

HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

ISSUE No 2 October 1997

270 people have now joined the Highbury Community Association (HCA). New members include shopkeepers in Highbury Barn, Blackstock Road and Seven Sisters Road. More needed! Can you enroll someone who might need help from the HCA or could offer help? Show this HCA News to a neighbour or friend. Roger Wright is Membership Secretary on 0171 354 1413.

What can HCA help with?

We've had calls about: noise from neighbours, planning applications in Drayton Park & Hamilton Park West, the Gillespie Parking Scheme, complaints from shop-keepers about parking problems and requests from newcomers to Islington for general advice on the area. Is there a brave member who would like to act as HCA Co-ordinator for some of these issues? Or do you have a problem you want to discuss? Ring Robert Scott on 0171 359 5731

ARSENAL UPDATE

About 70-80 HCA members heard the Councillors approve the revised Draft Planning Brief for 'public consultation' at the Town Hall on 11th September. The local Press were there and the meeting was covered London wide on 3 radio programmes and London TV News. Look out for articles and letters in the two local papers.

THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

How will the Council Planning Dept. conduct the consultation with us, the public? There is talk of a large public meeting organised by the Council, but no definite date or list of speakers yet. Jeremy Corbyn MP would try to attend if asked. The HCA wants a big meeting, held somewhere locally, to give a good chance for

all to ask questions and put forward suggestions as a start for a wide public consultation. Studies on traffic, environmental and economic impact are to be done by the Arsenal.

Arsenal Fanclubs and Fanzines

Three Arsenal Fan Clubs wrote to Arsenal Vice-Chair David Dein on 5th September, asking for proper consultation for the fans. There is a lot of rumour and anxiety about the Directors' plans for the Club, and fans jump from one rumour to another. The HCA's letter to David Dein is almost exactly like the Fanzine's letter, asking for a meeting so 'we can work together on this issue...' The HCA has not had a reply and there was no report, (by 23.9.97), that the Fanzines had heard from David Dein, either.

WHAT ARE ARSENAL'S PLANS?

The HCA, along with the Fanzines, does not have any details. The first step must surely be for the Club to announce some preferred options which the public could then discuss. Peter Kelsall, the Arsenal's Project Manager, said recently in public that there were NO plans but that the Club wanted 'about 50,000 seats'. The Highbury & Islington Express later reported him as saying that 'some houses are in the firing line', which seems to imply he knows which houses the non-existent plans involve! The HCA finds it hard to believe that the Council Planners do not know what the plans involve in detail. Many people think AFC could do much more to help the community, but on the whole, the balance is ok and the HCA is not against the Arsenal, as it is a part of the community. HCA members who are regular Club supporters worry that fans will lose out too, unless we all get what the HCA wants - open and fair consultation for all. There must be no losers, either in Highbury, or beyond Islington's borough boundaries.

"BIGGER ARSENAL STADIUM COULD SHUT TRADERS DOWN"

Highbury & Islington Express (26.9.97)

Arsenal and Council representatives were told by about 25 businesses, at a meeting organised by the Islington Chamber of Commerce, on 17th September, that each of them lost money on Home Match Days. This is not what some of our Councillors have believed in the past. If you live near or shop in The Barn, Blackstock Road and Gillespie Road, or near Finsbury Park Station, you can ask the shop-keepers yourself. Colin Small, of Small Restorations, Blackstock Road, is worried about the traffic congestion created and the access for emergency services. "On Match Days I just shut the

business and go away. The area is totally impenetrable."

An HCA preliminary survey of 80 shops has found that, as expected, the fast food shops and pubs in certain areas do well, with fans gathering in great numbers in the Blackstock Road and near Finsbury Park station to use the cafes, fish & chip shops and pubs. The great majority of the other types of shop and business suffer quite significant losses, (of between 20-100%). The Master Cobbler, at Highbury Barn, loses about 30% trade, because "my local customers just do not come out on a Saturday Match Day, and I rely on steady, constant

trade". A similar story is repeated in all the ordinary shops, and the worst affected are those whose customers drive in by car, eg the Car Audio shop in the Blackstock Road.

Some shop-keepers want the Council and Police to alter the rules for Match Day parking restrictions, to allow customers coming by car to park briefly to shop. Another demand made at the Chamber of Commerce meeting was that shop-keepers should be allowed Match Day Parking Permits, like the residents. The HCA aims to help shop-keepers find solutions to some of these problems.

