



PMRA - YOUR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Alexandra Road, Hornsey Park Road, Malvern Road, Park Ridings, Ravenstone Road
and The Avenue, N8 - www.PMRA.co.uk

Chair's Report to Annual General Meeting 2013

While it has been a quiet year for the association, we have, as you will see below been busy planning and campaigning around our area. We have quite a reputation and, over the years we really have achieved quite a lot. But, so much more would be possible, with more support and a greater willingness from the council and our councillors to work with us. However, we are determined to do the best we can for our area and though it may not always seem like we are making headway, looking back we will see we have made a difference.

As always, we owe particular thanks to The Grace Baptist Church for the use of their hall. Thanks must also go to this year's Committee - Dorothy, Polly, Olga, Ben, Ryan, Clement, Paul, Debbie, Sibel, Ivor, John and Roger. And thank you to all who have helped arrangements run smoothly, attended other meetings on our behalf and all who have supported the Association over the past year.

Over the past year, we have worked on a great many issues affecting our area.

Community Gardening

We are now in our fourth year of gardening and can be proud of what we have achieved. We know our efforts are appreciated by residents and visitors alike. We continue to develop plans and put in a huge amount of time. Our greatest challenges are theft and encouraging residents nearest the plants to water them during dry weather. Our bid to the Mayor for London, to complete part of the mural in Martin's Walk, add a planter and put up a sign recording the community's work to improve the alleyway has been successful. We must now complete the work by December: please help if you can. Particular thanks to regulars Joan, Clare, Tony, John, Noreen and Peter and Michael Thompson of The Mall and Yogamatters, for their support.

Dumped Rubbish and Bad Landlords

After 16 months of campaigning, it seems we may finally have a solution to the problem of dumped rubbish behind 1 The Avenue – time will tell but it shows just how ineffectual the council can be when the law is being broken and the neighbourhood is suffering. We have also been pressing Viola to be much more effective in dealing with overflowing bins, mostly to rented properties. There are signs of some improvement. Sadly, street cleaning and the swift collection of dumped rubbish remain poor.

Betting Shops and Off Licence

With others, we object to applications for yet more betting shops in the High Road: while other councils are seeking ways of stemming the increase, the council has failed to take action in our area. The same was true of the application for an Off Licence in Alexandra Road: along with a significant number of residents, the association objected, using all of the arguments used by other councils to turn down applications in vulnerable areas. Sadly, the council not only ignored resident's genuine objections, it actually seemed to side with the applicant. On a positive note, we have met the owner and he has promised to make every effort to prevent street drinking, antisocial behaviour and underage sales around his shop. Meanwhile, a well managed corner shop is a welcome arrival in the area.

Buses and traffic in Hornsey Park Road

Our calls for buses to use the spine road continue to fall on deaf ears. In July, the council promised to look into the problem again. We believe the solution is simple – make better use of the new spine road. Meanwhile, no lessons seem to have been learnt from the temporary one-way system last year which saw so much less traffic in the road. We need more residents to join our campaign and have their voices heard. We hope the community gardening at both ends of the road will send a clear message that the road is home to many and not a by-pass to the town centre. The noise, pollution and damage to property has to stop.



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Pocket Park and Alexandra Road

In January, we bid for funding for a Mayor's Pocket Park to buffer Alexandra Road from the High Road and give our community some breathing space. It was an excellent bid and would have brought together the broad community of residents, businesses, housing associations, local schools and the council. Sadly, even with political support, council officers saw off the idea, preferring instead to see the space used as a car park, loading area and general by-pass to the High Road. However, some excellent ideas came out of it and the widespread support proves that something better should be done with the space. In February, we agreed to campaign for less traffic, reduced speed and noise and less parking from the town centre in Alexandra Road – we plan to return to this in 2014.

Neighbourhood Watch

Through Ryan and Jay, we continue to support the Neighbourhood Watch. The Watch is a regular part of our meetings and we encourage everyone to support it. While the area remains a safe one, it would be good if the authorities were to at least acknowledge our proximity to the town centre and main roads brings with it a need for more vigilance on their part.

Web Site for Hornsey Park and Notice Board

We have an excellent web site which we can be proud of: thanks to Clement for creating and managing it and to all who have contributed to it. It gets many visits and is an important place to voice our concerns and galvanise action. Thank you also to Polly and John for looking after the Notice Board – no small task.

Other bits and pieces

We have continued to work with other residents associations, the Mall Corporation and the council through the Wood Green Action Group, sadly with limited effect. We responded to the Town Centre scheme via the group but were disappointed to see the scheme offer nothing to resolve town centre problems in our area (contrary to the original commitment).

We again pressed the council to improve the area beneath Hornsey Railway Bridge and come up with ideas that would better share the space between traffic, pedestrians and cyclist using the knowledge gained from Network Rail's temporary works. The council has promised to consult us.

We were promised replacement trees where mature ones were cut down: the gaps in the pavement tell the same old story that we were short changed.

We responded to the council's proposal to limit the uncontrolled growth in Houses In Multiple Occupation (HMOs) – common causes of overcrowding and problems relating to transience and community cohesion. It seems the council has quietly dropped the idea (except in Tottenham) without ever mentioning it.

We didn't manage to have an annual Spring Clean, summer party to bring us all together or the suggested community 'boot sale' or 'exchange' – we will try again in the year ahead. However, in December we returned to St Mark's Church Hall for our traditional Christmas Quiz night with the Noel Park North Residents Association and friends.

We have written to the council or attended meetings on many other issues affecting our area and used our meetings, the web site and Notice Board to keep everyone up to date.

In Conclusion

Thank you to all who have supported PMRA and joined in over the past year. Please do help again and make the association stronger and more relevant to our area. We look forward to working together in 2014, to help make our area one we are proud to call home.

Marcus Ballard, Chair, PMRA

2nd October, 2013