
NOTTING HILL EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Autumn 2016

Issue 2

Hello everyone, and welcome to our second issue of the Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum (NHENF) newsletter.

As I explained at our previous two AGMs, the Localism Act of 2011 created the concept of a Neighbourhood Forum, the body which makes the plan for our neighbourhood and submits it to the local authority, in our case Westminster City Council. That is why we have created NHENF, so that the people involved in the Westbourne Neighbourhood Association (WNA) have an opportunity to contribute to the plan for our streets. You will find some of the ideas we are considering as you read on.

I have explained to you in the past that we have kept both bodies, the WNA and the NHENF going, not least because we do not yet understand how government will react to each.

It has become plain recently that the WNA needs to continue, because at present WCC receives planning comments from amenity societies (like the WNA), not yet neighbourhood forums. We are unusual in that the “catchment area” for our forum is identical to that of the WNA.

And so we will keep both bodies going for the time being. Of course the people doing the work are the same. The WNA committee is the NHENF steering group, and Richard Perkins and Andrew Pilkington still do fantastic work in reviewing every single planning application and submitting comments to the council.

We need funds to continue this work. The WNA, you will recall, charged a membership

fee of £10 per individual and £15 per family, and we intend to continue this.

As we drift into the winter months and look back on the summer, the subject of the Notting Hill Carnival comes again to mind. Several of us from your committee attended a public meeting on this subject on October 26th, at Kensington Town Hall. We voiced our concerns about the high level of violence this year, notable by the large number of arrests, including several for knife crimes, the lack of adequate toilet facilities, the excessive sound volumes, and the overcrowding on our streets. Our concerns seemed to fall on deaf ears. However, we didn't see any representatives from Westminster there, so we will bring up these matters with our own council at a meeting later this month.

Our winter party is on 7th December, at 7:00 p.m. at St Stephens Church. As always we are indebted to Rev. Jeremy for his brilliant hospitality. There will be drinks and nibbles, and something difficult invented by Richard Perkins. A quiz, a game, a theme? Come and find out. We look forward to seeing you.

Please send us your views to:
info@nottinghilleast.org.uk and continue to check our website:
www.nottinghilleast.org.uk

I do hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Very best wishes to you and your families.

Andrew Jordan -Chairman

Our Neighbourhood Plan

It has been a busy year for your neighbourhood forum committees, especially those involved with the preparation of our neighbourhood plan. We have met with Westminster to ensure that our objectives are not in conflict with Westminster's strategic policies.

We have consulted with you, initially with a planning game played at last year's winter party, and afterwards, with an online survey. Many great ideas were suggested during the winter party, where attendees split into four groups and, presented with maps of the area, designed improvements to our streets, pavements, public gardens, traffic patterns, cycling routes, and buildings. We incorporated many of their ideas into our online survey, and were gratified to learn from the survey that we had overwhelming support from the majority of respondents. We presented the results at our April AGM, and they are available to view on our website.

These changes will slow the speed of traffic on our streets, make our parks and gardens more user friendly, introduce a sensible and sustainable tree policy, and allow for the expansion of living space. Your neighbourhood planning group will continue to meet weekly to refine and draft our neighbourhood plan, and when this document is complete, you will have the opportunity to vote on its implementation. Following your vote, it will go to an inspectorate, and if approved, will become policy in our area. We'll keep you posted.

Planning Applications and Construction

Many planning applications include some advantage to the wider community – whether it be the reinstatement of a lost historic feature from a façade, a clear attempt to slow water run-off by greening and/or increasing the surface area of gardens, or the improvement of boundary walls and railings. When people choose to make changes to their property, we intend to ensure that, as a minimum, they

always make good any deficiencies to the front of the building, because it is the facade that contributes to the streetscape. Second on our list of priorities is for homeowners to add to their plants and plantable area. If everyone has paved front and rear gardens, our rainwater will have nowhere to go, and we'll have flooding in our streets. We intend to make it possible for people to build up and down within the existing footprint of the building, as long as they pay attention to the disruption felt by neighbours. At the back of houses we expect greater flexibility and modern design, always ensuring that extensions become lighter as they go up, with in-fills of predominantly glass and lightweight materials..

