

RA first Open Forum

As announced in Suburb News, Summer issue, the Residents Association council is alternating its regular meetings, at which members have always been welcome, with a series of Open Meetings. Usually they will take place on the first Tuesday of every other month. Each such meeting will tackle a particular subject of concern.

'Basements are they a blight or a benefit' was the first subject to be aired on October 5. Chairman Janet Elliott welcomed an almost capacity audience in Fellowship House before handing over the chair for the evening to Richard Wiseman. He said that the intention of these meetings was not to discuss particular cases but to find out from residents what they felt and what the RA should be doing to reflect members' views.

Setting the scene for the discussion Trust manager Jane Blackburn gave an overview of the subject. She told the meeting that between 2007 and March

2011 some 30 applications for basements had been approved, almost all in larger detached houses. However since then a further five had been approved with another eight were in the pipeline.

Trust architect David Davidson said the Trust's powers were limited to controlling the external appearance of Suburb properties, visible skylights and to protecting trees. The Trust obtains advice from independent experts and does not rely only on the applicants' advisors.

Discussion ranged widely from Henrietta Barnett's dislike of basements where servants worked in dark damp conditions to concern that basements, doubling the size of modest houses would change the character of the Suburb. Mike O'Rourke Ossulton Way said

"Density will change dramatically and that should be a major argument against." There was a contrary view that they were better built nowadays and would

not increase the number of residents because they seemed to be almost entirely planned for recreational use. "Walk round the Suburb and you wouldn't know they were there. It has to be one of the least obtrusive ways of making more living space." said Dr John Bentley, Hampstead Way. Nuisance from months of noisy work seemed to be a major problem. Claire Calman said that a resident had been persuaded by neighbours in her close to move to a larger house rather than gain space by digging out a basement. Mike Tomlin, Brunner Close where basements are under way said "Pairs of houses with 2 - 3 feet foundations one side and 8 metre piles on the other must cause problems. Houses move naturally basements don't."

Richard Wiseman thanked everyone for coming and said the RA council was left with plenty to think about which had been the object of the exercise.

RICHARD WAKEFIELD

Bridget Cox 1935-2011

Bridget Cox, who died in September, was an RA council member whose aim had been to embrace residents in flats in the life of the Suburb.

In 1973 she and her husband Geoffrey moved to Asmunds Hill where their sons Andrew and Hugh were born. Bridget had been to drama school but became a speech and language therapist. Most of her work was directed towards young children with speech difficulties and there were many testimonials from Suburb

parents who thanked her for sorting out their child's problem.

On retirement she volunteered as a helper at Toynbee Hall where she supervised lessons in English and English life to Muslim ladies. Once she invited a group back to home, by now in Gurney Drive, for an English tea party which was a great success.

Having started life as an actor, Bridget was able to bring her old skills into play when she starred as Bottom the weaver in the Suburb centenary pageant.



She is especially missed at St Jude's where she was an enthusiastic helper at social and fundraising events.

Active fellowship

Membership is open to anyone aged 60 plus who lives on the Suburb. People can pick up an application form at Fellowship House or contact the membership secretary Dorothea Brandes on 8455 7910.

There are also activities and classes for which there is a charge and these are open to all Suburb residents. These include a painting class on Monday mornings, a History of Art class on Tuesdays, a Literature Class on Thursdays and a U3A painting Group on Fridays. There is also Zumba Gold class every Friday afternoon. Zumba Gold is slightly less energetic than the full Zumba and is aimed at people who are not as fit as they were but still provides a good work out. A series of six autumn chamber music concerts will take place on Sunday afternoons. Non-members can also come to

the Film Club which shows classics and foreign films twice a month on Thursday afternoons. Fellowship Hall is also available to Suburb residents for private hire at weekends.

None of the above could take place without Hilda Williams, who masterminds the setting and clearing up of all the activities and prepares the Hall seven days a week. She has been doing this work for years and it is difficult to envisage how Fellowship could function without her - and there are very few people in the Suburb who are senior in age to her! We are indebted to her in so many ways. On behalf of all the Community we say thank you Hilda.

The full list of activities is set out in the Fellowship Activities leaflet which is available at Fellowship House or contact peter.d.falk@gmail.com for a copy.



Hilda Williams

Fellowship House has reopened after the August break and continues to offer a wide range of activities for both its members and anyone else who lives in the Suburb.

The Fellowship Club provides free activities for members most days. These include Tai Chi and Keep Fit classes, a Music Group which meets every Friday, a Film Club, Weekly Talks, a Book Club, a Share a Poem group, a Craft Workshop, a Croquet Club, regular Coffee Mornings and a subsidised Chiropody Service.

Residents Association walk

HGS - A New Kind of Community is the title, chosen by Judith Chaney its leader, for an hour and a half to two hour walk in aid of North London Hospice on Sunday 13 November at 2pm.

The meeting point is outside Arcade House, on the corner of Finchley Road and Hampstead Way, finishing at Baillie Scott Corner at the junction of Meadway

and Hampstead Way, enabling an easy return to Golders Green Station via the H2 bus. The maximum number is 20 and an £8 donation is recommended (conc £6).

