

# BELSIZE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

August 2016

### Notes from your Chair

Welcome to the August newsletter.

It was great to see many of you at this year's Garden Party, which had excellent weather. Thanks to the hosts and those that helped make it a successful event.

This Newsletter covers latest developments on cycle superhighways, a recent event in Belsize village as architects gathered to consider its design, and HS2. We hope also you enjoy the profile of Pat Holden, a recent committee member.

We are currently looking through old BRA papers and publications, with a view to storing them in the Camden archives. We've got a piece that may remind you of some of the past activities of the Association. There is something also about our future, as we consider whether the organisational form of the BRA may be changed following this year's AGM.

Hope you enjoy the Newsletter.



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### \*Tree Walk\*

Sunday 18 September 2016

11:00am

From Swiss Cottage Community Centre,  
NW3 3NR

Refreshments available

# Our Constitution

The AGM this year considered whether to change the organisational form of the BRA.

We raised this issue at the AGM because recent work of the BRA, especially our challenge in the 100 Avenue Road planning appeal, involved sizeable amounts spent on professionals and advice. When this happens, an individual Committee member signs a contract and then becomes personally responsible for it, including payment. No problems have arisen but, with planning matters especially, we want to have firm and solid roots for any future similar situation.

The AGM indicated its general support for this year's Committee to consider whether the BRA should become a distinguishable separate legal entity; there was less, but some, support for becoming a charity.

We are looking into two possible legal structures at the moment. First, we would like to consider charitable status. In so far as our activities are charitable, the benefits of the status appear high. We would need to find out whether the activities we do are covered by the very wide range of charitable purposes allowed by the law. This seems a reasonable first step. It would either lead to a "yes" or a "no".

We would also like to compare charitable status with whether the BRA can and should become a community interest company (CIC). The Regulator of CICs defines a CIC as being a "type of company, designed in particular for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good". The table below looks in very simple terms at charities and CICs and what they broadly do.

Finally, we think that changing organisational form should be paralleled by amending the Association's written constitution which looks dated.

We would be grateful for any help on this that members can provide, especially those with experience of setting up, running or changing the constitution of voluntary bodies.

Charity	CIC
Must have charitable purposes which fall into at least one of the 13 types defined by law. Campaigning not precluded	May have any lawful purpose provided that it is carried on for the benefit of the community
Tax advantages	No tax advantages
Specific regulatory requirements with duties for trustees	Fewer regulatory burdens on Directors (than on charity's trustees)
Not associated with business or enterprise	Associated with social enterprise e.g. not-for-profit organisations

## BRA Garden Party 2016

Around 55 members came along to our annual Garden Party on the last Sunday of June, kindly hosted by Deborah and Barry Buzan. Luck was on our side: the rain held off long enough for everyone to enjoy tea, cakes and excellent company. We are very grateful to everyone who helped whether by making cakes, serving tea or organising the event. Particular thanks are due to Deborah and Barry for their hospitality and the use of their beautiful garden. If you have a garden and are willing to host next year's party, do get in touch: [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk).



### BRA Archive Project

This summer sees the launch of the BRA Archive project. We will be sorting and analysing a host of BRA documents and photos from over the years which will give us an unparalleled overview of BRA's history and activities. Documents, which we regard as contributing to local history, will be stored for research purposes at the Camden local archive. If you are a former Committee member with documents you would like us to take or which you think will contribute to an archive, please let us know. Thanks are due to our former Chair Averil Nottage for her help on this project.

### BRA Membership

We are always looking for new members. Why not encourage your neighbour to join? And we welcome the payment of subscriptions by standing order, which saves us time and money.



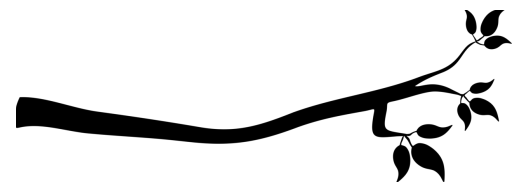
## Council Proposal for Fortnightly Rubbish Collections

Camden Council is considering reducing rubbish collections to fortnightly in order to save £5 million. This would not apply to the separate recycling or food containers which would continue to be collected weekly in order to incentivise recycling. Households will be supplied with a wheelie bin, and those with insufficient space will have to use council-branded sacks (to be delivered quarterly) - or risk not having their rubbish collected. It is not yet known to which parts of the borough this two-weekly cycle would apply. The potential disadvantages include overflowing bins and more visible rubbish in front gardens.

The Council is also proposing an annual charge to collect garden waste which it appears to be treating as an additional service. Yet the borough's much appreciated, beautiful trees and green areas actually improve biodiversity and air quality.

