

SUBURB NEWS

Issue 56

THE H G S RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSPAPER

Summer '97

NEW HOPE FOR INSTITUTE SOLUTION

The Institute's last newsletter was headlined 'New Labour - New Hope' but hopes were dashed when the new Secretary of State at the DfEE announced that he was minded to approve Barnet's compulsory purchase order despite the Inspector's recommendation against it following the inquiry last Autumn.

However he gave the parties until the end of June to agree to negotiate over the following six months to try to reach a settlement which would share the site.

The Residents Association, as a result of a special Council meeting called to discuss the issue before the deadline, wrote to all parties urging them to agree to negotiate and to the Institute in particular urging them to find a solution that would keep courses for residents available at the Institute whatever the outcome.

This was because the Institute has said that if the CPO is confirmed it will leave the site altogether whereas Barnet has always insisted that they wish the Institute to remain.

The response to the RA's letter from the Institute accused the RA of wishing to 'see outcomes which are irreconcilable' ie: the Institute should continue to offer courses to residents on the Suburb; that community facilities, theatre, meeting halls etc be available; that traffic and parking round the site be reduced and that new building be minimised.

Meetings have taken place but we gather that no progress was made until July 11 when all parties met for what was described by both Max Callor, Barnet's Chief Executive, and Fay Naylor as a very long meeting indeed but one that was productive.

"Everyone was keen to find a solution" said Max Callor.

One of the earlier sticking points has been removed with a new offer from the DfEE to pay rent for a maximum of three years, which would not count against a final payment to the Institute, while new school building is car-

ried out.

Barnet will pay the 15% the school would have to find.

The Institute will use the main building and sell Bigwood House and a large proportion of the land for school use. Valuers will decide current values and the school has yet to decide exactly how much new space is needed, but the cost to the DfEE is likely to be in excess of £5m. The Institute will

not wish to be involved in new building on the site itself but is looking for an annex nearby.

As we go to press the Secretary of State is expected to make a decision in a matter of days about further negotiations. If they go ahead the CPO will be put off until December as will the Institute's notice to quit.

See background briefing on page 4. **Richard Wakefield**

Omnibus views us

Whatever Suburb viewers thought they were going to see when the long awaited Omnibus feature was shown it is unlikely that this was it. Many had feared a real hatchet job on the Suburb; twee, complacent, snobbish, something to make the nation's viewers laugh at the inheritors of Dame Henrietta's Dream. It wasn't like that—it wasn't all bad—in some ways it was worse.

Reaction from critics in the national press was pretty much that the programme was good but the Suburb was awful—and from Suburb residents that the programme makers had got it all wrong.

When one knows the subject the media almost always get it wrong; how could the Evening Standard refer to the Mayor of Barnet, actually three mayors ago, as a Suburb resident? How could he not, the film didn't tell him. How was the viewer to know that the major subject of discussion at the RA AGM of 1995 was not the eruv but the Institute or that the people shown apparently worrying about matters as seemingly trivial as drawing pins in trees are the same people who devote much of their lives to matters of very serious concern to all of us.

It was a beautifully made feature that, in the first half anyway, told the viewer quite a lot about the Suburb and why we take pride in it. Of course it was not only about the Suburb but about divisions in society brought to the surface in our case by the argument over the eruv. An awful lot was missing though. Community spirit was mentioned but there was very little evidence of it, we might have had no schools, in fact hardly any young people at all, we were all preoccupied with the eruv and

nothing else, no traffic problems, no concern about the Institute.

It is a pity that the story of the Trust meeting that saw Lord McGregor's resignation was so one sided as to be misleading and that Sharon McGuire got so carried away with the drama of the eruv that it dominated the second half.

The tenor of letters and comments to the RA, the Trust and from those who have copied letters to us, to the BBC has been of disappointment that an opportunity has been lost, an opportunity that is unlikely to be repeated for a long time, that what was billed as a programme to mark the Suburb's 90th Anniversary should have been spoilt by the argument over the eruv. **Richard Wakefield**

All smiles for the Suburb's 90th Anniversary Festival

Above: Margaret Smith, who featured recently on Newsroom Southeast, enjoys a candy floss with Bary Lever, HGS Synagogue youth leader, during the festival.

Right: Nervous anticipation at Garden Suburb School as girls await their cue

Below: Sally Spensley with Katrina and Fiona Cooate with sons Jamie and Anthony



90th FESTIVAL SUCCESS



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We at Glentree, who live and work in the Suburb regard it as our home and we would like to believe that all our clients feel at home with our service.

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We have produced a guide to selling and renting your home and also one which refers to the various aspects of the recent listing of 500 properties in the Suburb of architectural merit.

If you would like a copy or just an in principle discussion, we would welcome your call.



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RA News

In the months since the AGM in March which saw a new chairman elected the Council of the RA has elected, or coopted as new officers; David Rapson, Vice Chairman; Graham Cunnold, Hon Sec and Alan Brudney, Treasurer.

All the standing committees have been completed and Chairman Richard Wakefield said at a recent Council Meeting "I am pleased to report that altogether some sixteen or seventeen new people are working with us now, either on the RA Council or on its committees".

The people who are still urgently needed are Membership Representatives and Gallery Volunteers. Membership Reps look after a small area of the Suburb and collect subscriptions, not very onerous but terribly important. Volunteers in the gallery are needed to take a morning or afternoon stint once a week or perhaps just to be on standby when someone else can't make it.

If you would like to help please get in touch with Joan Beales, Chairman of Membership, 6 Bigwood Road, NW11 (458 6685) or, for the Gallery, Gerlinde Bates, 4 Temple Fortune Hill, NW11.

If you wish to see how the RA works come and sit in at a Council meeting. They are at 8 o'clock on the first Tuesday of the month at Fellowship House, Willifield Green. Question time for residents is at 8.30.

Members

There are 4 elected members of the Trust Council and each year one of them comes up for election or re-election. This year Colin Gregory, who has completed 3 years on the Council, is standing for a second 3 year term. If members of the company would like to nominate someone else to stand against Colin they will have an opportunity to do so in August when the Annual Report and Accounts of the company are sent out. If the election is contested there is a postal ballot of the membership and the votes are counted by the Trust's auditors.

Christopher Kellerman