



YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD VOICE

A publication of the Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum and the Westbourne Neighbourhood Association

Autumn/Winter 2019

Issue 8

A belated Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the Autumn/Winter issue of the Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum (NHENF) and Westbourne Neighbourhood Association (WNA) newsletter. We hope you received the terrific one-topic newsletter that Andrew Pilkington produced in the spring for our Rachman walk. This newsletter will bring you up to date on our other work.

You'll know that in early December we had our Winter Party and we want to thank all of you who attended and the Walmer Castle for their excellent food, drink and festive atmosphere. We also want to say a huge thanks to the local businesses who contributed so generously to our raffle. From businesses on Westbourne Grove we received two very abundant Christmas hampers from the Co-op, £160 worth of vouchers from the new cryo and wellness clinic, Apogii, a five credit bundle for spin classes from the new Psyche, a colour book from Farrow and Ball, and hair products from Show. From Chepstow Road, five lesson vouchers and a month of classes worth £150 from Barrecore, a bag of goodies from local haberdashery, Infusion and a starter pack and workshop from Frankincense. And from Ledbury Road, the Simple cookbook from Ottolenghi, a teapot from Le Creuset, a 50 minute treatment from Caudalie and a chocolate penguin from Melt. We also had a big box of nutritious snacks from Indie Bay, a company run by a local resident. People were delighted with their winnings and the raffle ticket sales helped to offset the costs of the party, which made it possible for so many to attend.

Other events this past summer and autumn included two Swap Days and our June Big Lunch in Shrewsbury Gardens. We also continue to focus on improvements to our Public Realm and we'll tell you about these on the following pages.

One issue that is concerning many in the area is crime, and conversations have centred around how

we can help one another, share information and prevent more crime. One of the best ways to fight crime according to security people and the police is to create a strong community. If you're friends with your neighbour, you'll know if those people entering their house are there to renovate the bathroom or steal everything. Here are a few things you can do to help us in our efforts to strengthen our community:

Encourage others to become a member of NHENF/WNA because we think it's one of the best ways to get connected and tackle things together.

Say hello and talk to one another on the streets and in the parks, and come to our events where you'll have the opportunity to meet more people from the neighbourhood. Over and over we've heard that many of you met people at our events with whom you share common ground. You might be in the same profession. Your children might go to the same school. These conversations build a community and through them you can share your concerns about the area. Only then can groups be put together to deal with any problems.

Share your sources for things like a good handyman or babysitter.

Share news about crime so we can build an accurate picture of what is happening on our streets.

Lastly, there is a story about a final exam at a school in the USA where a question, worth a whopping 25% of the grade was, "What is the name of the person who cleans your dorm?" When students challenged this question, the professor pointed out that being successful in anything requires team effort and the recognition of the contributions of all. While this may seem only to apply to corporate life, it also applies to creating a community. How many of you know the name of the man who sweeps the litter from our streets? Hopefully lots of you. If you don't, please introduce yourself and say hello.

With warm wishes for a happy 2020!

Suzanne Forte and the NHENF/ WNA steering committee.

Consultations and Applications

Just before Christmas 2018 and again over the summer we submitted comments on Westminster's new draft City Plan 2019-2040. This is an important document because it contains policies that will control planning, environment, housing and public realm improvements across Westminster for the next 20 years, and our Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the statutory plans of the local authority. We felt that some of the policies were too restrictive and some, like those about pollution and climate change weren't ambitious enough. With our comments and those from other consultees across Westminster, the new City Plan is now headed to an inspector to determine whether it is sound, and if approved it will be adopted later this year.

We responded twice to consultations on Heathrow's expansion proposals, focusing on air quality and noise impacts to our area.

Our Neighbourhood Forum status was due to expire on the 15th of October 2019, so we submitted an application over the summer for this status to be renewed for another five years so that we can complete the Neighbourhood Plan. We were delighted to be granted our renewal, and would like to thank all of our councillors for supporting our application.

Finally, we learned that we were eligible for CIL funds (the Community Infrastructure Levy that those who do developments in the area must pay to the Council to be spent on local improvements) and so we submitted an application for Shrewsbury Gardens refurbishment. More about that just below.

Public Realm

You may recall that there were seven larger scale public realm projects identified in our Neighbourhood Plan Draft. We are happy to report progress on three of these and a few others.

