

HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

Issue No 7 April 1998

**Come to the
Highbury Community Association AGM**

**Thursday 2nd April
AGM from 7.30 - 8.30pm for members only -
Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent**

**8.30pm - 10pm Guest Speaker - David Conn
FREE TALK OPEN TO ALL!
For information: 359 5731**

**AGM 7.30-8.30pm
Chaired by Roger Wright, HCA Membership Secretary**

- * Welcome to all members
- * Update on HCA range of activities
- * Update on Arsenal's activities at Highbury
- * HCA and local Council elections
- * Proposals from members for HCA action
- * Amendments to constitution
- * Treasurer's Report: Approval of the Accounts
- * Election of Management Committee

**Public meeting
No 1**

**Thursday 2nd April
Central Library
Fieldway Crescent
8.30 -10.00 pm
See below**

Public Meeting No 2

**Wednesday 22nd April
from 8pm at Christ
Church, Highbury Grove**

**Local Election Hustings -
sponsored by the High &
I Express
See article on page 2**

**DAVID CONN - author and journalist 8.30pm 2nd April
at Library, Fieldway Crescent**

The meeting is open to all. The HCA's guest speaker, journalist **David Conn**, will talk about the huge changes that have taken place in football in recent years. David is a fanatical Manchester City supporter and loves the game. He's spent a lot of time researching what has happened to football recently and is now in demand by the press as an 'expert' on the business world of football. What has been happening to Clubs all over the country? Do the changes have a bearing on our community, which lives and works alongside a successful football club? What predictions are there for the future? David is hoping to bring a few copies of his book **The football business - Fair game in the '90s?** to the meeting.

HCA LOCAL ELECTIONS HUSTINGS

Local electors will get a chance to quiz the candidates for the Local elections to be held in May, at a public meeting to be held on **Wednesday 22nd April in Christ Church Main Hall from 8pm to 10pm**

Candidates for the next Council will be invited to put their views to the electors of Highbury, Gillespie, Mildmay and Quadrant wards and to answer questions from the floor.

The event has been sponsored by the *Highbury and Islington Express* in conjunction with the HCA.

You are welcome to arrive when you can and ask the candidates their views on what matters to **you**.

There'll be a glass of wine after the

meeting, from about 9.30pm in the Fellowship Room.

We've invited a single representative from each main party, to speak on behalf of their party. The other candidates for each ward will also be invited and we hope many will turn up.

Lindsay Mackie, a freelance journalist, who lives in Highbury, will be in the Chair.

This is the only local election hustings being held in this area and we are very pleased that the *Highbury & Islington Express* newspaper is sponsoring and promoting it.

This means that we have a chance to get concerns in these particular wards aired in the local press.

The *Evening Standard* will be invited and we may get London-wide coverage, as people are interested in the Liberal Democrat attempt to win power from the long-standing rule of the Labour Party in Islington.

Rumour has it that the Greens, who have a strong base in Highbury, will be fielding a full slate of candidates. Quadrant Ward is vital for the Liberals, who have one seat and the Conservatives, who have the other, their only one in the Borough. Will there be independents in Gillespie or Mildmay?

For more information ring Alison: 359 5731

ARSENAL UPDATE

On Thursday 12th March 1998 Arsenal PLC issued this Press Release, "*The board of Arsenal Football Club has confirmed that it has made a proposal to Wembley PLC to acquire the stadium.*" The HCA issued the following statement in response, "*The Highbury Community Association welcomes Arsenal's attempts to seek a solution to their problems. We recognise that the Club wants to do the best for its supporters and take Arsenal forward to further success. Sadly, the Club has outgrown the small ground at Highbury. Should the Wembley bid fail, the HCA remains wholly opposed to any redevelopment at Highbury which might lead to the demolition of homes and an increase in the serious traffic and other environmental problems.*"

At the time of writing (25th March) the result of the Arsenal

bid to buy Wembley is still unknown. What can be reported here is that, contrary to some rumours, Arsenal directors are indeed serious in their attempt to buy Wembley Stadium. This was confirmed at a meeting between AFC and HCA last week. The news was not a surprise to many HCA members who have known for some time that Arsenal directors have been looking long and hard at a number of sites. Obviously, this is a shocking idea for many of us but unfortunately football has changed out of all recognition, and Arsenal is keen to be part of that change. Money and big business have entered the game. The national press have reported that AFC is involved in negotiating a £200 million deal with British Land and is borrowing £120 million from Hambros bank.

The latest news this week is that the FA and the English National Stadium Trust have patched up their differences and put in a substantial bid to rival that of AFC. The problem is that although Arsenal are happy to share with what might become the National Stadium (as do other European Clubs) it seems that the FA wants to keep a £200 million National Stadium for use only about half a dozen times a year.

This bid by Arsenal confirms that the HCA is right in thinking that expanding to 50,000 seats in a cramped ground, without much scope for hospitality suites and income generating bars etc. is not a big enough development for Arsenal, in this new world of football big business. Cllr Richard Greening, who

(Continued on page 3)

represents Gillespie Ward, agrees and has said "I can see them needing more than 50,000 in five years time. Why cause so much disruption to people's lives and the neighbourhood if this is only a short-term solution?" One HCA member said . "I think most of us would like Arsenal to stay as it is, not expand at all and somehow, for local fans to be able to afford, and get their hands on tickets again. But this is an unrealistic hope, unfortunately."