Camden's proposals were given the green light at a cabinet meeting last week, though at the time of writing the Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee has been asked to call-in the waste contract decision. Residents who are concerned should contact their ward councillor or the cabinet member responsible for this contract, Cllr Meric Apak (meric.apak@camden.gov.uk). Please also let us have your views on the proposals.

Camden's press release about the proposals can be found at [www.news.camden.gov.uk](http://www.news.camden.gov.uk).



## Celebrating Local Architects in Belsize

The afternoon of 23rd June 2016 - the Brexit Referendum day - also provided an opportunity for Belsize residents to gather on the paved area of Belsize Terrace. The gathering was organised by the Belsize Architects Village Hub consisting of four local practices - Xul Architecture, Starchitects Ltd, Square Feet Architects and Sanya Polescuk Architects - in order to explore residents' ideas for further improving the area and potentially renaming it. The event was generously supported by many local shops and eateries - XO, Ronnie's, Crescent Fruiterers, Belsize Deli, Retsina - providing a small stalls, packed full of delicious snacks.

Despite the persistent rain that accompanied almost the entire afternoon, over sixty residents attended, contributing many proposals.

The suggestions for improving the area ranged from the simple such as adding more trees, or some grass, maybe more notice boards or footings for a temporary gazebo or even simply the permanent Christmas lights. The more involved work included building a new kiosk, adding a levelled platform for a band stand, a fountain and even removing all curbs and repaving the entire area including the adjoining roads and parking area in the manner similar to that at Exhibition Road in South Kensington. There were also suggestions for renaming Belsize Terrace.



## Belsize Safer Neighbourhood Police

Our local Belsize Safer Neighbourhood Team police officers are PC Mike Lohan and PCSO Gurmaan Taak. Their next SNP drop-in surgery is at 12:00-14:00 on 7 September at the Bray Tower and later ones are listed on their website. The Belsize website is [www.police.uk/metropolitan/E05000128](http://www.police.uk/metropolitan/E05000128), where you can also register to receive their monthly emails containing updates on local crime trends and hints for crime prevention and safety.

Following a recent incident, the SNT encourage residents to use a door chain and to challenge unexpected visitors by demanding to inspect their photographic ID. If you are still suspicious, ask for a phone number of the company they are from and give them a call. Genuine people will always be happy to give you this information. This follows a burglary in Haverstock ward: three males, one pretending to be from EDF, explained to the resident at the front door that the electricity had to be turned off in order to fix a leak in the bathroom of the flat above. Once inside the property, the suspects stole a substantial amount of jewellery before making off.

### PLANNING MATTERS

#### *Are you a HS2 Petitioner? Training in Camden on Monday 22 August*

Camden Council is holding a preparation session to support residents, community groups, businesses and other local organisations who are petitioning against HS2 in the House of Lords. The session will be held on Monday 22 August 2016 from 6.30 to 8.30pm at the Surma Centre, 1 Robert Street, NW1 3JU. Participants will learn about preparing for the Select Committee hearings, find out about Camden's approach including the negotiations with HS2 Ltd. There will be plenty of time for questions and a chance to meet other petitioners. For those who cannot attend, Camden will publish presentations on its website.

Readers of this Newsletter will know that the BRA petitioned the House of Commons and our Chair gave oral evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee. Now that the HS2 Bill has gone to the Lords, we have petitioned the Lords and have been given a speaking slot, together with other Camden petitioners, in mid-September.

#### *Cycle Superhighway Route 11 and Local Bus Routes*

Earlier this year, Transport for London consulted on proposals for Cycle Superhighway Route 11 between Swiss Cottage and the West End. TfL received 6,270 responses. Sixty per cent supported or partially supported the TfL proposals. Thirty-seven per cent did not support them. TfL is now reviewing the proposals in light of the consultation responses. TfL plans to publish its response to the consultation, and its decision about how to proceed, later this year. The Consultation Report may be found at [tfl.gov.uk/cs11](http://tfl.gov.uk/cs11).

Meanwhile, TfL is consulting about a number of local bus routes: Routes 13, 82, 113, 139 and 189. In relation to Swiss Cottage, the TfL website says:

"To match current demand, peak hour frequencies on the Finchley Road would be reduced from 27 buses per hour to 22 buses per hour, which equates to a bus every two to three minutes, instead of just over every two minutes. This would reduce the number of buses in the Oxford Street and Baker Street areas and would enable us to reallocate resources to enhance bus services in other areas of London. During the day Monday to Saturdays buses would be reduced from every two to three minutes to every three to four minutes."

The deadline for responses to the consultation is 30 September 2016. While these routes fall outside the BRA's area, members who are affected may wish to put forward their views at [https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/buses/routes-13-82-113-139-189/consult\\_view](https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/buses/routes-13-82-113-139-189/consult_view).