Planning Application - 100 Drayton Park, N5

Residents near this big white office block have been objecting to plans for a change of use application to create 84 residential units. These will be mostly 1 and 2 bed units with a requirement for 25% affordable units. 53 parking spaces are planned, which complies with Borough policy. Plans have been modified twice, following worries about the large number of extra cars (over 100) such a development could bring to Stavordale Road, Drayton Park and Aubert Park. 53 spaces does not seem enough to cater for the number of car owners likely to live there. Probably to be heard at Development Control Sub-Committee on 13.11.97. Written

OTHER NEWS

comments to be sent by 23.10.97 to Helen Dilkes, Planning Officer, Planning control, 222 Upper Street, N1 1YA. Tel 0171 477 2792

Planning Application - Newbury Lodge, Hamilton Park West, N5

An application for an extra storey, creating a one-bedroom flat, on this modern block is coming up for consideration at the next Development Control Sub-Committee on 7.10.97. at 7.15pm. Objectors can speak at the discretion of the Chair. Ring: Mr Rayner Planning Officer on 0171 477 2278

BONFIRE NIGHT AT HIGHBURY FIELDS TO BE SCALED DOWN

The Islington Gazette's front page news this week is that there will be **NO** bonfire and fewer fireworks at next month's November 5th "Bonfire Night!"

The emergency services estimated last year's crowd at 60,000. The police warn that crowds may block emergency vehicles and are pressing for the event to be cancelled. Islington council are trying to scale it down so the event can still take place and hope it will be seen as a local "family" affair only.

DIARY AND ACTION PAGE

Monday 6th October-
7.15pm for 7.30pm start
Nag's Head
Neighbourhood Forum
Isledon Day Centre, 76-80
Isledon Road, N7

Wednesday 8th October
Highbury Vale
Neighbourhood Forum -
7.30pm
Sotheby Day Mews
Sotheby Road, N5

Monday 10th November-
Gillespie Neighbourhood
Forum - 7.30 pm
Stephen's Ink Community
Centre
Gillespie Road, N4

COUNCIL
PUBLIC
MEETING ON
ARSENAL
STADIUM
PLANNING
BRIEF - NO
NEWS YET
ON DATE OR
PLACE

ACTION FOR HCA MEMBERS

Have you been to speak to a Councillor in his or her surgery yet? Try it! It's always interesting and is the best way to put over your views and to find out what each Councillor thinks about something. See Council Fact Sheets (above) for addresses.

The Public Consultation on the Arsenal Stadium Draft Planning Brief is meant to have started, so more letters and visits to Councillors are needed. You may feel you have more questions than you did in July about the whole issue - do you think a bigger stadium will mean more matches per week? Perhaps you want more details and can get an answer from the Council Planners or a Councillor. Copy your letter to Ian Crawley, Development Control, 222 Upper Street, N1 1YA, or write direct to him also. Every letter MUST be copied to HCA c/o Pauline Gerlis 10 Stavordale Road. Tel: 0171 359 1980. The Council has been known to lose letters of objection in the past! Pauline will keep a record of the issues you write about.

Councillors to lobby this month, particularly, are the LIBERAL DEMOCRATS. They have done better in Islington recently. Will Cllrs prove supportive of voters concerns about the Arsenal expanding at the expense of homes and will they address the problems the borough has with increasing traffic congestion? Cllr Steve Hitchins is the Leader, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Cllr David Tibbs & Cllr Mary Powell (on Planning Committee), Cllr

Dave Barnes (Quadrant Ward), Cllr James Kempton are just a few. See Fact Sheets for more names and to see what Committees and interests each has. Write or go to see them. Pat Fyans will advise on Surgery visiting: 0171 226 8940

Donations are welcomed for the general fund: Robert James 111 Highbury Hill, N5. If you want to help with fund-raising activities ring Lee Green 0171 354 8641. Leafletters please offer to help: Francis Radice 0171 226 9422

FINALLY - THE HCA APPEALS FOR RETIRED PEOPLE TO HELP WITH SOME ADMINISTRATION AND ANYONE WHO WANTS TO ADD TO HCA KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE TO RING: Alison Carmichael : 0171 359 5731

If you have joined the HCA in the last few weeks and have not got a list of HCA Committee members and special interest groups, please ring 0171 359 5731

GET YOUR FACT SHEETS

Fact Sheets on Councillors (Surgeries, Committees), Committees, Neighbourhood Services, etc. Collect free from Town Hall, or ring: 0171 226 1234

TRAFFIC POLLUTION WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

IS A PUBLIC MEETING ORGANISED BY THE ISLINGTON SOCIETY. This 37 year old society is well worth joining if you care about architecture, transport and the environment in Islington. There will be four public meetings on transport issues, highly relevant to all of us. 'Traffic Pollution - what can we do about it?' is at 7.30 pm on 8.10.97 at the Town Hall. The society has lists of other societies and events in Islington, so is an excellent resource. To join ring: Jim Lagden 0171 354 9442