



Chair's Report

Annual General Meeting – 7th November 2018

Our most difficult year

With nearly 20 years under our belts, you might think life would be a little easier but for much of the year it's felt like we've been fighting for the recognition and respect deserving of a long standing and committed community group. We have responded to Haringey's version of 'community' - one of sponsored and out-sourced organisations delivering Haringey's home grown plans over the short term, by reminding them there is already a 'community' here and renewing our commitment to work with them as their partners under a formal framework. We await a response. Meanwhile, with the Area Action Plan (AAP) forgotten and HDV dropped, we can look back and see quite how disruptive and consuming of our time and resources both unwelcome projects have been to the local community for nearly two years. At the same time, private conversations between developers and Haringey have appeared to us to challenge the boundaries between statutory, corporate and public services, leaving no place for community.

Communication with Haringey has been fragmented, infrequent and asymmetrical – we give a lot but little is given in return. We've been disappointed with the interest shown in our area by the new ward councillors since they were elected – priorities clearly lie elsewhere. Perhaps it's time to look again at the opportunity from a Neighbourhood Forum for Wood Green: Haringey has two - Highgate and Crouch End, created for the purpose of involving the local community in planning its area. Why not, then Wood Green?

Over the year, we have challenged many bald statements and consultations by Haringey that were presented as fact. To justify the draft AAP, we are told we all voted for densification and tall buildings when we did nothing of the sort. Redevelopment of our area was announced to international investors at MIPM as close to a 'done deal' but hidden from us. Crossrail 2 was used to justify densification even when it was clear it would not materialise. Officers and councillors breaking the news that the Shopping City and homes above it had to be demolished as part of an unapproved AAP scheme was a deceit – it wasn't theirs to demolish. Telling us the protected Metropolitan Open Land and filter beds must be developed at the behest of privatised Thames Water (when the company has opposing environmental commitments to reach) was a betrayal of Haringey's commitment to the environment and protection of valuable open space. We were told that the Moselle Brook is too deep and too polluted to open yet Haringey knows it to be just below the surface and the pollution is low level and their legal responsibility to address.

Outreach

During the last year PMRA members have played a key role in establishing the Haringey Rivers Forum as an off-shoot of the Friends of Parks Forum to encourage collaborative practice in water management in the borough and campaign for the recognition and restoration of the Moselle Brook. At the planning committee in January we helped secure a commitment from the developers St William to deculvert the river on the Heartlands should the water quality meet an adequate standard. We are still pressing all parties to agree a realistic standard and we have also argued that proper investigation of the culvert at proposed Wood Green development sites offers scope for establishing a 'chain of pools'.

PMRA represented our area at meetings called by Haringey on the theme of a collaborative council, the role of its scrutiny committees and at the recent consultation to launch the Fairness Commission. Several of us also attended the two meetings held at St Marks Church at the instigation of Catherine West and David Lammy MPs to respond to the spate of murders which affected our neighbourhood in the first six months of the year. We have urged Haringey to continue these meetings borough-wide for concerned citizens to



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share ideas and support each other. Our position reflects a growing local concern about the lack of youth facilities at the point when the area is growing.

Residents and Business Liaison Group (RBLG)

We have continued to host the Heartlands RBLG, a requirement of National Grid following the planning permission granted to dismantle the gas-holders and remediate the gasworks site. Five members of PMRA (two of whom live on Hornsey Park Road) represent the association at these meetings. We've widened the remit to involve other developers making proposals under the AAP and worked with key partners like Capital and Regional who manage The Mall and most recently the Business Investment District group. The most contentious issues on site during the last twelve months have arisen from the work undertaken by tRiIO to lay new gas pipes and install a new Pressure Reduction Station. The work has been much more extensive than anticipated, taken longer than forecast and given rise to a number of complaints about vibration, out of hours working and disruption to traffic. Despite this the RBLG has helped maintain good relations, facilitate communication and occasionally secure constructive amendments to the conduct of works. The primary absentee from the meetings has been Haringey itself which tends to treat our neighbourhood as a minor diversion on the way to greater things.

