

SUBURB NEWS

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ST JUDE'S PLANNING SHOCK

St Jude's income from recording sessions is threatened by Barnet councillors who voted in private to stop the church being used for recording classical music.

It was some eighteen months ago that the Council, apparently as a matter of course, sent an enquiry to the church asking how many days in a year recordings took place. The answer from the PCC was that for something, like 100 days a year the church is used for this purpose.

Deciding that this level could be said to constitute a change of use Barnet asked the church to make a change of use application largely because of their concern about alleged traffic chaos caused by the sessions.

Quarterly reminders to the vicarage having elicited no response the council then issued an enforcement order in September that gives St Jude's six months to appeal or stop the recordings.

The council's action may have been prompted by a petition organised by South Square resident Norman Lester and signed by some, but by no means all, South Square residents.

The first the church warden and members of the congregation knew of either the change of use requirement or the enforcement order was when the Hendon Times, acting on a leak from Barnet, covered the story on September 12.

In that article Norman Lester is quoted as saying that "It wasn't an attack on the church or the orchestras involved, it was simply against the huge traffic jams recordings generate. Once I had to go to the dentist for an emergency and couldn't get out of my drive because of the cars".

Members of St Jude's congregation are quick to point out that with the Institute attracting thousands of students, less than one third of whom live in the Suburb, and with events at the Institute Hall causing jams, the traffic generated by recordings is hardly likely to be the greatest of the Suburb's traffic problems.

Raymond Lowe, one of St Jude's church wardens says "The upkeep of the fabric is a very heavy burden on the congregation and in recent years only the income from the recording has allowed the maintenance of the building in anything like a sound state to continue. Nevertheless as one fault or deterioration is overcome and paid for another arrives. In the immediate future damp and storm damage to the base of the spire has to be repaired, the roof of the Lady Chapel has to be opened up and cleaned, the campaign of re-leading the windows has to be continued. If the council insist on the cessation of the recordings the residents of South square will be able to look out on a ruin rather than a well maintained church which is one of the finest pieces of work by Sir Edwin Lutyens "and" as neither I nor the Vicar have been notified in writing of their reason for stopping the recordings we must presume the reason is that one man was late for the dentist". RJW



RA REPORT

How many residents could say that they have studied or perhaps even heard of the document "An Environmental Strategy for Barnet", or the "Unitary Development Plan for Barnet"? And yet these lengthy and involved documents contain long term plans which will greatly affect us all. Fortunately, amongst the Residents Association Council there are a few members with much expertise who give up a great deal of their time and give comments and responses on our behalf.

Although the RA Council takes a holiday in August, the Executive Committee continues to meet and consider various problems. We have been pressing for more toilets to be provided by the London Borough of Barnet in this area. They have agreed to upgrade those in Northway Gardens, but we believe the toilets in Temple Fortune should also be reinstated. Negotiations between London Underground Ltd and LBB about the installation of a toilet at Golders Green Station have failed. LBB intend to look for an alternative site in Golders Green for an Automatic Public Convenience (APC). The Traffic Committee is asking the Department of Transport for further information on their report on the results so far of the Red Route Pilot Scheme, as any possibility of the Red Route being extended along Fallooden Way to Henlys Corner would have drastic implications for the Suburb.

Research is needed into the effects on local and side roads. Enquiries were made by the Chairman of the Traffic Committee into the control of exhaust fumes - interestingly enough, the Police, London Borough of Barnet and the Department of Transport admitted they can do nothing about enforcement of existing regulations, although the D of T is in the midst of drafting more

stringent measures!! The Traffic Committee has written to English Heritage asking that adequate parking provision is made for the disabled at Kenwood.

For many months the RA has been in contact with the Post Office about our concerns for retaining services at Temple Fortune. Now that the service will be moving further down the road, and being provided by an agency, it is up to residents to carefully monitor the service.

Architectural Tours visited the Suburb on July 13th, and the Letchworth Society on September 14th, both groups enjoying a tour conducted by Mervyn Miller. The RA provided refreshments on the first occasion, and the Horticultural Society on September 14th - attendance at the Flower show was a 'bonus' for the visitors from Letchworth. This is a welcome demonstration of the value that is placed on the uniqueness of the Garden Suburb!

