



The Woodsider

DECEMBER 2017
www.woodside-park.com

Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

Another year has flown by and here we are, nearly at Christmas again and, of course, the annual carol singing which will be held on Saturday, 16th December 2017 at Sussex Ring, kick-off 4.30pm.

We will again be joined by a couple of members of the St Barnabas choir with drum and guitar and the event would not be complete without the fire torch juggling, refreshments, a dash of whiskey and sweets for the children (all completely free of charge). Last year was an outstanding occasion, enjoyed by all denominations, children and adults alike. It will indeed provide a welcome relief from the diet of Brexit, sexual conduct allegations, paradise papers, shopping and other such stuff which has been swirling around this year!!

The Woodsider Party in September was extremely entertaining. There was delicious food, quite a lot of drink, Colin the entertainer, a little music and much bonhomie. I hope that all of you who attended enjoyed the event. My particular thanks go to the WPRA Committee (and my wife, Trish), who helped with organising and producing the food. Appreciation should also go to John Bowra at the Old Finchleians who ran the bar. Our MP, Theresa Villiers, and one of our three local Councillors made an appearance and joined in the fun.

Our local shops supported the raffle. Many thanks to you all. It is important that we continue to support the local shops. The Sussex Ring hub is now the centre of our community and Vero Café has now been granted permission to become a hot food restaurant. We just have to sort out the parking difficulties which increased use of the Sussex Ring hub is causing. Double yellow lines will be installed around the Sussex Ring to stop selfish people parking immediately on Sussex Ring which prevents buses and lorries from passing through.

There has also been talk of installing double yellow lines up both sides of all cul-de-sacs in Woodside Park but we, along with our Councillors, will be fighting this, should the matter become official.

People are now parking in Linkside and Walmington Fold when they use West Finchley Underground Station and, whilst this might be a nuisance, I think we should also resist any creeping of the Controlled Parking Zone. There will be consultations made nearer the time by the Council but hopefully it will not come to this.

I regret that, due to lack of people prepared to volunteer to assist with the committee, we have had to cut back on our activities. I suppose this is a sign of the times. We have moved into the digital era but, nevertheless, I am very sad to see this decline in community spirit. This Newsletter will appear twice a year and we have abandoned the Woodsider Party for the foreseeable future. The carol singing will remain. Our website shows all of the current planning applications together with other local news. You will find this more up-to-date than the Newsletter.

A bane of our life is supermarket trollies which seem to appear by the brook but also in our streets. Quite, how they get there is anybody's guess because I can't imagine that people put the whole trolley in their car and then just dump it afterwards. There is now a Smartphone App for supermarket trolley collection and all you have to do is take a picture and the phone will relay the GPS position. The App can be downloaded from Apple iTunes or Google Android Play Store and is organised by Trolleywise who aim to collect the trolley within twenty-four hours of the report.

May I, along with my committee, take this opportunity of wishing everyone in Woodside Park a brilliant and successful 2018. Next year sees the local Council elections in May which could prove to have an interesting outcome that might affect us all in the future.

I hope to see you all at the carol singing on 16th December.

Robert Shutler



CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

SATURDAY 16th DECEMBER at 4.30pm
at Sussex Ring
CHILDREN ESPECIALLY WELCOME
Free Refreshments

Planning Applications

Current planning applications can now be found on our website www.woodside-park.com.

The Association will continue to resist planning applications which propose to divide any house within the suburb into two or more separate residential units. There are one or two houses where this has been done (illegally) but we are now experiencing planning applications to convert houses into two or more flats. The Suburb is characterised by single dwelling houses and the roads are set out within a setting of single dwelling houses. Increased residential units in the area cause a strain on roads, parking, schools and public services. The loss of single dwelling houses to flats is not appropriate.

The Association will also resist basements which cause massive disruption to adjoining neighbours and, if not correctly constructed, can also cause damage to adjoining buildings. Basement submissions without proper and professional hydrology and soil reports will be resisted at all times. This is required to avoid the catastrophes in some other London Boroughs where basements are causing all sorts of difficulties especially with ground water flow.

The Council does not seem to have a recognised planning policy regarding basements. There are quite a few basement cowboy builders out there – please be aware.

North Finchley Shopping Centre

The Council proposes fundamental changes to North Finchley shopping centre and details of these changes can be found on our website www.woodside-park.com. The Council has been out to consultation with the general public but the consultation will finish on 12th December 2017. If you kept up to date with our website you will be able to make some comments. The key proposal is for northbound Ballards Lane traffic to be directed through Kingsway and the High Road would be converted to two-way traffic (whereas it is one-way southbound at the moment). Buildings in the area would stretch upwards for twelve storeys or so and the bus station would become a shop. Some 2000 extra homes would be produced. Anything that improves the shopping experience in North Finchley is to be welcomed. Without cheap and adequate parking though, nothing is going to work.

Other news

Sadly, we have to report that Dr Estelle Phillips has resigned from the Committee. She has spent many years serving our community and we would all like to thank her for her many efforts, thoughts, ideas, suggestions and work on our behalf during this period. Estelle's contributions will be sorely missed.

Playing politics with people's lives is what the present housing scandal is all about. London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has now decided that Barnet should find another 22,000 homes by 2025. He wants the council to produce 3,124 extra homes per annum. Where are they to go? Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land? The proposed London Plan prevaricates around these issues. It has been suggested that homes are built over the railway lines, presumably including the underground. 50% of these homes are supposed to be "affordable" but people can't afford them. There is no joined-up thinking from the Mayor or the Government, who are trying to troubleshoot this problem with short-term solutions, none of which are going to work. The Government continues to kow-tow to the large housebuilders (one wonders why?). It is a case of the tail wagging the dog. Neither Sadiq Khan nor the Government will achieve these targets, which are fairly useless if people cannot afford to buy or rent them. Given Brexit and the reverse flow of immigration, we have to ask whether all of these homes are actually necessary.



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