

# It's your Residents' Association

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association (HGSRA) has been in existence for over 70 years and, despite ups and downs, has remained constant in its over-riding aim: to preserve and increase the amenities of the Suburb.

## What are these amenities?

A most important one is the architectural interest of our environment, described in the Constitution of the RA as 'a distinguished living contribution to the history of English domestic architecture and site planning', and posing quite a 'problem of preservation as extensions and picture windows attempt to infiltrate the decorous buildings all around us.

The 'quiet charm' of the neighbourhood is another amenity; the community spirit encouraged by the ideals of Dame Henrietta Barnett, yet another, and allied to this are the wide-ranging social and cultural facilities available to residents of the Suburb.

So, your RA acts to maintain all this, and to improve and increase it wherever possible.

## How does the RA work?

Putting its aims into practice requires a good deal of work and organisation. It involves communication with residents to discover their points of view, formulation of policies based on majority points of view, and liaison with the relevant bodies, such as the Trust, Barnet, the GLC, so that action is taken where necessary. It goes without saying that a request or opinion expressed through an elected mouthpiece carries more weight than that of an individual resident alone.

A Suburb resident becomes a member of the RA on the payment of an annual subscription. A member is entitled to elect the individuals responsible for acting on his or her behalf, and this takes place at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Any member of at least two years' standing is eligible for election to the RA Council which

comprises a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and between 30 and 36 ordinary members.

The Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month (except August) and the meetings are open to all residents who may raise any points they might wish to so long as this has been arranged in advance with the Chairman.

The Council acts in the name of the RA, but the management role of marshalling information, analysing points of view, considering policy options, etc, is undertaken by the Executive Committee (EC) which consists of seven members elected from within the Council.

The detailed information on and investigation into specific concerns of Suburb residents is supplied by eight standing committees that, as can be seen from their names, cover most aspects of Suburb life. First (in alphabetical order), there is the Allotments Committee which has the basic task of overseeing the fair allocation and proper cultivation of allotments as well as looking after some sites on behalf of the Trust.

The Community Services and Tenants Committee monitors the provision of social services including, for example, youth clubs. The Conservation and Amenities Committee (CONSAM) has the 'front-line' job of furthering the aims of the RA by informing residents (when necessary), checking that planning controls are observed and keeping abreast of Trust and Barnet policies on planning. CONSAM liaises directly with the Trust over breaches of planning regulations.

The Open Spaces and Trees

Committee is generally concerned with the maintenance, protection, enhancement and use of public open spaces in and adjoining the Suburb, and with the cultivation of trees - a current objective is the preservation of avenues of specific trees in opposition to Barnet's policy of mixed planting.

The main role of the Publications Committee can be said to be communications - between the RA and residents as well as resident and resident - though the pages of the Suburb News, for example and the Suburb Directory which provides the names of all the warden and Council members of the RA along with other useful information.

The Roads and Traffic Committee monitors road safety, maintenance and public transport provision as part of its job which involves liaison with London Transport and the Police as well as all the relevant authorities. The possible widening of Archway Road with its implications for traffic through the Suburb is a pressing concern at the moment.

The Social Committee aims to encourage community enjoyment by arranging social events, and is especially concerned to introduce new residents to the Suburb. And, finally, the Wardens and Membership Committee is responsible for the Suburb's warden system whereby direct communication with each resident is possible and membership of the RA can be circulated.

How does all this work in practice? Do you have a problem or feel strongly about any particular aspect

of your environment? If so, your first step would be to contact your warden or a member of the relevant committee (see Suburb Directory pages 8-10 and 11); your warden will put you in touch with the right person if you're not sure who to talk to. Explain the problem and you might get a direct answer. Perhaps the committee will have to work on it, finding out legal or planning implications; and perhaps it will act on your behalf, for example, approaching the Trust on the matter of planning infringements or neighbours' disputes over hedges or trees. In the case of problems that might necessitate a policy ruling by the RA, it might be taken to the EC and discussed by the Council before any action is taken. No promises can be made. Some action by the RA inevitably results in months if not years of discussions with authorities of one kind or another, sometimes without success. But if you do need advice or help don't hesitate to try the system - the RA is there to do all that's humanly possible!

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## DIG IN!

Some allotment plots will be available at the end of this year. The allotments committee Secretary, David Meyler - (455 0961) will be pleased to give particulars and take applications. First come, first served; so hurry!

## LETTERS

The Editor would like to thank the many residents who have written to congratulate the RA on the new format Suburb News. Whilst there is no shortage of news, only a shortage of space we will welcome contributions on topics of interest for future issues, which we hope will have more pages. We are particularly anxious to find someone who can provide a regular article on what Suburb gardeners should be doing through the year and a photographer to cover occasional functions.

Please send contributions and letters to the editor for the January issue by early December to; R.J. Wakefield, 26 Hampstead Way, NW11.

Dear Sir, It was a pity your reporter was unable to hear everything that was said at the Mid Term Meeting of the Trust. He surely must have been aware that by now the largest majority of people present were not a little worried about the Trust's attitude and actions on everything that was disclosed.

Not least so far as the annual charge is concerned: its amount; its unlimited nature; its inequitable method of sharing the cost whereby all Freeholders pay the same amount whether they live in a £200,000 house in the square or a £40,000 house on the wrong side of Falden Way. No matter what we think about rates and income tax there is some attempt to ensure some sort of equity.

