

Hillfield Park

Neighbourhood Watch

Co-ordinators:

@ No 9
Peter Thompson
(editor) [8883 0371]

@ No 4
Carmen Harris &
Richard Tharp

@ No 18
Sarah Rodgers

@ No 25
Micheline Gunter

@ No 28
Clive and Pippy
Tickner

@ No 40
Rupert Townsend

@ No 45
Justin and Ama
Keery

@ No 53
John Fulford

@ No 67
Sue Dawson

@ No 71
Joy and Patrick
Wheeler

Can The Centre Hold?

"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold" as Yeats wrote in his great poem The Second Coming; and we have been looking anxiously at our own Centre, the Muswell Hill Centre, where Erroll Brown runs one of three youth clubs for the young people of Haringey [the other two are at Bruce Grove and Wood Green]. The trouble is that the youth club in Bruce Grove is closed for refurbishment and their customers are turning to Muswell Hill in increasing numbers. Activities within the Centre are well run but effective control does not extend to the groups, not to say gangs, hanging around outside in the car park. Hillfield Park residents have complained to the Council about abusive language, noise and damage to property and have been invited to make a case for an ASBO. This is not what anyone wants. The situation can be managed to everyone's satisfaction if only one or two more youth workers are added to Erroll's team so that supervision can extend outside the Centre as well as within. So far the Council's line has been that no more youth workers can be spared for the West of the Borough. The result is that the youth club activities have had to be suspended until the numbers can be reduced in proportion to the youth workers available.

Safer Neighbourhood Surgeries

Members of the Muswell Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team are trying out a new way of communicating with local residents about crime and crime prevention: evening surgeries. The idea is that any local resident who has an issue to raise with the community police, or who wants advice, should be given a time when he or she can drop in and discuss it face to face with the community police officers. The first session will be held

BETWEEN 6 and 7 pm
On WEDNESDAY 21 DECEMBER
2005

IN THE MUSWELL HILL LIBRARY
(QUEENS AVENUE)

In case you have forgotten what members of the Safer Neighbourhoods team look like here they are again:

Paul Lancaster



Paul Saunders



Vikki Eggleton
Allan Greig



Late Night Nuisance: We Won (Sort Of)

Residents in this road were understandably concerned that the Licensing Authority granted O'Neill's application for a late night licence for 1am Thursdays, 2 am Fridays and Saturdays and midnight every other night, subject to further extensions for New Year's Eve, St Patrick's Day, Sporting Events and so on. It was widely felt that the Licensing Sub-committee had given insufficient weight to complaints about the noise which escapes when the front doors are open and about the ruckus on the Broadway at closing time and the noise associated with finding cars and driving away. The sense of grievance grew as it became clear that over half of those residents who sent in objections received no notice of the hearing and much of the evidence gathered from others for the purpose of the hearing was rejected out of hand. An appeal was therefore launched.

At the preliminary hearing on 29 November the Council admitted that objections from 13 residents had been misfiled or had not received attention. Indeed they owned up to a further 2 being misfiled making 15 in all. But they added, provocatively, that even if the 15 extra objections had been added in, the result would still have been the same. This may well be true: the Licensing Sub-committee made it clear that anyone who wanted late licensing hours could have them unless there were objections from the police or from the environmental section which monitors noise levels; and there were no objections from those quarters in our case.

The appeal gave us a chance of deploying *all* our objections and evidence before a court but it did not promise success. In the event, we reached a successful outcome by a different route: the planning conditions which were imposed when the owners (Haringey Council) were given permission to turn the church building into a pub. Tucked away in the small print was a vital condition that the premises should not be used for the sale of alcohol after 11pm. Admittedly the conditions were varied in 2004 to extend the hours to 1 am for Fridays and Saturdays but this was done after consultations with us in November 2003continue



Newsletter Editor:

Peter Thompson

Designer & Printer:

Burger Edwards

This Issue



Thieving Days



Assembly Bids



Surgeries



Merry Christmas

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The planning conditions are still in force and O'Neill's lawyers appear to have overlooked them. But now that they have been brought to their notice they have given their word that O'Neill's will abide by them. So the upshot is that closing time is still 11pm 5 nights a week and the extension on the other two nights is to 1 am, not 2 am. So we won (sort of) and the appeal has been discontinued.

Yes, I hear you say, but they may apply to vary the planning conditions again. True, they may well apply and, if they do, we will have to fight them. But if we can succeed in preserving things as they are at the bottom end of Hillfield Park (Hurray for the view through the arches) maybe we can succeed at the top end too.

Meanwhile, be vigilant; and make a note of instances of unacceptable noise or conduct. Your editor plans to have a meeting with the licensee in the New Year and would welcome views now on the sort of points that need to be made.

Only A Few More Thieving Days To Christmas

The police warn us to be particularly careful of pickpockets and purse and bag snatchers in the run up to Christmas when crowds of people are on the streets with money to spend and the pickings are good. And don't leave valuable goods like laptops and plasma screens on display where they can be seen: burglars will find a way in, even if it means breaking a window, if the rewards are good enough.

Finally, cars are getting harder to steal without the ignition keys, which is why there is an increase in letter-box fishing (mentioned in the last paper and already experienced in Hillfield Park). Well. There is now another ingenious scam. The intending thief sticks a piece of white paper on your rear window which is not obvious until you get in the driving seat and start up. Your immediate reaction on seeing the paper will be to get out of the car and walk round to the back to pick it off, *leaving the keys in the car*. Don't do it. It is a trap: as you reach for the paper the thief will jump into the driving seat and speed away.

Moving on:

Sad to leave Hillfield Park for greener pastures in Palmers Green - Caroline and Burger Edwards (formerly No 49) wanted a garden and found one across the North Circular. Saddest for Burger (our newsletter designer and printer) is the abrupt end to his printing career due to the move. Who is up for the vacant challenge? (Ed)



Assembly Bids: Not In My Front Garden

What of the 12 trees for Christmas which have been promised for the flat section of Hillfield Park? To our surprise, bordering on alarm, we were told that they were on their way (almost) although we did not know what kinds of tree they would be (Lombardy poplars?) whether they would be planted in the pavement or close up to the buildings (Not in My Front Garden! What about subsidence? And my Right to Light?) or who would look after them. Reassuring answers were provided which were considered and approved at our last meeting. The type of tree is Broad-leaved Cockspur Thorn (*Crataegus x prunifolia*), a variety of hawthorn with a small compact crown with big thorns to deter vandals. The oval leaves turn a very attractive orangy-red in autumn with small red berries that are usually eaten by birds. They thrive on poor soil and air pollution! They will be sited in the tarmac near the roadside so as to allow pedestrians and buggy-pushers to pass on the inside. If you still have concerns email the arboricultural officer, Alex Fraser at alex.fraser@haringey.gov.uk.

Perhaps we should bid for trees on the slope as well(?) We asked our creative cameraman, Clive Tickner, to show us what they might look like. No, I don't think so.



Merry Christmas, Everybody