## Trees... Giving Character to Belsize

The BRA continues to monitor all applications made to Camden about felling or pruning trees. We object where we feel that there is no good reason for the proposed action. If you are concerned about a tree application, please do get in touch.

**Get involved in your neighbourhood!**

## Belsize Badges



Longstanding residents will recall the annual Belsize Festival, which ran from 1973 to the late 1980s centring on Belsize Village and St Peter's Church. The festival publicity and artwork was always superb and we thought that newer members might want to see some of the festival badges (see photo).

The final festival was held over the course of a week in September 1989 and was opened by George Melly. It included all sorts of music as well as exhibitions,

stalls, workshops and a Free-Range Pancake Race. The theme was "Greening the Village" with a special emphasis on environmental stalls from organisations such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the London Wildlife Trust. All profits (which totalled nearly £1250) were donated to St Joseph's Hospice in Hackney, the Simon Community, the London Wildlife Trust and St Peter's Church.

The festival was run in association with the BRA, which produced a 44-page programme printed by Middlesex Polytechnic as it then was. The programme included information about the Camden Greening Forum as well as an article on Turning Green by well-known classicist Dr Nigel Spivey of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

## Belsize Profile: Pat Holden OBE

A Committee member from 2008 to 2016, Pat Holden led the Association's work on Police, Traffic and Transport through a period of major changes to public services. An expert in social analysis, she probed local authority decisions on bus routes, parking, pedestrian safety, licensing decisions and anti-social behaviour. She played an active role in securing the continuation of Belsize Community Library for local people when Camden decided to give it up, helping to select its first Community Management Officer.

Pat moved to Belsize Park in 2003 after a period living in Geneva and New York where she worked in the UN on secondment from the UK Department of International Development (DFID). She began her professional life teaching in Uganda, Malawi, Nigeria and Egypt. Returning to the UK, she trained in Social Anthropology at Oxford University, which led to her career in international development.



She joined DFID in 1988 as a Senior Social Development Adviser, and later became an International Development Consultant. She played a major role in developing DFID's work on women's rights and empowerment and gender equality and in making sure these were reflected in all development work. She was also responsible for making sure that development projects – designed by engineers and other technical experts – did not lose sight of social impacts and benefits. How would women working on the land be affected by a new agricultural project for subsistence farmers? What special facilities would girls need in a new school? She was seconded by DFID to the UK Mission to the UN in New York in 1997, where she contributed to the landmark UN Resolution 1325 on (among other things) violence against women in armed conflict. She worked with UNICEF on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – a treaty that has made a major contribution to human rights law reflected in court decisions around the world.

Although she has now retired from DFID, Pat remains very much involved with the promotion of women's rights and empowerment. She has been a trustee of WomanKind Worldwide which supports NGO projects in developing countries working on women's rights and access to justice. She is an adviser to Widows for Peace Through Democracy (WPD), a small NGO that promotes the human rights of widows around the world. She is also a board member of INTRAC, which supports capacity building in development projects.

It comes as no surprise that she received an OBE for her services to international development in 2002. Her interests now span a host of other things, notably those associated with the theatre. She is a playwright and she performed some of her work in aid of WPD at Belsize Library. She has also tried her hand at acting and directing. She is now a member of the Friends of Belsize Community Library committee. We know that she will continue to contribute to the social and cultural life of Belsize and beyond.

# Need to know

## Dates for your diary

Tree walk Sunday 18 September at 11:00am

Come and learn about our local trees. Experienced tree guide and BRA member Bettina Metcalfe will teach us how to identify trees in Belsize with a one hour guided walk and commentary followed by refreshments. The walk will start at 11:00 am and the meeting point is at the BRA Noticeboard on Belsize Terrace. Refreshments will be available at noon in the Hall at Swiss Cottage Community Centre, 19 Winchester Rd, London NW3 3NR.

Book your place in advance by emailing [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk). Everyone is welcome to the refreshments at noon, even if you have not walked.

Wallace Collection: Private Tour on Sunday 9 October at 3:00pm

Art lovers are invited to a private tour of the Wallace Collection on Sunday 9 October starting at 3:00pm. The tour will be conducted by BRA member Danuta Lasik, who is one of the Collection's guides. Places are limited so please email [info@belsize.org.uk](mailto:info@belsize.org.uk) to book. You will need to make your own way there and back.

The Belsize Baroque Orchestra - Sunday 2 October at 6:30pm

The Belsize Baroque Orchestra, directed by Catherine Martin, will give a concert at St Peter's Church, Belsize Square on Sunday 2nd October at 6:30 pm. They will play concerti by mostly German composers such as Bach and Telemann. The full programme is available on their website: [www.belsizebaroque.co.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.co.uk).

## How to contact the editor

Comments, contributions and events welcome!

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**November issue deadline:**  
**\*29 October 2016\***

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