



# PARKSIDE MALVERN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

(Alexandra Road, Hornsey Park Road, Malvern Road, Park Ridings, Ravenstone Road and The Avenue, N8.)

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## Chair's Report to Annual General Meeting 2012

*This has been our first year covering all roads in Hornsey Park year and, with more roads come more challenges. Our greatest is participation. In our 13 years we have made many connections – the council, local businesses, housing associations, Heartlands High School, The Mall and, through our Neighbourhood Watch, the local police. Although a year of celebration, as a community the Olympic Flame coming to our area and the Jubilee passed us by. We did manage our own celebration to mark the completion of the mosaic on the corner of Hornsey Park and Mayes Roads, a joyful affair in the most awful weather, thus proving we can come together and have a party. The mosaic is important because it was made by children who we want to feel proud of their neighbourhood. We know the community gardening connects us, and not just those in our area. We are such a culturally rich and diverse community. Yet pressure from development, bad planning by the council and the antisocial effects of the town centre take their toll. Young and old, new or old time resident, we need to look after our area. No one else will do it for us – certainly not the council or government. This is our challenge as we look forward to the next year.*

*We owe particular thanks to The Grace Baptist Church for their use of the hall, without which the Association would be without a home and unable to host events. Thanks must also go to the Committee - Niki, Dorothy, Polly, Olga, Ben, Paul, Debbie, Sibel, Ivor, Noray, Clement and Ryan, for much hard work over the year. 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.*

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

### **Community Garden Project**

This is now in its third year and well established. We owe particular thanks to Heartlands High School and The Mall, for creating the mosaic and the council's 'Making the Difference' fund for helping towards its costs. We congratulate the residents of Hornsey Park Road, for looking after our new planters next to the Mayes Road zebra crossing. Thank you also to Homes for Haringey for helping us create the plaque in the Lavender Garden and to Yogamatters, for creating their garden opposite. Community gardening remains perhaps the strongest expression our community. It is, though a constant struggle – plants are stolen, urinated on, damaged and some have even had bleach poured on them. What has survived is a credit to Dorothy, Polly, Noreen, Joan, John and all. Please help if you can by joining in, donating plants from your garden or making a donation.

### **Web Site for Hornsey Park and Notice Board**

The web site has been running for two years and is now well regarded. Thank you to Clement for creating and managing it. Please let us know if you have something you feel would be of interest or would like to write for it. The notice board in Mayes Road takes time to look after and always needs contributions of interest to residents and visitors to the area – again, please do help by providing contributions. Thank you to Polly and John for looking after this, too.

### **Coronation Sidings development**

The application was approved and work is now underway, at times causing noise and disturbance for those nearest. The council received a considerable amount of money from Network Rail to invest in the area, yet we have heard nothing from them. We continue to call for the widening of the north



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footpath beneath the railway bridge, more important than ever now that so many children attend St Mary's school in Hornsey High Street and we are all being encouraged to walk instead of drive for short journeys.

## ***Buses and traffic in Hornsey Park Road***

Our calls for buses to use the spine road continue to fall on deaf ears. The council's (and those who represent us) part in not resolving this simple problem reflects very badly on them when the new spine road is all but empty. Bizarrely, the council removed the 'alternative route' sign at the Turnpike Lane end. We will need to repeat our pavement protests and intend to hire our own bus to drive the route to prove to the council and the timid TfL that buses really can use the spine road.

Our campaign to get the council to learn from the experience of the one-way system last autumn has also been ignored. We kept a detailed blog of how traffic was affected and had ample evidence that, through period when traffic is traditionally heavier, it actually flowed better. There was less noise, less pollution, less congestion, less speed. Our findings have gone unchallenged. What has become clear is that council really has no policy for our area other than to push more and more traffic into it, whilst reducing the capacity of Wood Green High Road and Alexandra place Way to carry its share of traffic. Mean time, the so called 'environmental scheme' around the Mayes Road/Hornsey Park Road zebra crossing saw the road being widened to allow bigger vehicles to pass! At least the bendy-buses have gone from the road.

It will need more direct action, lobbying and, ultimately holding the councillors to account if things are to improve.

## ***Heartlands Planning Application - HYG/2009/0503***

Despite our best efforts and collaboration with other associations and groups, the application was approved in outline. It is not a good permission and was forced through by an unseemly alliance of applicant and the council, as part landowner. Officers were quick to approve a scheme that ignored their own policies and clear directions from others. The council recognises our area as being without open space yet it approved a new development with 30% less opening space than its own meagre policies require: what space there will be will be private and gated or open piazza style public realm – something on which the council has a particularly poor track record (Wood Green - Spouters Corner, the Library or around The Mall). Officers justified their recommendation by saying that we will be involved in the next, more detailed stage. We hope they stick to their word. Sadly, our request for a meeting with the Head of Planning to discuss this was ignored.

## ***Betting shops***

We continue to raise concern at the proliferation of betting shops in the High Road and the antisocial problems they bring. Our objections to an application by Betfred at 64 High Road were ignored and the greatest opportunity to stem the tide of such premises flunked when the council approved it.

## ***Neighbourhood Watch***

Through Ryan and Jay, we continue to support the Neighbourhood Watch and the Safer Neighbourhoods scheme. The Watch is a regular part of our meetings and we encourage everyone to support it.



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## ***Other bits and pieces***

We have tried to engage with Viola and the council on the new cleaning contract but been disappointed at how poorly cleaned the streets have become and the number of overflowing bins in the front gardens of houses divided into bedsits. During the summer, the streets became green, as the lack of cleaning allowed weeds to grow in the gutters. Much improvement is needed.

We have been assured by the council's tree officer that trees will be replanted to replace those cut down earlier in the year. The council has apologised for cutting down our hedgerow at Turnpike Lane and offered to help replant it, something we plan to do in October.

We continued to support calls to preserve Hornsey Gas Holder no.1, its retention being now championed by the Victorian Society.

We did not manage to have an annual Spring Clean but this popular day remains on our agenda. We are also looking at other ideas, such as a community 'boot sale' or 'exchange'.

We have written to the council or attended meetings on many other issues affecting our area. We use our meetings, the web site and Notice Board to keep everyone up to date. Committee members have attended the Neighbourhood Forum but little of substance affecting our area has come from it. The 'Area Plan' being created by the Forum lacks the detail required to address our concerns. We have not been contacted by the council in any respect on the governments Localism agenda or its new National Policy Framework – so much for working with neighbourhood associations.

In December, we returned to St Mark's Church Hall for our traditional and hugely enjoyable Christmas Quiz night with the Noel Park North Residents Association and friends. We hope to realise a long held hope to hold a summer party in the year ahead, to bring all ages together.

Our calls for a community response to last August's disturbances in Wood Green were ignored but Cllrs Strickland and Stewart have, with ourselves, two neighbouring residents associations and The Mall established a 'Wood Green Action Group', to bring a collective voice for change and improvement to the town centre and surrounding areas – ours included. We hoped this would see some of our issues being addressed through the offices of the council but, to date, the group has tended to highlight how disjointed and poorly implemented policies are for our area. The proposed 'Town Scheme' for the High Road misses our area. Other than this, we hear little from our local politicians and are sad to report that we have had no meaningful support for our campaigns,

## ***In Conclusion***

Thank you to all who have supported us or joined in over the past year. Please do help again and help make the association stronger and more relevant to our area. We look forward to seeing you again and working together in future, uncertain times.

Marcus Ballard  
Chair  
For Parkside Malvern Residents Association  
26<sup>th</sup> September 2012