Shrewsbury Gardens:

Back in January 2019 in an email to you all, we advertised an onsite meeting/consultation for the renovations to Shrewsbury Gardens and a good group turned up to discuss what is needed. We also showed you drawings in our Spring 2018 newsletter

and some of you wrote to us with comments. Notes from the onsite meeting here:

- We were in agreement that this unloved park has the potential to be a more beautiful and engaging community space.
- We agreed that the big trees should be on the north side of the park and smaller ornamental trees and shrubs on the south side. This would let the sun in and open up the views into the park.
- Elevating the grade in the southeast corner would help to lessen the feeling of being in a pit there.
- Plantings should be added along the east brick wall (Shrewsbury Road side) to make it feel less stark.
- Some separation of dogs and other park users might help to contain the dog litter and allow the rest of the park to be used for other activities.
- A performance space /amphitheatre would be a beneficial community amenity even though most of the time it would be used as general seating. It should have interesting paving rather than concrete for the surface. The tiered seating should have soft edges and doesn't necessarily need to be a half circle, but could be opened up and more meandering and could include plantings.
- Water jets would be fine if they were only on part time. We could also look at another type of water feature.
- There should be some elements to encourage social interaction such as a coffee cart or gym bars.
- Table tennis would be ok if there was a space but we need to be aware of the noise factor and potential disturbance to residents or other park users, and think about the sharp edges for children.
- Shrubs on the north side of the garden next to the school should be as close to the chain link perimeter fence as possible so we can reclaim some space for grass and flowers. We agreed that the border is too deep and overgrown right now.
- Flowerbeds could be somewhere in the park, but maintenance will be a consideration unless we can get resident participation. Bulbs might be the answer? (of note - there is a planter in St. Stephen's Gardens that is scraggly and weedy right now because no one seems to take responsibility for it.)
- We should compensate for the loss of any trees by planting new ones somewhere.
- We should try to get more feedback and involvement from residents of Wessex Gardens next door.
- For those who saw St. Stephen's Gardens afterwards, we agreed that the proposed pergola re-configuration and the elimination of the unnecessary lattice on the sides would make it a more appealing feature and would free up space for additional outdoor tables and chairs just to the

south. We should also request more benches for the east end of this garden by Chepstow Road.

- We should try to get even more feedback/ support from the regular users of these parks.

With these goals in hand, we met with Groundwork, a charity working nationally to improve green spaces for communities, and they submitted a proposal for Shrewsbury Gardens. Groundwork employs professional landscape architects and designers and their services include community consultations, design of public spaces - considering ecology as well as community needs, and importantly, the acquisition of funding for the construction of the schemes. Our application for CIL funding was to pay Groundwork's fee to consult, design and document this project to the point where they can then acquire the funding to construct and oversee its implementation. We were awarded the CIL funds and hope to see this project happen over the next year. Special thanks to Councillors Adam Hug and David Boothroyd for supporting our application.

Needham Road:

As part of Westminster's Neat Streets program, pavements around the city are being widened at street crossings to slow vehicular movement and facilitate easier pedestrian movement. We received a proposal for some pavement reconfigurations at Needham Road and members of the NHENF/WNA steering committee met with residents to review. The final result will be a widening of the pavements at the south end of the road along Westbourne Grove and, we hope, some tree planting along the length of Needham Road.

Five-Ways:

Steering committee member Andrew Pilkington has joined the Pembridge Association, the Kensington and Chelsea amenity society immediately adjacent to us south of Westbourne Grove. Our two associations are now working together on a Five-Ways scheme and NHENF's proposal to the Pembridge Association is here:

- **Five Ways** – Make an ellipse of paired trees to define the five street entries here, facilitate pedestrian crossing, increase pavement corner apexes and sun collecting pavements where possible - like Seven Dials, transform it into a place to go to, to linger.
- Five Ways previously Bradleys Corner joins the boundaries between two boroughs and three amenity societies (NHENF, PA -Pembridge Association & BRA - Bayswater Res Association)
- One of the most visible junctions in West London - a key pedestrian route running east-west, and

south-north, Notting Hill to Queens Park, also a corner turn for the yearly Carnival.

- Presided over by the five totemic cupola towers from the 'gothic' former National Provincial bank, Viceroy Court, and the former Bradleys building.
- Nearly everyone north of the park passes through, but few pedestrians stop, or even pause as they are largely pushed away because of a peripheral chain of crossings encouraging pedestrians to skirt the space or avoid it altogether.
- Presently an ordinary junction surrounded by quite generous size edges. With some optical depth and perspective, these would be magnified with some transformational pavement widening and enhancement, providing more space for greenery between a newly configured traffic flow and a lively ring provided by more pavement cafes.

There will be sketches of the scheme in our next newsletter. We also hope that by working together we might finally get a zebra or other protected crossing across Ledbury Road in the vicinity of Westbourne Grove, since that spans our two boroughs.

