

NEWS ROUNDUP

The Library has a new manager, Karl Hemsley. Contact Karl on at 0208 937 3532 or karl.hemsley@brent.gov.uk Linda George has moved to another Brent library. Brent

Planning Department has a new **Enforcement** Officer, Elliot Tuck, elliot.tuck@brent.gov.uk. Tel: 0208 937 5235 replacing Tara Kalpage. Brent Council has a new **Climate Change Strategy** approved at the meeting of the Council Executive on 15th June. Read the Strategy on Brent Council's website (search for Climate Change). Brent Council is already committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by 2011. **Keslake**

Road junction with Chamberlayne Road. Plans are afoot to improve the area around the planters and seats by installing more lights, and re-stocking the planters to provide more colourful and interesting plants. Dennis Lewis, our Streetcare Officer has already had the area jet washed and discussed lighting ideas with a Brent engineer. Sergeant Mick Pilkington of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and Robert Budwig and Elaine Henderson on behalf of QPARA have also been involved. The views of Keslake Road residents will be sought and local businesses will be approached with a view to providing some sponsorship towards the cost. Please contact rbudwig@aol.com with ideas. **Safer**

Neighbourhood Team's 3 Year Anniversary. Sergeant Mick Pilkington and his excellent team have now been with us for 3 years helping to make the area a safer place. To comment on the team please contact brentqueenspark.snt@met.police.uk or call 0208 721 2960. To join the Ward Panel which sets the Team's priorities contact any member of the team for more information and an application form. **Car Clubs** – on a couple of roads in the area there are car club bays with spaces for 3 cars, but only 1 car ever there. We are taking

this up with Brent. **Streetvan.** Did you know you can hire a van locally? See www.streetvan.co.uk. There's a location near the junction of Willesden Lane and Walm Lane. Used and recommended by a QPARA member. **Renewal of Residents' Parking Permits** – a QPARA member recently collected 3 penalty notices on his car. He hadn't noticed that his permit had expired and hadn't received a renewal reminder. The policy is that the reminders are sent as a courtesy, so don't rely on getting one and keep an eye on your permit's expiry date. **Tiverton Green** – improvements carried out funded by Neighbourhood Working Fund. New paths and 70 new trees (mainly ornamental pink flowering cherries, but also native bird cherries and willows). Good place to spot bats!

Transition Town Kensal to Kilburn. A new local group has a vision to turn the area into a more self-sufficient community, using the Transition model. To find out more visit their stall on Queen's Park Day and see <http://ttkensaltokilburn.ning.com/>

New Local Organic Food Co-operative. QPARA member Emily Hamilton who lives on Creighton Road has set up a local organic food co-operative. Emily answers your questions: *How does it work?*

Email me a completed order form and make a bank transfer for the total amount due a week before the goods are to be delivered. A week later the goods arrive with me. *How do I collect my order?*

The goods are packed up into individual orders and are then collected by members. Any difference between money transferred and final total amount is settled up at the point of collection (usually some cash back because an item ordered was not available). *Do you pack up all the orders yourself?*

No, this is done on a voluntary basis by members. So, we always need people to come forward to help.

Is there any extra cost?
There is a £5 membership fee.

How is the cost of the goods calculated?
The price of the goods is the wholesale price plus five percent. This tends to be about 20% less than retail price.

Emily Hamilton e-mail food-buyers-coop@live.co.uk or tel. 07779 100 187

Roads and pavements
Harvist Road has developed speed humps! These were installed by the council following a written consultation of Harvist Road residents last September. 13 accidents had occurred on Harvist Road in the previous 3 years, 3 of them resulting in serious injuries. The traffic calming measures (speed cushions along Harvist Road and a raised junction table at the Harvist/Milman junction) were designed to provide safer conditions and reduce the likelihood of future traffic accidents.

Chevening Road is in the process of having all its pavements re-laid, on both sides and along the whole length of the road. This has caused some comments from residents of Kempe Road whose pavement on the south side is tarmac (not an acceptable paving surface in a Conservation Area), despite many requests over the years to Brent Council for paving.

Speed monitoring of traffic along Chevening Road continues, with equipment to be installed at two points on the road.

Councillors' names and contact details if you want to be in touch with them about these or other issues:

Emily Tancred, emily@tancred.co.uk,
Simon Green, simonjgreen@hotmail.co.uk,
Will Motley,
richmot@hotmail.co.uk

Conservation Area signs. We are hoping to have special CA signs attached to every road sign in our area. Also we hope to have small window stickers for cars and houses.



ENGLISH LESSONS AT HOME – Would you like to be a volunteer?

English Lessons at Home (ELAH) is a new Queen's Park voluntary group currently applying for charitable status. It offers one to one tuition, in their own homes, to people from ethnic minorities who want to learn English but are unable to attend classes for a number of reasons. They may have caring duties which prevent them attending regular classes; they may be older people who lack the confidence to attend classes; or mothers with young children or people who have never had any formal education and lack the confidence to enrol for a class.