Unlike many amenity societies we view development of properties favourably, and will always be happy to give advice about the sort of features a development should contain in order to contribute to the public good. (In time, we hope to produce a guidance booklet containing information on original architectural details from our local area.) We champion good modern design as well as the conservation of our architectural heritage. At the end of the day, solidly built, well maintained and beautifully restored buildings benefit us all.

In the future we hope it will be possible for people doing major developments to contribute also to elements of the streetscape such as lighting, trees and park benches. As a suggestion, we are proposing the introduction of a voluntary (but strongly encouraged) community contribution from those undertaking major works or adding to the size of their property. This suggested contribution of £500?, £1,000?, TBD.... for every 6 months of heavy construction, (which adds noise and dust, and disrupts parking and traffic), will be publicly acknowledged, and will be used for community improvements such as nicer public gardens, new park benches, replacement of street lamps, etc. We believe this "Community Contribution for Nuisance" will go some way towards compensating the neighbourhood for the noise

and inconvenience of lengthy construction projects.



Expertly restored facade in our neighbourhood

Our Trees

It is highly improbable that any of our residents have a dislike of trees – they are a habitat for our songbirds, shade us from the sun, provide a satisfying backdrop of green against a hard urban landscape, clean our air, and become sculpture in the winter. One can argue that they are essential to our wellbeing - as essential as sunlight and shelter. Unfortunately, our buildings sit on subsidence-prone clay soil, and many of our trees in private gardens have not been consistently pruned over the decades. As a result, some of our larger forest-type trees, growing a mere 4 meters away from our 20 cm deep foundations, can damage our buildings. Some of these trees may have been planted in Victorian times, when labour to care for them was cheap, and they probably would have been pruned and pollarded regularly, left to grow unimpeded only in parks, public gardens, and along wide avenues. Lime and plane trees, two of the largest tree species in Britain, are happy in Hyde Park or Windsor Great Park, where they can spread their branches and soar into the sky.

(If any of you watched the recent television series Victoria, you will remember the excursion to Windsor, so Albert could be among the big trees!) Unfortunately, our forest trees must be thinned, reduced, and otherwise deformed to fit into our small gardens. In fact, as an arboriculturist pointed out in response to a BBC article, (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7271725.stm>) to prune these trees to the extent required to “eliminate tree related clay shrinkage subsidence”, they would “resemble hat stands”.



Our suggested tree policy, supported by a large majority of those polled, aims to increase both the number and species of trees we have in our area, to protect against increasing climate change and future blights. It also aims to allow an owner of one of these overgrown trees to replace it with a different scale of tree, which in 10-20 years can have a beautiful shape, and be an appropriate size for its location. However, there will be some owners who wish to keep their trees as they are. If that is the case, those owners must keep in mind that the heavy shading quality of limes and planes, and their vast size, can take light and sun away from neighbours, darkening their windows and compromising their ability to grow sun loving plants, and can also damage their buildings. As a considerate tree owner and neighbour, please respond quickly and cooperatively if it comes to your attention that any damage is being done to another’s property, or if there has been a reduction in the amount of sunlight they receive. There may be recourse through local authorities, and laws that protect a person from tree related

damage, but it is a sad day when we must turn to officials to solve our neighbourhood business.



Lime tree showing its true colours in Hyde Park



Plane trees lining Brook Green

Celebrating our green spaces and other public realm news

Garden Competition

There were two categories for our garden competition this year - one for Best Garden, and one for Best Window Box. And, the winners were.....

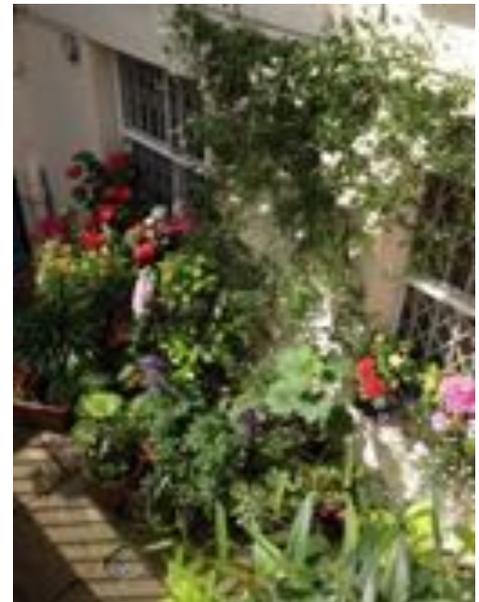
WINDOW BOX at Royal British Legion at 2 St. Stephen's Gardens