Garden Bulbs:

We would like to thank the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association and Taylors Bulbs of Holbeach for their gift of flower bulbs for Shrewsbury gardens and to Councillor Maggie Carman who made us aware of this program. Thanks also to NHENF/ WNA members Zarina Funk, Louise Terry and Katherine Lubar for coming along to plant them. Unfortunately the soil was so compacted in most places that we broke one of our shovels trying to dig down just 15 centimetres! Even after borrowing a pickaxe, we still couldn't get many of the bulbs into the ground. Another reason to address the deficiencies of this public space.



Traffic signal - Chepstow and Talbot Roads:

Councillor Maggie Carman applied for CIL funding to have a green man at this crossing and the funds were approved, so crossing at this rapidly changing traffic signal should be easier in the future.

Bicycle Locking Hoops:

Hopefully you've noticed the new cycle hoops around our area and our thanks go to John Zamit, Sebra's chairman, for his help in getting these.

Carnival

The 2019 Carnival was once again run by the Notting Hill Carnival Ltd. and was very well attended, helped by the hot and sunny weather.

The Carnival organisers, based locally at the Tabernacle - <https://nhcarnival.org> met with us just a few months ago and they have encouraged us to share any feedback we receive from our residents. If you have any comments or suggestions, please email us at nottinghilleastnf@gmail.com. WCC is responsible for certain aspects of the Carnival such as litter and cleaning, and because we've heard some comments that the cleaning of the streets and pavements last year was inadequate, we'll be raising that issue with Westminster.

In addition, residents will have several opportunities to speak to Carnival organisers directly. Meeting dates have already been organised for 2020 - schedule below:

- 15th June 2020 - Drop in at the Tabernacle
- 18th June 2020 - Drop in at the Tabernacle
- 20th July 2020 - Residents Meeting at the YAA Centre, Harrow Road
- 6th October 2020 - Debrief, location TBD

For times, check the Carnival website closer to the date or call the Tabernacle @ 020 7221 9700

Neighbourhood Watch News

We've been encouraging streets to set up Neighbourhood Watches, which requires a coordinator and liaising with the police and your neighbours. If you'd like to set up a Watch for your street, you can phone **020 7641 2117** or email neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk

Local Watch Coordinators can be contacted for Northumberland Place and Sutherland Place can be contacted through us. nottinghilleastnf@gmail.com.

Garden Competition

We've been unable to have our garden competition for the second year in a row, due to a shortage of manpower. We're in search of a gardener or garden lover who would enjoy taking in all the wonderful gardens in our area in the spring and then nominating a few for winner and runner-up. If you would like to do this for us next year, please send us an email. It would be a shame to let this tradition die out.

NHENF / WNA Street Reps

We've announced in previous newsletters that we are looking for street reps who could go door-to-door on their own street to encourage membership, as well as to hear feedback on issues affecting the neighbourhood. If you'd be willing to be the rep for your street, road or mews, would you please send us an email?

Our streets:

Artesian Rd., Botts Mews, Bridstow Pl., Chepstow Rd., Courtnell St., Heads Mews, Hereford Mews, Hereford Rd., Ledbury Rd., Moorhouse Rd., Needham Rd., Northumberland Pl., St. John's Mews, Shrewsbury Rd., Shrewsbury Mews, St. Stephen's Crescent, St. Stephen's Gardens, St. Stephen's Mews, Sutherland Pl., Talbot Rd., Westbourne Grove, Westbourne Park Rd., Wellington Close

Our Events

We think that there are many of you who enjoy our events. So we're hoping that some of you will be willing to help us make these happen. If you would be willing to help us with our Neighbourhood Walks (submit ideas, offer to lead), Swap Days (help with set up and removal, saying hello to neighbours as they stop by, encouraging membership), June Lunches (putting up signs, setting up and clearing away), and parties (booking venues, helping with ticket sales, promoting), please send us an email. These can only continue with more volunteers.

Winter Party 2018

On the 4th of December 2018 we had our Winter Party at the Walmer Castle on Ledbury Road. A good time was had by all. Photos below. Our raffle last winter included prizes from: LC London, Melt and Ottolenghi, on Ledbury Road, SpaceNK, Moshi Moshi Mind, Show, Sézane, and Aesop on Westbourne Grove, Farrow and Ball at Five-Ways, and Frankincense on Chepstow Road. We thank these businesses for their generosity and the Walmer Castle for doing a fantastic job in keeping up with the drink orders and restocking the food buffet.