Working with St William

We objected to the latest plans for Heartlands (phases 1 and 2) but at least had the courtesy of a detailed response from St. William to each of our concerns: it changed nothing as the plans were waved through by Haringey in an unseemly haste ahead of the local elections. We have had site walkabouts and workshops with the St William team about their design and cultural strategy for the Heartlands development they now call Clendon N8. These involve intensive discussions about open space, biodiversity and wildlife, security issues with bordering properties and the marking of a site of historical interest. The loss by National Grid of a number of heritage items ear-marked to commemorate the former gas-works was a blow to this strategy but we have been satisfied that St William have a genuine interest in reflecting the industrial legacy through design and information features across the site. Recently, we have stressed the potential of local human interest stories in commemorating the site of the works rather than searching for evidence of major historical events. The lack of open space within the site remains a major concern and we agree with the Friends of Alexandra Park and other bodies that this should be a major thrust of campaigns about the future direction of planning in the area as a whole. As regards green space (which has a direct bearing on air pollution) we have promoted the idea of Wood Green as an urban forest and are pleased that St William have agreed some small additional protections to existing mature trees. St William turned down our proposal for a miniature eco-survey at the back of the lime-trees on Hornsey Park Road but there is still scope for a more collaborative approach to the creation of the 'Moselle Walk' as a 'green corridor' and permissive right of way following the line of the brook and connecting Hornsey Park Road and Brook Road.

Cleaning and maintaining our streets

We continue to report fly-tipping across the neighbourhood and are impressed with Veolia's prompt response to the strip of land under the lime-trees. We have extended our community gardening to include regular litter-picks of all the sites we maintain, particularly of the Mayes Road shrubbery behind the information board. We take responsibility for removing the bulk of the fall from the lime trees - this year for the first time we were able to distribute home-grown leaf-mould to improve soil quality across the planters near The Mall and outside Umoja House.

We are deeply concerned that there has been no improvement to the maintenance of the dangerous unsightly footways on Hornsey Park Road. Casual observation indicates these to be in the worst condition of any major thoroughfare in Haringey and regularly run over by traffic, putting pedestrians at risk.



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Meanwhile the community streets project - despite the success of the new build-out and road narrowing near the junction of Hornsey Park Road and The Avenue - is incomplete with all the proposed improvements to Martins Walk outstanding. Residents continue to express concern about fly-tipping in Arnold Bennett Way and the lack of trees in Avenue Road. Builders rubbish and domestic waste disfigures too many front yards and gardens suggesting it is time for another community clean-up event...

Traffic

We represented our area at Haringey's Transport Forum but had little success in changing the embedded view that Hornsey Park Road should suffer traffic growth and act as a bypass for the High Road and Alexandra Palace Way when it suits. The harmful impact of traffic on the lives and health of residents is irrefutable: we have endeavoured to hold Haringey to its promise to share traffic through the area equitably, improve the environment for residents and reduce the impact of traffic. Their lack of interest or concern is inexcusable. Our vision remains the greening of our roads and a significant reduction in traffic.

Neighbourhood Watch

We wrote to Borough Commander Millichap and met with PCSO Yildiz Ali several times formally and informally to fill the space left by the demise of the safer neighbourhoods ward panels: we also attended a meeting of the Haringey Association of Neighbourhood Watches about local criminal activity, raised various concerns with the presiding officer and met with the Supt. of Ops to discuss local problems and potential strategies in the wake of recent violence and murders across the wider area. We also supported the OFO bike share scheme to identify and recover seven or so bikes stolen in the local area.

Events

We conducted a number of walkabouts to acquaint key partners and developers with our area, our works and concerns. We held the annual Winter Drinks and Cake event in November and the Christmas Quiz Night and Social in December. We are grateful for the support for the tombola from local businesses and St. William for the winner's prizes. In April we held a well attended hustings for the local elections but were disappointed only one of the main parties fielded candidates. In July we cancelled the General Meeting and watched England in the World Cup on a big screen with a buffet kindly provided by the church.

Thank you

We owe thanks to the Grace Baptist Church for the use of their hall and Homes for Haringey and The Mall for their support. We owe particular to Michael Thompson, General Manager of The Mall who retired last year for his support over many years. Thanks must also go to this year's Committee - Polly, Dorothy, Olga, Ben, Clement, John, John, Debbie, Don, Anna and Niki, to Clement and Eugene for the website and tweets and all who helped arrangements run smoothly, attended meetings on our behalf or supported PMRA.

In Conclusion

We urgently need more help and support. Those who remember the association being founded will recall far greater support from residents – attending meetings, writing letters, helping with our costs - joining in. Please support us in any way you can and stay in touch and involved with issues that affect us all.

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 2019, to help make our area one we are proud to call home.

Ryan King and Marcus Ballard, Co-Chairs for PMRA
7th November, 2018