

# SHORTLANDS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1934

## NEWSLETTER

Summer 2018

[www.shortlandsresidents.org.uk](http://www.shortlandsresidents.org.uk)

### SRA Open Meetings Plans

Over the next year or so, the the SRA will be trying some new approaches. We need to find ways of attracting and communicating with new members, particularly those with families and school age children. We also want to make sure that we work closely with our elected representatives on Bromley Council.

So on Saturday morning 6 October we will be holding an open meeting at the Harris Primary Academy, Shortlands, in Kingswood Road. This meeting will be different from our previous open meetings because:

- We aim to have short discussions on key issues that the SRA considers – planning, parking, developments in Bromley Town centre, and how we connect with local people - what do residents think on these issues and are they the right things for us to focus on?
- We are inviting local Councillors (see website for names) to join us. They are well placed both to keep local people informed about Bromley's policies and plans, and to take back the views of local residents to Council meetings and discussions;
- By holding the meeting on a Saturday morning we are hoping that we will make contact with people who find evening meetings more difficult.

We hope for a good turn out, so please make a note in your diary for **10.30 on 6 October 2018 at the Harris Primary Academy**. More details will appear on our website nearer the time.

### Not joined up yet?

To access the SRA'S various services and advice please email your contact details to [info@shortlandsresidents.org.uk](mailto:info@shortlandsresidents.org.uk) and we'll be in touch. Minimum subscription £1 per household

### Draft London Plan

When the current Draft London Plan was published some months ago there was much consternation about the perceived encouragement by the Mayor's office to permit building in back gardens.



This was part of the response to the need for many new homes in London and the plan that the London Borough of Bromley said it should contribute by building a minimum of 1400 new homes each year for 10 years. Just where would these be, queries SRA Development Officer Danny Miller.

Against this background there have been a number of decisions, by Bromley Council, over the last few months refusing just that kind of development. This is in reliance on existing plans but also taking into account the draft future plan.

One recent decision refusing building in what it described as a backland location referred to “a

cramped and discordant form of development eroding the spatial and visual qualities of the area". It added that there would be unacceptable harm to neighbouring residential amenities by way of being overlooked, loss of privacy, increased noise and disturbance and would be visually dominant.

Strong stuff! However, this decision, like many others, is about to be appealed. This is hardly surprising considering the amounts of money potentially involved. It is now not uncommon to find two or three applications in respect of the same property and appeals going on at the same time.

Whether this represents a trend which will continue remains to be seen, but there is also a clear trend, mainly in the centre of Bromley, to convert office space to residential accommodation and this is likely to be the kind of brownfield development to be encouraged. Other proposed town centre developments are less appealing – see below.

### **Churchill Quarter Proposal**

Countryside Properties has now made an application for planning approval to develop a substantial site parallel with the High Street in Bromley town centre. This is to be known as Churchill Quarter.



*The proposal*

Countryside had entered into a development agreement with the London Borough of Bromley. There was a public consultation in July 2017 and plans were refined and re-presented at the Churchill Theatre last November. The plan is to develop the site from Library Gardens through to and including

Ethelbert Close. The application now proposes 410 residential units together with a range of business services at ground floor level and basement car parking.

The proposal includes several blocks of apartments of differing heights the tallest of which would be 15 storeys together with large open spaces between the blocks. This would involve a major change to the skyline of Bromley and when combined with the current development at St Mark's Square and the possible development at Bromley North, reflects potentially enormous changes to the nature of Bromley town centre.



*As Now*

In many ways this is consistent with the encouragement of the draft London Plan for councils to look for new housing space as close as possible to town centres and to public transport. The draft plan also includes a proposed requirement for LBB to provide more than 1000 new homes each year for 10 years.

There is no doubt that the plans are contentious. Early on there was a proposal to grant Countryside a long lease of Library Gardens even before planning approval had been granted. Many pointed out that Library Gardens had been willed to the people of Bromley in the early part of last century.

Further, this would involve the disappearance of Ethelbert Close and directly affect people in the 40 flats in the Close. Local civic societies have strongly objected to the overwhelming effect on Church House Gardens and the centre of Bromley. The SRA has made detailed

comments to the Council and these can be found on the SRA website at <http://www.shortlandsresidents.org.uk/index.html>

There will no doubt be a vigorous debate about the pros and cons of such town centre development.

### **Double Yellow lines and Bus Stop Markings**

Residents will remember that since January 2017 we have been urging Bromley Council to paint double yellow lines on road junctions where thoughtless drivers park their cars. This is dangerous. We were told by the Council that this was easy to achieve. After repeated requests these lines have finally appeared. We have received thank you notes from pleased residents. Unfortunately the corners at the “top” end of Church Road (which were on our and the Council’s agreed list) have not been done. We are trying find out when they will be completed.



Also in January we asked the Council to put bus stop markings at the four stops in St Mary’s Avenue and one in Beckenham Grove. Once again drivers park in a way which prevents the buses from drawing to the curb. This is unsatisfactory for all bus users but especially those with mobility problems and parents with pushchairs. Again we continued to ask when the lines would be painted.

But instead of the simple line painting job we had requested, the contractors began by digging up yards of pavement and curb in St Mary’s Avenue to provide slightly ramped access. We have now learnt that this is standard TfL practice to meet their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act.

We are curious about two things. First, why in the 18 months of discussion was your residents association never told that they would not just paint lines? Secondly

how much does this all cost? in addition to the need for the inclusion of yellow lines in Church Road, we are also waiting to hear about the difficult bus stop in Beckenham Grove. We will continue to pursue.

### **Keeping Gallery Visit – 20 October, Unveiling of Blue Plaque**

Famous artists Charles and Renata Keeping lived for many years at 16, Church Road in Shortlands, just down from St Mary’s Church, and we are organising a special guided visit to the Gallery they set up at their home - at **2pm on Saturday 20 October.**

There is already a blue plaque on the front of the house dedicated to Charles, but, to coincide with the start of this visit, a new plaque will be unveiled dedicated to his wife Renata.

Charles was internationally renowned in the mid-twentieth century for his illustrations in works ranging from ‘Beowulf’ to ‘Black Beauty’, and the Gallery has the finest collection anywhere of his artworks.

Renata, who used to teach art at the Gallery to many students, young and old, specialised in her own texture and fabric based style of art, and the most striking of all her works to be seen at the Gallery is a sort of ‘Bayeux Tapestry’ collage of her and Charles’ life together in Shortlands – over 30 feet long.

‘If you are interested in joining this Gallery Tour, or just seeing the unveiling of the blue plaque to Renata, please contact Mike Ricketts on 0208 460 0395.

#### **Shortlands Great House Tour**

**There are still places available on our visit to the ‘Great House’, now Bishop Challoner School, at 2.30pm on Tuesday 21 August. The House was Shortlands’ ‘stateliest home’, built well over 300 years ago, which has evolved from being a major landowner’s mansion, to a private hotel, to a primary/secondary school. If you would like to join us, please call Mike Ricketts on 0208 460 0395. We meet up to start the tour in front of the main school building.**

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### Shortlands Library

Your local library providing popular fiction and non-fiction, free internet access and much, much more. Find us at:

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