of issues discussed include (but are not limited to) buses, tube, overground rail, cycle hire and traffic signals. This year the meeting will be held on Tuesday 4 July 2017 from 7pm to 9pm at London Borough of Camden, Room 11.10, 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG.

Cllr Phil Jones, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning will be chairing the meeting and Camden has invited community groups from across the borough. We plan to send a representative from BRA.

BUS ROUTES

You have probably noticed that since 1 April there have been major changes to bus routes in Finchley Road and West Hampstead.

- Routes 13 and N13 have been withdrawn
- Route 82 is renumbered 13 with a new 24 hour service
- Route 113 now operates between Edgware and Oxford Circus
- Route 139 now operates between Waterloo and Golders Green via West Hampstead
- Route 189 now operates between Brent Cross and Marble Arch.

For details of all bus routes, visit <https://tfl.gov.uk/>

Crime and security

Gaining access to the rear of a property and forcing a door or window is a common method of burglary in NW3. The best advice the police can give is to have a burglar alarm and ensure your front and rear doors have three points of locking (top, middle and bottom), as well as attempting to secure your back garden as best you can. The advice remains not to leave any valuables in your vehicle at all; or if you must leave something valuable in your car, put it in the boot.

If you have any valuable electronics (or anything else for that matter with a serial number, cameras, computers, phones, push bikes etc) you can register them for free on www.immobilise.com which makes it much more likely if the property is ever stolen you will get it back. Police nationally can check this database, as do many second hand stores.

We reported in the last edition on the recent burglaries of Belsize Village businesses. Since then, you will have seen the posters in shop and restaurant windows warning potential criminals that the premises are now controlled by the Belsize Business Watch Scheme and that the police are using CCTV and surveillance 24/7. The BRA wholly supports anti-crime measures for our much-loved businesses which provide a valuable service for all members of the community.

PLANNING MATTERS:

Letter from Janine Sachs about 100 Avenue Road

Dear Friends of 100 Avenue Road and Swiss Cottage

Save Swiss Cottage and CRASH would like to thank you most sincerely for your very generous contributions to the 100 Avenue Road fighting fund.

I am happy to be able to tell you that, thanks to you, we have now reached our target. Consequently, we are now able to meet the expenses likely to be incurred in commissioning SDStructures to comment, yet again, on the serious shortcomings of Essential Living's current application to discharge condition 31, as well as engaging them to speak on our behalf in the council chamber when the application is finally considered by the planning committee.

We will, in due course, inform you in detail exactly how the money raised has been spent and keep you informed of any developments. For now you may want to pencil 15 June and 29 June into your diaries as these are the next likely dates for the public planning committee.

In the meantime, we would like to thank you, once again, for responding so quickly and so generously to the appeal and for your continued support of our campaign.

Kind Regards

Janine Sachs

FOCUS ON ... BANKING

NatWest Branches set to Close

NatWest and RBS are closing 158 branches across the UK. Locally, NatWest will be closing its branches in Belsize Park, Hampstead Village, Euston Road, Great Portland Street, St John's Wood and Temple Fortune.

Barrie Tankel writes:

Demise of the Banks

The ice melts, the sea rises and the high street bank dissolves from the cities. Climate change and technology are moving us from a world we have known and loved to a different planet.

Over the past two decades the internet has made a huge impact on the way we do business. It has facilitated the growth of a different sales/purchasing culture that has driven the development of huge enterprises such as Amazon, eBay and Spotify. Other retail companies have developed on-line, with so much trade taken away from the high street that many retail shops have been forced to close.

Banks have also streamlined their systems to become more efficient and competitive businesses. Their initiatives allow us to pay bills in different & less cumbersome ways. We no longer require paper bank statements (saving a few trees) to check the receipt of funds and to check bank balances whilst we can now arrange loans, overdrafts and mortgages all using the world wide web to complete and submit an on-line application form. From later this year we will bank cheques simply by photographing them with our mobile phone and emailing to a central banking system.

So with more being done online and less by visiting a bank it is not surprising that it has reduced the need for such a large high street presence.

Whilst many of us don't require cheque books and paying in slips to do our banking, there are others who can't afford the cost of a mobile phone or computer or who struggle to use the facilities on the internet. What choices do they have to do their banking, particularly for an older generation that have grown up using bank accounts since they left school, writing cheques, banking money with pay-in slips and taking advice from bank managers?

Banking without a computer or mobile device

1. *Banks.* There are several banks in Hampstead, which are easily reached by bus or via the Northern Line tube train from Belsize Park to Hampstead. Those living closer to Swiss Cottage can use Barclays or NatWest in the Finchley Road, however Lloyds Bank has gone.
2. *Drawing cash.* This is probably the main function we need from a bank. Daily sums, usually up to £300, can be drawn from cash machines. There is a cash machine outside Budgens supermarket in Haverstock Hill and another outside Tesco supermarket in Englands Lane. Cash can also be withdrawn at the Post Office counter in Budgens. Please take care when entering your PIN number to avoid fraudulent withdrawals.

3. *Banking.* I usually send cheques through the post to my bank together with the pay-in slip. Whilst there is the added expense of a stamp it is more convenient than trekking there. Banking cash into your account can only be done at a Bank.
4. *Checking bank statements.* We can continue to receive paper copy bank statements on a regular basis.
5. *Or,* we can use an Internet cafe to do our online banking. I don't know of one in Belsize Park. Is there one close by?

Banking with a computer or mobile device

6. *Paying Bills.* Bills can easily be paid online (via the computer and the internet). In order to keep the internet secure most banks provide a hand held machine that is used with our bank card to provide numeric codes which replace signatures. Interestingly I use machines issued by 3 different banks: Lloyds, Barclays and RBS and they are all interchangeable. So if the battery fails on one machine I can insert my card into a different machine. For instance my Lloyds card will work in my RBS machine.