June Big Lunch 2019

We all recognise the components of a perfect English summer day: low humidity, a pale cerulean sky, puffy clouds and abundant sunshine, and those were the conditions on the 2nd of June for our fifth (!) annual Big Lunch event in Shrewsbury Gardens. This UK-wide event was started by the Eden Project to encourage communities to come together on one day each year to bring and share a meal and get to know one another. We're glad our residents continue to turn out with their delicious offerings. If anyone would like to suggest an idea for next year's Big Lunch to give it a new twist - a bake off?... a food theme?, please email us.



Neighbourhood Walk - July 2019

On another sunny afternoon in July we met at the portico of 135 Ledbury Rd. and faced east towards the location of Burlington Road as shown in the photo on our Victorian postcard from 1915. We traced the line of Burlington Road through the housing accommodation that replaced it, Wessex Gardens, and visited the other locations of the photographs taken in the 1970's by Jonathan Barker. From each location we were able to conjure the past, imagined then and seen as it is now.

Admiring the grand arch of Wessex Gardens.



Modern Wessex Gardens shown in red on historical 1893 map, centred on the west end of the old St. Stephen's Square, now St. Stephen's Gardens. Map adapted from and reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

© National Library of Scotland

Photo taken from what is now St. Stephen's Gardens, facing west to the current location of St. Mary of the Angels school. Photograph reproduced with the kind permission of Jonathan Barker.



Autumn Swap Day 2019

On Saturday, October 19th we had our autumn Swap Day. Special thanks go to the Clutton family once again for all their help with the event: carrying boxes and tables, setting up, helping arrange donated items, scrambling to cover items during rain showers...and the tea and scones!



Winter Party 2019

For the second year in a row on the 4th of December, we had our Winter Party at the Walmer Castle, Ledbury Road. We had a tasty buffet, a lively group and lots of raffle prizes, as listed in our introduction. We must thank the Walmer Castle again for their excellent service and lovely atmosphere. Thanks also to steering committee member Penny Bagnall-Smith for working so hard to find and collect the raffle prizes and Andrew Pilkington for his raffle ticket sales. To those who attended, we promise to have a fresh book of tickets next year starting with number 1....



The Environment

It seems we may be approaching a tipping point when it comes to environmental awareness - or at least we can only hope. There are positive signs around London including shops shunning plastic and publicising their zero waste goals. We've noticed more of our local shops keeping their doors closed on cold days rather than letting all that fossil fuel generated heat escape to the streets. If you find a local business that has eliminated the use of plastic or done a good job of reducing waste, please send us a photo so we can put it into our next newsletter.

And, if you're tired of seeing people in their cars or vans talking on their mobiles, eating lunch or taking a nap with the engine running, you can get the flyers shown below right from Westminster. Councillor Emily Payne is working on other initiatives to tackle the idling problem. If you have any suggestions or comments, please email us at nottinghilleastnf@gmail.com.



Your car idling produces up to **150 balloons of exhaust** emissions containing harmful chemicals like cyanide, NOx and PM2.5 every minute.



 <p>Car idling contributes to premature deaths and unnecessary health issues in Westminster.</p>	 <p>Turning off your engine could help children's health, reduce asthma, heart disease and lung cancer.</p>	 <p>Idling wastes fuel and money as well as increasing wear and tear on your engine.</p>
--	--	---

Everyone is affected. By making this small change you will make a big difference.

Sign our #DontBeIdle pledge and help improve air quality in the city.

#DontBeIdle
westminster.gov.uk/dont-be-idle

 City of Westminster



Annual General Meeting

This year, our AGM will be held on the 13th of May
at 7 p.m. in St. Stephen's Church Hall.

Would you like to join the steering committee? If so the AGM is the time to put yourself forward for election. You can do so at the meeting, or you can send us an email a little in advance of May 13th expressing your interest - you will need a nominator and seconder. If you are new to the neighbourhood and finding a nominator would be difficult, please email us.

We hope to see you all on the 13th!

www.nottinghilleast.org.uk
nottinghilleastnf@gmail.com

Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum Membership

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

Please fill this in as legibly as possible, and please give us your address or telephone number so we can contact you if we have any problems with your email.

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

.....

Membership is open to all in our area, and is free. This form can be filled in and left at 1 St. Stephen's Mews or you can email us the information. Donations are entirely voluntary and will help us to continue to do our work for the neighbourhood. Donation cheques (made payable to WNA) or cash may be posted to, or left, as noted above, with Cye Elliot at 1 St. Stephen's Mews, London, W2 5QZ, or brought to our AGM or other events.

Donations can also be transferred directly into our account: Sort Code 60-02-08, Account number 7861-4023. If you choose to do this online, please reference your surname, street number and street name, (very important) and please drop us an email to let us know you wish to be a member.

nottinghilleastnf@gmail.com