Lessons take place weekly, one to two hours,

in the student's home and are given by a trained volunteer.

Volunteers are always needed to do the teaching. Volunteers receive a six session training course (2.5 hours per session) run by a qualified trainer, held in the Queen's Park area and are paired with a student during the training. Volunteer tutors are introduced to a student by an ELAH coordinator and are given ongoing support whilst they are teaching. A commitment for at least six months and fluent English is required. Out of pocket expenses are paid.

If you think you would like to be a volunteer you can get further information and a referral form from:

Evelyn Cantor on 020 8960 0548 or elahinfo@yahoo.co.uk

Piano Teacher
Adults and children
Linda Taggart
07763 245736

Hopscotch Nursery was due to close in 2010, but Brent council has now decided to extend the lease to 2012. The reason is that the Islamia school will need 2 floors until their new school building is ready in the playground next to St. Anne's church.

QPARA MEETINGS

St Anne's Church Hall
Salisbury Road
7.30 for 8pm

10 September
8 October
12 November(AGM)

2nd Thursday of the month
Meet your neighbours for meetings that are part social.
Refreshments provided
www.queensparkonline.org.uk

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Queen's Park Area Residents' Association

news

www.queensparkonline.org.uk

SEPTEMBER 2009

QUEEN'S PARK DAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 12-5.30PM

www.queensparkday.org.uk

The idea this year is to have fun on a budget. We've been lucky enough to receive a Grassroots Grant from North West London Community Foundation and sponsorship from some local businesses which has enabled us to offer some great free events and others at very low prices. A whole family could enjoy Queen's Park Day without spending anything at all! The arena events, magic shows by Mr Alexander, bandstand music and cycling roadshow are all free. Some of the stalls also have free activities for children. The donkeys, climbing wall, Rope-a-phobia all cost only £1. The Organising Committee answers your questions about the day.

What's new this year?

"Get Cycling" from York are bringing their 5 seater bike and recumbent trikes for children and adults to ride. Find them near the main arena.

My children loved the tree climbing, what else is there?

Also new this year, Rope-a-phobia offers older children the chance to test their rope skills and head for heights

What's on in the arena?

The Kangaroos Gymnastic Display Team and the Eagle and Vulture Show as well as the Dog Show (see www.queensparkday.org.uk)

Can I get something to eat in the park?

You'll be spoilt for choice with an even greater range of food stalls than last year, including North Indian, seafood, hog roasts and pancakes

What competitions are there?

The edible monster competition is back, and a new family competition – Decorate a Broom. As for baking, the quest this year is to find the best lemon drizzle cake. Entries to the Qpara tent by 1pm. Don't forget the Children's Fancy Dress and Dog Show too. See www.queensparkday.org.uk and posters around the park soon for more details.

Who organises it?

The Queen's Park Area Residents' Association with help from the City of London park staff led by Richard Gentry, Sergeant Mick Pilkington and the Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

Do you need any help on the day?

Yes! If you can spare an hour or two any time between 8am and 7pm on the day, or the evening before please contact Helen 07789 917721 or Elaine 07963 113820 (or elaine@london.com)

Are the stalls the same as last year?

No, we always try to have some new stalls. There's home-made jam and original art to African baskets and fair trade clothes. You'll also be able to find out about new activities or groups to join.

Who's performing on the bandstand?

"Guided by Lights" a local acoustic duo, QPCS Jazz Band, Salisbury drummers, the Many Rivers Gospel choir

Is it easy to park nearby?

No, the stall holders need to park nearby and it is Ramadan so parking will be



very limited.

Come on foot or by bike if you can.

Can I recycle my drinks cans and bottles?

Yes, as well as the recycling points by the café, playground and tractor yard, temporary bins will be dotted around the park for glass, tins and plastic bottles and paper

Are you trying to raise money for anything this year?

Our main aim is to provide fun on a budget so we're keeping prices as low as possible, but any surplus will go towards funding the re-design of the older children's playground.

The Team.

(l-r) Carin von Drehle, Helen Durnford, Elaine Henderson, Andrea Szalanczi



Play Area Developments



It has taken nearly five years to get there but a new play area is now in its early stages. In last year's Joint Consultative Group meeting, attended by QPARA representatives, the then chairman, Alderman Robert Hall, agreed that we needed a new play area and it was made a priority in June 2009. Helen Durnford, Richard Gentry, Alison and I have had several meetings with Land Use Consultants and we now have an exciting new design. QPARA paid £2000 towards the £5000 cost of this.