The process is straightforward.

- When you sign in to my bank account you will be asked for a password and/or PIN number.
- Insert the bank card into the machine and type the card PIN number. Once this number is recognised the machine provides a code number that you type onto your computer screen and this enables you to add a new payee or use the service.
- Each bank uses a slightly different system but, once you get used to it, it's pretty easy to do.

You can also see bank balances on the screen and can check that all payments and receipts are valid. And there are also facilities to set up regular payments.

7. *Receive payments.* You can receive payments into your account by electronic transfer whether it a personal payment or your pension. And you'll receive the money faster...often on the same day.
8. *Overseas payments.* It's much easier to make payments overseas via the internet, with the additional requirement of a BACS number. Your BACS number is usually found on a bank statement.
9. *Cash.* Cash will be drawn at a cash machine or post office (see 2 above).

Bank Managers

Our local friendly managers have moved to other banks and your account will be transferred to another local bank probably in Hampstead or Swiss Cottage and this manager should provide the same services as before.

Other Services

We have become used to banks providing advice on insurance policies and other financial matters. These services can be obtained from your new manager or very competitively bought from an online provider.

Annual General Meeting 2017: Report

The AGM took place on 6 March at our new venue, Belsize Square Synagogue. Over 70 members attended the meeting in this pleasant location. Following the Chair's report, there were some questions and comments on CS11, the Hall School and Royal Free Hospital extension plans. For the first, it was agreed that whilst a safe cycle lane is needed for Finchley Road, changing the gyratory system was a step too far and there was concern that freedoms were being given to cyclists at the expense of pedestrians. TfL and the Council are doing some traffic modelling to take account of some of the objections and suggestions made, and the BRA will keep members informed.

Residents against the Hall School development have initiated a report which indicates that some of the planning application report documents may be either inaccurate or have not been done. The committee hearing is expected by the end of March.

The BRA has objected to the considerable narrowing of the path between the RFH and Hampstead Green, partly on the grounds that the original plans were not clear about this intention, nor about the effects on St Stephen's Church.

Much of the meeting was spent discussing the proposed new status of the Association. The main driver for change to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation is that responsibility of the trustees will be corporate rather than individual. Our Committee members, who organise our work on large projects such as the 100 Avenue Road planning enquiry, would not need to sign contracts personally or become personally liable for any unpaid costs (which of course we avoided but the risk remains). After a lively discussion, the meeting agreed by a substantial majority for the Committee to continue its research and to produce charitable objectives, culminating with a General Meeting in the Autumn for a definitive vote about the Association's change of status.

Finally, the Treasurer presented the accounts for 2016 which were accepted nem.con as were the Committee nominations for 2017-18, after which the informal part of the AGM, namely conversation, tea and homemade cakes became the order of the day.

The new Committee is: Prabhat Vaze (Chair); **Sarah Courtin** (Secretary); **Neil Harris** (Treasurer); **Judith Farbey** (Events and temporary Newsletter Editor); **Michael Jampel** (Constitution and Governance); **Sanya Polescuk** (Planning); **Consuelo Phelan** (Trees); **Lelia Sexter** (co-opted, April 2017); **Anne Stevens** (Membership Secretary); **Barrie Tankel** (Planning).

FROM THE BRA NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

Our Newsletter in December 1988 carried a letter which will still strike a chord with us all. The author of the letter wrote about exiting from Belsize Park tube station:

'At the moment some people get into the lifts by using the gates meant for passengers leaving the lifts. Thus two things are happening:

- those people get in the way of passengers rushing to the trains;*
- they jump the queue and annoy those waiting in the correct position to board the lift'.*

Some things do not change!

Dates for your diary

BRA Annual Garden Party, Sunday 2 July,
3pm to 4.30pm, Garden Flat, 8 Parkhill Road
Tea, cakes, strawberries
BRA members only.

Belsize Community Library, 15 June,
Antrim Road, NW3
David Wickham 'Stolen Children'. Entry £3 donation.

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3, Friday
23 June
Joshua Jaswon & Barry Green Duo Recital. Award winning UK jazz musicians performing original compositions alongside imaginative interpretations of the Broadway Songbook. Doors open at 6:30pm for a 7pm start. Tickets: Advance (£6) and Door (£10).

Keats Community Library, 10 Keats Grove,
NW3. Thursday 29 June at 7.30pm
JB Priestley: A Celebration of his Work, with Ruth and Lee Montague, Anna and Christopher Benjamin.
Tickets: £10 in the library or www.wegotickets.com.

Regent's Park Decorative & Fine Arts Society
Lectures in St John's Wood Church Hall, St John's Wood Roundabout NW8 7NE at 8.00pm. Coffee is served from 7.30pm.

Bayeux Tapestry, Eveline Eaton
Tuesday 6 June 2017
This lecture will present in detail the historical, cultural and artistic aspects of that unique masterpiece, the Bayeux Tapestry, which provides posterity with such a startling testimonial of people's lives in the late Viking Age.

Eric Ravilious and the lure of the everyday, Jo Walton
Tuesday 4 July 2017
Eric Ravilious has been described as the greatest watercolourist of the twentieth century. This lecture considers him alongside other artists working on the Home Front and shows their remarkably powerful images of Britain at war.

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Interested in keeping up with Belsize news and events? If we have your email address, we will send you occasional emails with news about Belsize and BRA. If you wish to receive emails and are not already on our list, please send your email address to info@belsize.org.uk.

To find out the latest about Camden Planning: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/>

www.belsize.org.uk