Christopher Kellerman gave a short and informative talk to the RA Council about the work of the New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. With the co-operation of residents and help from the RA, one of the Trust's most important functions is to see that the Suburb retains its outstanding features.

A talk was given to the RA Council by the Chairman of the Charitable Trust, J.D. Freebom - they make a valuable contribution to the welfare of our residents.

The Home Office included Hampstead Garden Suburb in a series of case studies on "Safer Communities" - this can be credited to the outstanding efforts of Peter Loyd in organising and maintaining the Suburb Neighbourhood Watch. Finally it is interesting to note that 34% of the students attending the HGS Institute are from the Suburb. SdeP

New Chairman elect for Trust

Since before he retired from the chairmanship of the Trust last year Gerry Mansell had been hoping to persuade one of the Suburb's most distinguished residents, Lord McGregor of Durris, to join the council. At last month's AGM it was announced that Lord McGregor will be filling the vacancy caused by the retirement of present Chairman Tony Thornley, who has served on the council for seven years.

Lord McGregor has lived in Wyldes Close for 40 years. For many years he was Professor of Social Institutions at the University of London. Between 1980-90 he was Chairman of the Advertising Standards Authority and he is now Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission and of the Trustees of Reuters.

GAS MAIN ARGUMENT

The Suburb News piece about the new gas main being laid through the Suburb by British Gas, in particular Mr Cooper's contention that refilling the excavation with aggregate instead of clay will cause subsidence of houses nearby, has sparked off some lively correspondence.

Jack Worts, British Gas' Construction Engineer claimed, in a letter to RA Chairman Eileen Whelan that "This feature may well be causing unnecessary worry and anxiety to members of your association" and "We have drawn the attention of the local newspapers to the erroneous statements in this feature and hope also that Suburb News will publish correct information, particularly about the approved type of aggregate being used as infill around our new gas main."

In her reply to this letter Eileen Whelan said "I am writing with further reference to your letter of 20 August concerning the article in "Suburb News". We believe this merely repeats, as any community newspaper needs to repeat, anxieties which are currently being felt by some members of the community.

These anxieties continue to be felt because, as your letter makes very clear, there is such persistent misunderstanding of what Mr. Cooper, and others, have tried to explain. No-one is accusing British Gas of not using the appropriate current

specification; nor of not using the approved type of aggregate; nor of not planning to work to specification; nor of not monitoring the work to ensure it is carried out to that specification. To quote the words of the article "Mr Cooper says that his complaint is not whether the work is up to specification but whether the specification itself is sound".

Many people today are aware of the fact that technologies sometimes get things wrong, particularly where the fault takes time to develop. There are no doubt many examples, but I am advised that a good one is that of "concrete cancer". It appears that when newer cements were developed after 1945 it took about twenty-five years before there was recognition that their use with certain aggregates could lead to serious trouble. Until that happened the cement and aggregate specifications were regarded as entirely adequate and consonant with best practices. Anyone who challenged them in, say, 1950 would have been given exactly the same answer you have given us. As it happens, that answer would have been wrong; we do not know, and may not know for many years, whether your answer is also wrong.

What we are asking is, first, that you should acknowledge what we are saying; and, second, that ours and Mr. Cooper's doubts should be on record.

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Traffic Calming on the Suburb

Thursday 7 November 1991 at 8 pm in the Institute Hall

All residents are urgently invited to attend this very important meeting, which has been convened by the HGS Trust and the Residents Association.

Chair - John Marshall, MP for Hendon South
Speakers - Margaret Heraty, Traffic Consultant
Tim Pharoah, Polytechnic of the South Bank

Chris Kellerman will outline previous traffic schemes for the Suburb; Margaret Heraty will describe her traffic survey and its implications; Tim Pharoah will give an account of traffic-calming measures already implemented in Britain and David Rapson and S.F. Bailey will outline possible measures that could calm traffic throughout the Suburb.