As Queen's Park once held an agricultural show, the theme of the design is based on this. It will have tyre swings, seats and crawl tunnels. It will also have a farm track and a dry stone wall, a hazelnut coppice and an orchard picnic lawn. There will be a 'Sensory Meadow' containing a special textured path, chimes, wooden sculptures and planting. Indeed children of all abilities have been taken into account in its planning and it will be a very organic, natural play area, stimulating imaginative as well as active play.

The play area users are being consulted in the park. You will also have a chance to view the design and give your opinions at the City of London stall on Queen's Park Day.

We have applied for funding from one local trust fund, however, a major part of the finance has to be found from sources other than the City of London, who will be match funding. It is hoped that local businesses will sponsor play pieces or areas and if anyone is interested please contact me on my e mail below.

*Caroline Robinson.
pageandrobison@aol.com*

THE LEXI CINEMA: a rare gem in NW10

Sharp-eyed locals will have spied a rather exciting development recently on the strip of Chamberlayne Road that runs between Hardinge Road and Leighton Road: The Lexi Cinema – a high-tech digital arthouse, which opened last October in an old Edwardian community hall, and has been the talk of the neighbourhood ever since.

The venture is local businesswoman Sally Wilton's baby. She had longed to manage her own not for profit, community cinema for years. All profits go to the Sustainability Institute, a South African eco centre.

In a year Sally transformed the 1920s hall built by Charles Pinkham into a magnificent but intimate entertainment venue – London's first social enterprise cinema. The refurbishment, sensitively done around the period features, includes a breathtaking chandelier by Eden Project sculptor and lighting wizard Bruce Munro as a centrepiece for the auditorium. 'When I walked through the door I knew instantly that I could magic it into the most glorious picture palace', she says.

It is like a tardis inside with an auditorium of 80 seats, room to stretch your legs, a roomy box for 16 (how perfect for a private party?) and Josh On The Rocks – a back-of-house bar.

Sally was determined that The Lexi would be as comfortable and technically perfect as it is stylish and modern. And it delivers. Her picture house brilliantly fuses 20th century style with 21st century technical know-how and comfort.

Since it opened, The Lexi has shown the Coen brothers' "Burn after Reading", the critically-acclaimed "I've Loved You So Long" and is soon screening, on release, the new Tarantino movie, "Inglourious Basterds". And to mark the Lexi's first anniversary in October, watch out for some free entertainment and prizes!!

This is cinema as it should be: exciting, magical, escapist – old picture house qualities lacking in all but truly independent enterprises and which make film-going as much of a treat to look forward to as theatre. It is a rare gem, right here in NW10.

The Lexi's Vital Statistics:

Phone bookings: 0870 7042069 (lines are open from 9.30am – 8.30pm); £1.50 booking fee per booking .

Online bookings: www.thelexicinema.co.uk; £1 booking fee per booking.

Address: 194b Chamberlayne Road, Kensal Rise, London, NW10 3JU

The Sustainability Institute website: www.sustainabilityinstitute.net

Kate Shapland

Cowboys on the Roof or How to position a satellite dish in the Conservation Area: A Drama in Four Parts

Does this sound familiar?

1. Your children's pestering campaign succeeds. You sign up for a satellite TV package. The familiar van drives up and out gets an engineer who insists that only if the satellite dish is fixed prominently to the front of your house will you be able to get a signal. It's not allowed, you say, don't you know this is a Conservation Area and anyway it will look ugly. Well sorry love, I'm not authorised to go high enough anyway – you'll need a different team for that. Dunno when they could come (on phone "yeah, near Queen's Park, fussy lot, [rest inaudible]").

2. Bad evening when your children cannot watch the match but another engineer soon arrives and suggests a large pole bolted to the chimney as the only possible solution. You hesitate- the chimney's rather old and this will spoil the view from your bedroom and more importantly no one else has a dish on the end of a pole. Engineer departs.

3. Family in despair. Even the cat has left

home to watch snooker elsewhere. A third engineer arrives, a member of the elite "height team", and charming with it. Nothing is too much trouble for this man. If only you'd known you'd have got in some chocolate biscuits. Before you can say "Queen's Park Conservation Area" this man is inspecting the house from all angles, noting the rows of satellite dishes pointing south, flicking cables over the roof, admiring the roses which are catching on his clothes, dangerously hanging out of windows and gallantly refusing all offers to hold onto his legs. All talk of dishes at the front of the house or wobbling on poles is forgotten. A dish is neatly tucked in at the back of the house just below a bedroom window.

4. Children contently watching cartoon network. I've run away with the engineer. [Name supplied but withheld to avoid embarrassment]

In a Conservation Area your satellite dish must not be visible from the front or side of the house. If you have spotted a new offending dish, contact Sue Arnold sue@rickwright.co.uk.

It's a hard life...