“Two smallish troughs, one above the other, display a splendid array of seasonal summer flowering plants, in particular geraniums and lobelia”



BASEMENT GARDEN of 1 St. Stephen's Crescent:

“For the clever arrangement of pots and containers to show a huge variety of plants and flowers in vividly contrasting colours”



Honourable mentions:

“The topiary garden with roses at 54 Sutherland Place, the pleasing boxes at 12 Moorhouse Road, a good range of pots at 20A Artesian Road and the descending cascade of pots at 33 Chepstow Road”



Awarding the prize!

Can't Plant!

Some of our neighbours aren't able to garden, for various reasons, and the fronts of their buildings are full of soil and weeds and sometimes rubbish, which is detrimental to the neighbourhood at large. If you enjoy gardening, or have plants that can be divided up, and would be willing to volunteer for our Can't Plant effort, please contact us. And, if you are one of those residents who would like help in obtaining plants, or with the planting, please get in touch.

Street Lamps

There was a disparity on our survey between those of you who wanted to replace our modern street lamps with more historic and less light polluting ones, and those of you who would be willing to contribute to the cost of the replacement. Because of this, we will have to find other ways to raise the money for new street lamps. If anyone has ideas for fund-raising events, kindly e-mail us your thoughts.

And speaking of Fund Raising....

Our neighbours in Pembridge Square got together to restore their railings and gates, and we need the same effort to bring about the many improvements to our public realm that we've presented to you. We are looking for someone with experience in fund raising to help. If you would like to volunteer to spearhead this effort, please e-mail us.



Neighbourhood events and other happenings

Swap Day

On May 21st, we had our first Swap Day, at the north end of Sutherland Place. It was a great success, with many neighbours happily cleaning out their cupboards and generously donating armfuls of items, and other neighbours happily taking away much appreciated clothing, toys, bicycles, housewares, rugs, and assorted other useful goods. It was not only an exchange of objects, but also a fun gathering of residents, and we signed up many new members to WNA/ NHENF. Huge thanks go to the Klemos/Imperiali family, who worked tirelessly at our tables from beginning to end, and to the rest of you who donated goods, and came to help. Save the date for our next Swap Day on November 12th!



The Big Lunch

On a not-so-sunny June 12th, our stalwart neighbours gathered for a picnic in Shrewsbury gardens, as part of the 2016 UK-wide Big Lunch event. It rained, and it was cold, but such minor inconveniences didn't stop our many convivial neighbours from assembling to share a meal together. Animated conversation and tasty food were shared under our NHENF marquee, and as before, attendees agreed that The Big Lunch must be an annual event.



Halloween

It was wonderful to see so many of our neighbours getting into the spirit of Halloween this year. A great deal of effort went into decorating houses, and the streets had a festive air, aided by the mild temperatures and clear skies. Starting at dusk, the trick-or-treaters flowed in, and there were many happy children, who chirruped “Thank you!” and “Happy Halloween!” while walking away with brimming buckets. Next year “A Spooky House” competition?



Our businesses

Those who adhere to American author Michael Pollan's Food Rules will enjoy dining at **Redemption**. Rule number 19, "If it came from a plant- eat it, if it was made in a plant- don't", ✓ and Rule number 24, "Eating what stands on one leg (mushrooms and plant foods) is better than eating what stands on two legs (fowl), which is better than eating what stands on four legs (cows, pigs and other mammals)" ✓! This vegan local turns out appealing and flavourful dishes without a single animal product. Their meals will leave you satisfied, but without the stuffed feeling of more traditional fare. If you need a cocktail after a trying day with your boss, this isn't your place, but one could argue that the health benefits of clean food and non-alcoholic but inventive plant-based drinks will have an equally fortifying effect.

Artesian Tailoring have relocated into a beautiful premises on Chepstow Road. Their sign and lighting offer a good example of the type we would like to encourage in our area.