From Temple Fortune Gateway we will walk along Hampstead Way and Asmunds Hill to Willifield Green. Then via twittens (and allotments) to Holmesfield, along

Erskine Hill to Central Square. Wald around Central Square, down Heathgate, along the Great Wall to Hampstead Way. We shall then go to Linnell Drive and into Linnell Close, out into Meadway finishing at Baillie Scott Corner.

If you would like to book a place on this walk please phone 8731 6755.

More from Barnet CPZ Action

Those of you who read the Sunday Times on October 9 may have seen a two-page article in the 'In Gear' section looking at how councils have been increasing parking charges. The focus of the article is Barnet and the case of a family (the Parkers) who had to spend £32 on parking vouchers to hold a party at home for their three year old daughter is featured prominently. Its a great way of illustrating how the charges impact on everyday activities. The only downside is

that Barnet Council are quoted as saying: "We have held down the prices of residents' parking for several years but circumstances dictate that we have to bring them into line with other London boroughs." Its hard to have a debate with the Council when they resort to this sort of nonsense. The statement that charges in Barnet have been brought "in line with other London boroughs" is simply untrue. Barnet Council know the facts perfectly well, so they have knowingly misinformed

perhaps one million readers in order to save themselves from embarrassment. Barnet Council well know that if the Parkers had held their daughter's party in the adjacent Haringey street, they would have spent £4.80 on parking, not the £32 they spent in Barnet.

Please see the last Suburb News for more on the Action Group. You can contribute to the cost of their judicial review against increases on <http://barnetcpz.blogspot.com>.

Beata Vox feeling and sensitivity

A hushed audience in the Free Church awaited the start of the concert on Saturday 30 July by the choir Beata Vox, as the singers took their places. Alex Patterson, one of the choir's joint musical directors, stood ready to perform O nata lux by Thomas Tallis. Then, unexpectedly and as if by magic, a gentle waft of glorious vocal sound materialised from the back of the church, later answered by the visible choir before us. From the outset, the fine quality of the ensemble was in evidence. It was logical to follow the opening piece with Haec dies, a lively motet by Tallis's pupil, William Byrd. Both Alex Patterson and William Glendinning sing as tenors in the choir. The two directors exchanged roles to enable William to direct the ensuing pair of motets by Monteverdi. The choir sang with feeling and sensitivity and impressed by their attack and clarity of

diction. William had trained his choir well and demonstrated how much he had benefited from his wide range of musical activities at Nottingham University.

He next directed Palestrina's motet Sicut cervus, a setting of Psalm 42. Alex returned to the conductor's stand to present Stanford's Magnificat for double choir, which he wrote in 1918. The work, dedicated to his contemporary Parry, looks back to the sixteenth century and makes several references to the inspirational writings of Palestrina.

Following the interval, astute programme building produced a late work by Parry, My soul there is a country, set to words by Henry Vaughan. A note in the programme describes a feeling of optimism, notwithstanding the poem's preoccupation with death. Seven unaccompanied part songs by Finzi, ably directed by William Glendinning, ended the evening's fare. The choir

admirably conveyed the peace and warmth of an English summer's evening, reflecting the actuality of the best July weather of the year. The audience demanded an encore and were rewarded by a witty rendition of a bright little piece with Barbershop overtones, directed by Lindsay Jamieson, one of the choir's sopranos.

Congratulations to William Glendinning and Alex Patterson for forming Beata Vox, named so appropriately to denote a choir of blessed voices.

DAVID LITTAUR

Martin Bell lends a hand

The season of Remembrance is upon us and it is again being marked by a Winter Fair in aid of the military charity Combat Stress, formerly known as the Forces Mental Health Society. It will raise funds for the treatment of veterans returning from Afghanistan and other conflicts whose injuries are of the mind rather than the body. The Fair will be opened by Martin Bell, the former BBC war reporter who is a resident of the Suburb.

Martin says, "The work of Combat Stress has never been more necessary. Our soldiers in Afghanistan are engaged in the Army's most intensive armed combat since the Korean War. Whatever our view of the war they deserve our support. After their six month tour of duty many of them return home apparently uninjured, only to find in later years that they are victims of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. There can be an interval

of ten years between the incident that led to the condition and the soldier coming forward for treatment." The charity runs a number of residential homes and provides counselling for the growing numbers of affected ex-soldiers. It also funds research into the nature of the illness.

Martin will open the Fair at 11am and will be on hand to answer any questions. He adds, "Suburb residents were most generous last year and we are hopeful of a similar response this year. I also found the Fair brim full of the most amazing bargains and have been using the silver tea spoons ever since!"



Martin Bell

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Orchard

One of the hidden jewels of the Suburb is the Orchard which provides sheltered housing for the over sixties.

Opened in 1909 and rebuilt in the 70s, it sits between Hampstead Way and Willifield Way, a five minute walk from Temple Fortune. There is accommodation for up to 60 residents who are from the Suburb or have local connections. The studio flats are well appointed offering a safe and secure environment.

The committee is keen to consider applications from outside the Suburb to join this thriving community which has been at the heart of the area for so many years.

For information call Jill Purdie on 8458 5042 or 07811 929796. Or Sally Lewis on 8458 3663.



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