It's a hard life on the streets, out in all weathers, a bit of a change from where you lived before, subject to mindless violence – especially if you're a newly planted street tree. You might be planted in a mix of rubble and heavy clay, short of water, get knocked sideways by inept drivers, have barked peeled off by vandals, or worse still be snapped in half.

This year we have seen the worst problems ever with the newly planted trees. Of the small number of newly planted silver birches 3 are suffering from lack of watering (Kempe Road and Peplow Road) and one on Winchester has been broken in half. Along the South side of Chevening Road and Winchester Avenue several trees had long strips of bark removed in early Spring (they will probably survive this but will be weakened and prone to disease) and another tree was broken entirely in Montrose Ave recently.

It costs Brent around £250 to plant a street tree and that price includes after care for the first two years. There doesn't seem to be much watering happening though, so if a tree near you is starting to wilt please give it a few cans or buckets of water through its watering tube if you can. Camden council attach jokey notices to trees encouraging this, and we have suggested the same to Brent.

Perhaps the biggest threat to street trees is neither drought nor vandalism but over zealous insurance companies. Recent losses



in the area for this reason were a mature plane tree in Victoria Road, a particularly fine false acacia on Milman Road and an elegant silver birch at the junction of Carlisle Road and Brooksville Avenue. Insurers are quick to blame street trees for any cracking, however minor, which may be caused by slight movement of a house for various reasons. These old houses of ours move about with the seasons, and most cracking is not structural, and probably not caused by tree roots. In a recent local case, a house was very expensively underpinned by reason of "tree roots", when the real culprit

was later found to be leaking drains. Fortunately, the alleged culprit trees were in the Park, and the City of London did not fell the trees. Another house had minor cracking, unrelated to either trees or drains, and was merely to be patched up by the insurance company. Nevertheless, a beautiful street tree was cut down.

If you have any concerns, make sure that the situation is assessed by a competent surveyor, architect, or engineer, not just by a loss adjuster whose only interest is in saving money for insurance companies. Some are known to process domestic claims by doing a "drive-by"!

Clearly there are cases where roots do cause damage and a number of very large flowering cherries have been removed for this reason. During the 5 years to Spring 2007 1,500 street trees were felled in Brent, 16.67% as a result of subsidence claims. Think before you claim, particularly if your cracking is minor!

On the plus side, there's a new plane tree on Salusbury Road, near the library, which seems to be doing well and quite a lot of new flowering cherries in the smaller streets. Qpara are sponsoring 8 of the newest trees, 4 on each side of the park (and ones which we hope will survive!).

If you notice a problem with a tree – concrete around its trunk, damage by vandalism, damage from vehicles, loose and dangerous wire tree ties or if a tree needs pruning please contact

*neal.stlewis@brent.gov.uk and
elaine@london.com.*

Park News

Green Flag Award

A total of 15 open spaces owned and managed by the City of London Corporation have this year scooped Green Flag and Green Heritage Site awards. In addition to this, the City Corporation won three out of seven national Innovation awards. Queen's Park was awarded a Green Flag award for the 13th time but also won an Innovation award for Sustainability. This was for the use of stored rainwater to water the planting in the quiet garden. Qpara are particularly delighted as the pumping system for this was installed partly in response to our suggestions at a City of London Consultative Group meeting. It also helps the City to meet the aims of its Climate Change Strategy. The next step, if funding can be found, will be for the stored water also to be piped up to the pitch and putt course. For more details of the Green Flag scheme see www.greenflagaward.org.uk Sue Ireland, Director of Open Spaces at City of London Corporation, said: "We are absolutely delighted that the City of London's green spaces have once again been

recognised as some of the best run and well loved open spaces in the country. This is thanks to the tremendous effort of staff and volunteers who work throughout the year.

Wildflowers on the bunds

This scheme is now in its third year and some of the bunds have been invaded by creeping thistles and large mustard species. Volunteers from QPARA led by John Blandy launched an attack on the thistles earlier in the year and cleared quite a large area by patiently digging them up, but strimming was also necessary. The two



bunds near to the bandstand have a large number of different wild flowers growing on them if you have a good look. These include knapweed, corn marigold, mallow, white campion, poppy, cornflower, bedstraw, knotgrass, corn chamomile, shepherd's purse, pignut and birds foot trefoil. There's quite a lot of insect life there too and butterflies feeding on the flowers.

Squirrels and pigeons do not need extra food! Leaving heaps of nuts or bread by trees encourages rats, encourages even more pigeons into the area (they are already a serious problem at the café) and causes a serious risk to small children with nut allergies. Even touching a nut can cause a life threatening allergic reaction. The park is much cleaner since the installation of the dog poo bins, let's not encourage vermin by providing food. Plans are afoot to engage a falconer with a hawk to deter pigeons by the café (this works well in Trafalgar Square where you can see a Harris hawk and handler some mornings). The Park Staff have put up notices explaining the problem and will speak to anyone putting down large quantities of food.