Our residents won't have any excuse for a bad hair day - three salons have joined the well-established local **77** on Westbourne Park Road: **Mimi et Mina**, at the corner of Artesian and Needham Roads, **Stil** on Chepstow, and **ACT** at the corner of Westbourne Grove and Chepstow Roads.

The **Cock and Bottle** seems to have had quite a surge in business following their renovation earlier this year. It just goes to show how well customers respond to attractive design, increased comfort, and expanded offerings.



Cock and Bottle's new outdoor seating area



Artesian Tailoring

Is Committee a dirty word for you?

Does the very word Committee with its double 'm's' and 't's and 'e's repel you? 'I'm not a committee person' is the stock reply from many people when asked if they would help to organise this or that good cause. In some cases this is possibly a good answer but I would like to convince you that it is not always the right answer.

Every month or so a group of around a dozen of your neighbours meet to discuss matters and make plans that will more often than not result in something of benefit to the neighbourhood at large. We are your elected committee – although elected is perhaps too formal a word – and we are not a talking shop and no-one is on an ego-trip. At the end of the meeting we leave with tasks we have each volunteered to do, but no-one has to undertake more than they feel they can manage and hopefully they are things the rest of you will be able to enjoy - an event such as a winter party, an open-air summer lunch, a swap day or, indeed putting together this letter bringing you up-to-date local news. Sometimes the tasks involve an ongoing initiative and might not bring

immediate results. Most notably there is a planning group who are at present trying to bring about environmental changes and who look with an aspiring eye at how a more harmonious way of life can be created for us all. The many of you who filled in our recent survey will know the ground that it is hoped to cover.

There is a quiet determination in the way these tasks are approached and I think it is fair to say that committee members are content to spend a portion of their time in these activities. But inevitably life patterns change and someone will find they have less spare time, so will decide to step down from the committee, and when this happens new faces are needed. Should you feel that you would fit in with the way this particular committee works and you have something positive to offer, then why not submit your name for consideration? You could find that not all committees are filled with stuffed shirts eager to hear the sound of their own voices.

Email info@nottinghilleast.org.uk to submit your name.

Really Useful List

- *Experienced decorator and paper hanger, with degree in interior design. Excellent results.*

Rupert Rutherford - 079828 490706 or 0208 743 1844

- *Antique furniture restoration and conservation*

Piers Keating Restoration - 01963 440705 or 07476 755806 pierskeatingrestoration.co.uk

- *All-purpose builder*

Peter Cyparski - 07738 830970

pcyparski33@gmail.com

Recommended by Sheila Keating

- *Plumber*

Alpine Plumbers LTC, Felix Marco 07957 294830
Gas Safe

- *Garden Builder and also Christmas Trees*

Hew Stevenson, Shoots and Leaves 0208 563 7733
www.shootsandleaves.co.uk

Recommended by Suzanne Forte

- *Plumber*

Elgan Davies 07870 161434

Recommended by Sarmila Bose

- *Thai Massage. Firm professional approach and wonderful benefits*

Om 14 Chepstow Road

Recommended by Richard Perkins

If anyone wishes to recommend a good service provider, please email us at:

info@nottinghilleast.org.uk

Stay tuned!

For carolling and other upcoming events, please check the website from time to time.
www.nottinghilleast.org.uk

Upcoming Event Dates

Autumn Swap Day

Saturday, November 12

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. - North end of Sutherland Place.

Winter Party

Wednesday, December 7

7 p.m. - St. Stephen's Church.

Hope you all will be there. If you aren't already a member and would like to become one, please complete the membership form, and bring it to the party, or you can deliver it to Cye Elliot as noted on the form below.

Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum Membership Form

I certify that I live, work, or have a relevant interest in the Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum area.

Signed:.....Print Name

Address..... tick if business owner or worker ()

Email..... and/or Phone Number

If you have any special skills that you would be willing to contribute to the group, please note them here:

.....
.....

Suggested minimum contribution

Single member	£10	Small business	£15
Family membership	£15	Large business (more than 20 employees)	£50

Completed forms and subscription cheques (made payable to WNA) may be posted to, or left with Cye Elliot at 1 St. Stephen's Mews, W2 5QZ