

Suburb

Head Garden Suburb Residents Association

News



Fancy dress winner at the HGSRS Summer Flower Show, see page 11



Richard Clegg, Proms at St Jude's chairman, presided over Silver Anniversary, pages 6,7&9



Who's the proud owner of this prize-winning dog, find out back page

Another Suburb Hustings at The Free Church



There was surely a feeling of "déjà vu all over again" in the Free Church on the Monday before the recent general election as Suburb residents took their seats for the Hustings arranged by the RA's events committee again after only a two-year gap.

We were there to hear all five of our parliamentary candidates each make a short statement, and then give their answers to a selection of questions, which were submitted by members of the audience. It was a selection made by Father Alan Walker of St Jude's, who was in charge of proceedings, just as he had been 2 years ago.

The church was packed in 2015 but only half-full this time, with an estimated 160 people present. A not unexpected turnout when you consider the lack of posters in windows and on garden boards this time around. A case of voter fatigue perhaps.

Andrew Price (UKIP) got the ball rolling by claiming the Brexit vote to be the most important revolution in our country since 1688, and telling us of his belief in local and national direct democracy. Control of our own destiny was his chimera.

Adele Ward (Green) then told us of her commitment to the maintenance of our education system, her concern for the environment and her portable air pollution meter, which allowed her to keep a real time track of how effectively she was being poisoned by London's air.

Mike Freer (Conservative) stood on his no-nonsense, get things done record as our local MP and reminded us of the generational Brexit choice to be made – May or Corbyn? That was the question.

John Davies (Liberal Democrat) recalled that this was the election that wasn't going to

happen until 2020, and stressed his opposition to Brexit, and commitment to yet another referendum once the divorce terms had been agreed.

Jeremy Newmark (Labour) was also ok with a referendum on the divorce, and, ever the idealist, wanted the election to be fought on party manifestos and policies, and not to be made into a beauty contest between leaders.

Alan Walker's first choice for the candidates to consider, for obvious reasons, concerned the terror threat and questions about police numbers, immigrants, foreign policy and measures to keep us safe.

We had the first heckles of the evening for the UKIP comment on how the increasing number of Muslims represented a problem, and then again with the LibDem mention of maintaining our open tolerant democratic values; a case of equal opportunities for hecklers.

Labour and the Greens made much of the cuts in police numbers, but the Conservative recalled that they had been agreed by London's Mayor, the Home Office and the Met Commissioner.

Our MP claimed that foreign policy could not be a factor as 9/11 preceded the Iraq War, apparently forgetting about over a century of our meddling, sometimes violently, in the region.

There followed a lively exchange on a number of topics; education funding and the 11 plus; the environment, nature and fox hunting; President Trump and the Paris Agreement; Brexit in a 60% remainder constituency; taxation levels and policies; NHS funding, the GP crisis and children's mental health.

We were treated to answers which reflected the broad range of opinion that divides our society, but also demonstrated the concern each candidate has for what they perceive to be the right course of action.

There was more heckling, a noisy but not effective activity. While the hecklers' words no doubt ring clear in their own ears, to the rest of us they are just unintelligible shouts.

Finally there was the Golders Green planning brief. It was this topic that replaced the 2015 Save the Number 13 Bus campaign as the "I am Spartacus" moment of the evening, with all the candidates reflecting the will of the people in their rejection of the proposed redevelopment of Golders Green bus and tube stations and the moving of the War Memorial. Let's hope for a more successful outcome with this one.

Father Walker then brought the meeting to a close with thanks to the candidates and to the audience for a lively, and relatively well-behaved meeting. Although this sparked the loudest and most determined heckling of the evening as opposing factions attempted, in vain, to out-shout each other.

TERRY BROOKS



Keeping an eye on proceedings, members of the Wildlife and Education Centre (DWAEC), at this year's HGSRA Summer Picnic. Details and more pictures back page.

One more Suburb oak saved

It is very easy to be reminded of Tweedledum's comment, "I don't suppose there'll be a tree left standing, for ever so far round, by the time we've finished!" when considering the reaction of our insurance companies to trees anywhere near a house with subsidence problems.

Luckily we have active and concerned residents on the Suburb who, along with the RA's Trees and Open Spaces committee and the HGS Trust, fight for the preservation of our more magnificent trees. The wonderful old oak by the twitten between Wordsworth Walk and Willifield Way was saved last month by such concerted action.

190 objections were sent by residents to Barnet, and the Trust commissioned an expert report casting doubt on the Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company's claim that it was causing damage to a nearby house. The RA's Trees and Open Spaces committee submitted a detailed objection and its chairman, Tony Gilchik, spoke against the proposal as did another Suburb resident, with the result that Barnet's planning committee refused to remove the tree protection order on the tree and spared it from the axe.

We all owe thanks to those involved in helping to prevent the felling of this tree, including Barnet council for listening.

TERRY BROOKS



Henrietta Barnett School traffic disruption

Examination day at Henrietta Barnett School will take place on Tuesday 5 September. In recent years the roads around the school have become very congested indeed throughout exam day, when there are several sittings.

There may be some temporary parking and traffic controls put in place on the day. The best advice for those driving through the Suburb is to avoid the whole of that area if possible, especially Northway and Southway.

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