Never have I left a meeting so despondent. The acoustics made the meeting a matter of solos instead of one of dialogues; the spread of TINA from next door ensured a complacent platform retained closed minds; any idea of Henrietta Barnett's that the Suburb would be one of harmony and equity between the rich and the poor was shattered; and finally, the complete lack of understanding by the platform that an extra charge of £11 for 1982/83 could just be shrugged off by most Freeholders. How much more for 1983/84?

Yours sadly,  
Peter Turner, 26 Brookland Hill.

Dear Sir, Welcome indeed to the first 'Suburb News' but please, let's get it right! There are two significant errors of fact in your front page report 'Trust Gets Judgment'. (1) Cost of recovery by the Trust from slow or non-payers of the heavily increased management charge will fall not on residents generally, as you imply, but on freeholders only, who will have this added burden to bear. (2) The ratio of freeholders to others is not 2:1 as you have it, but 1:2. There are some 5,000 separately rated houses, flats and other properties in the Suburb, of which some 2,000 are enfranchised (freehold) and these will

always be in a minority.

One comment: the safeguard for freeholders that was enshrined in Clause 7 of 1974 Scheme was the obligation laid on the Surveyor acting as Arbitrator to "... assume in determining the management charge to be paid in respect of each enfranchised property that a similar contribution will be received from the owners of all other separately rated residential units or shops, whether enfranchised or unenfranchised within the Hampstead Garden Suburb and that the Scheme will thereafter be managed in an economical and efficient manner." (My italics). That safeguard was simply swept aside by the Trust's revised Scheme now endorsed by the Court, despite representations pressed by me among others. In its place there is now no safeguard: only the pious hope offered that the charge should not 'escalate out of all proportion'.

Yours faithfully,  
Robert D J Walker, 10 Southway.

AS ONE who was chairman of the Residents' Association at about the time of the demise of the old Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, I find it ironical to see residents of the Suburb still requiring the New Trust to continue protecting the amenities of the Suburb but being very reluctant to provide it with the necessary income.

I admit that the charges under the scheme look high, but I think a small exercise in arithmetic, allowing for inflation, would put them in better focus.

I suggest that the original pre-1914 ground rents of £5, £10, £15 per annum, allowing for inflation would now be £200, £400 and £600.

I also know that my house was built in 1910 for about £600 and now has a value in excess of £100,000.

These figures, I feel make the proposed charges under the scheme look much less onerous.

Stanley Wilson,  
7 Willifield Way,



## Summer and Autumn Flower Shows

The busy H.G.S.H.S. has held two successful shows this summer. On July 30 a superb summer show attracted a very strong entry. Five magnificent Dahlias won a first for Jimmy Dyson as did his large Gladiolus. In this section Mrs. H. A. Squires won the Best Horticultural Exhibit with a vase of foliage, and carried off the Best Vegetable Exhibit with a collection of herbs.

The shows are not all flowers and vegetables though. Mrs. M. Glaser entered an imaginative

'picnic meal for two' to win Best Domestic Economy and Harold Karton and H. Rees Phillips were awarded firsts for their wine making.

The Horticultural Society shows are very much family affairs. Children enter paintings, sweets and cookery. Seen above are James Page, representing a multi prize winning family, with his winning rock buns and Elizabeth Moss from Ossulton Way shyly exhibiting her teddy bear painting.

RJW

## Town and Country

British Dramatists have, through the ages, revelled in satyrising the manners and morals of Town and Country. Our new Season of Live Theatre opens with two super examples of this art.

First in October - "Entertaining Mr Sloane" by Orton a modern black comedy which burst upon the sixties like a thunderclap. The laughter still rolls out as the play makes its barbed points.

Nex in December - "She Stoops to Conquer" perhaps

one of the best loved of English comedies, in which Oliver Goldsmith gently pillories the countryfolk and their pretensions. The two plays complement one another but you will treble your enjoyment by seeing them both. Dates times, and other details to be found in the diary of events.

Any further information from: John Woolf, 46 Temple Fortune Lane, NW11 7UE.

Telephone Daytime 629-6226. Evening 455-2625. JW

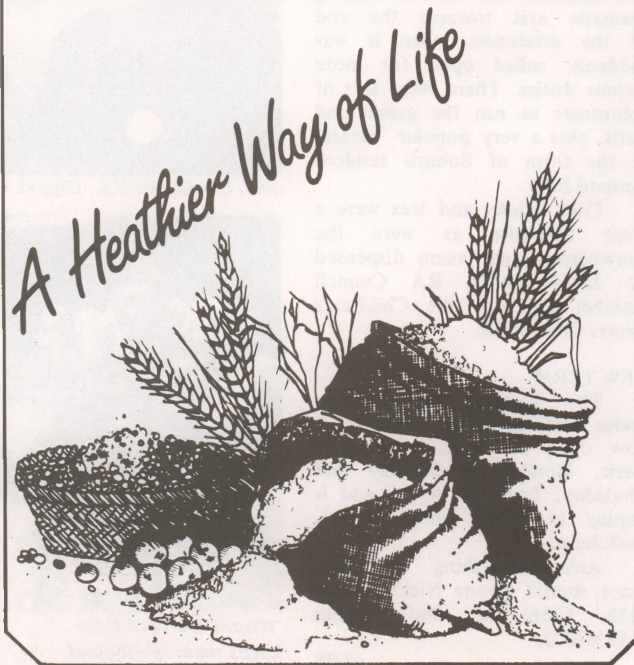
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