Another thing many fans know, but Liberal Democrat Councillor Joe Trotter doesn't seem to understand, (see Islington Gazette 19th March), is that Arsenal itself has recognised that Highbury is too small, and that a great Club wanting to keep up with its competitors, needs more space and income generating facilities than the proposed de-

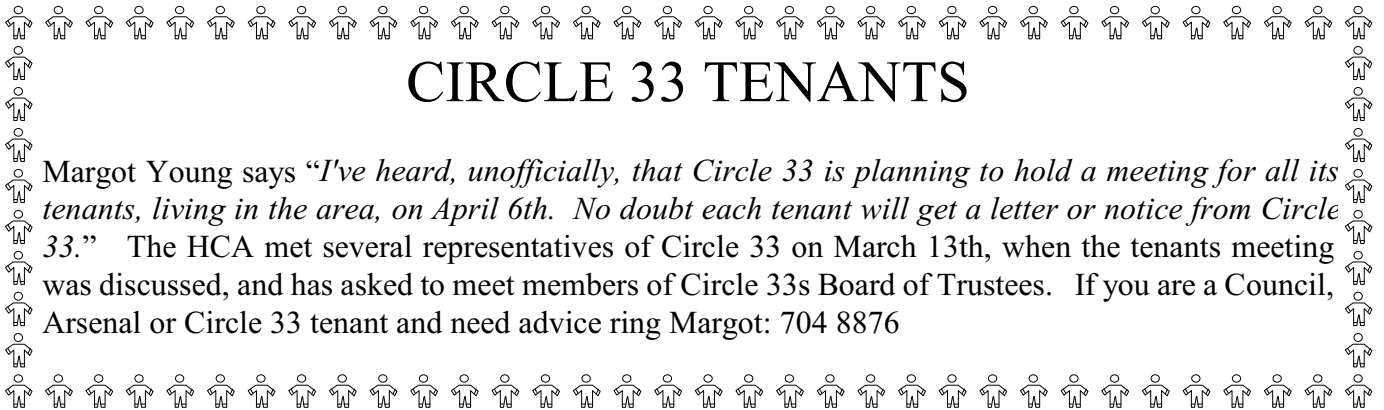
velopment to 50,000 at Highbury will allow.

The community around here lives with the Club's activities and we are used to about 28 matches a year. We have learned to live with increased use of the stadium for other events such as video-screenings. We tolerate the uncertainties of scheduling that have come about at the whim of football's paymaster, Rupert Murdoch's Sky TV. Commercial pressure to compete and the likelihood of a European super-league suggest that the trend to ever more frequent use of the ground will not only continue but accelerate in the next few years.

Either AFC comes back in a few years time, asking for yet more land or it tries to make up for lack of space by using what it has more

frequently. Since Man U. operates seven days a week and others, such as Leeds, are planning upwards of 180 events a year, how is AFC to make do with less?

Neither the Arsenal nor the Council Planners have claimed that HCA predictions for many more matches/events per year are wrong. If the Arsenal fails to win its bid for Wembley, the HCA is determined to oppose knocking down 30+ houses and expansion beyond the current site. At the current level of activity, Arsenal and the community can co-exist. The proposal to expand to 50,000 is too much for the health of the community and too little for the aspirations of the Club. Where is the sense in this?



CIRCLE 33 TENANTS

Margot Young says "I've heard, unofficially, that Circle 33 is planning to hold a meeting for all its tenants, living in the area, on April 6th. No doubt each tenant will get a letter or notice from Circle 33." The HCA met several representatives of Circle 33 on March 13th, when the tenants meeting was discussed, and has asked to meet members of Circle 33s Board of Trustees. If you are a Council, Arsenal or Circle 33 tenant and need advice ring Margot: 704 8876

FUNDS NEEDED TO KEEP HCA GOING

The HCA relies on donations from supporters . Can you help? Send cheques to 'Highbury Community Association' to HCA Treasurer, 111 Highbury Hill, N5.

NEW MEMBERS

We have over 450 members now. Welcome to new members - we hope you can come to the AGM on 2nd April. Membership is free but donations are welcome.

— WANTED —

EX-PUPILS OF AMBLER SCHOOL

Ambler Primary School is 100 years old and is planning centenary celebrations.

On Saturday 18th July there will be a display and magazine of Ambler memories, a fashion show, a fair, a barn dance and much more.

Please contact **Joe Hallgarten** at the school if you can help with the arrangements. Joe is looking for

former pupils who could lend old photos, books or reports; or who are happy to be interviewed about their schooldays.

He is also hoping to hear from local businesses who are willing to sponsor the festivities, contribute prizes or advertise in the magazine.

The search is also on for musicians and performers.

If you can help or if you know of former pupils who might be interested, please contact Joe or leave your name and number with the Secretary between 10 a.m and 3 p.m. **Phone 0171 226 4708**

EASTER WEEK SERVICES

Christ Church Highbury Grove

Vicar-John Littlewood 0171 226 4544
Curate-Nigel Mason 0171 359 1799
Curate-Tania Witter 0171 607 3156

Palm Sunday 5th April

9am Holy Communion
11am All Age Service
6.30pm Evening Meditation

Wednesday 8th April

8pm Meditation on the 'Stations of the Cross'

Maundy Thursday 9th April

8pm Holy Communion

Good Friday 10th April

1pm-3pm Meditation 'At the Cross'

Holy Saturday 11th April

8pm Easter Vigil

Easter Day 12th April

9am Holy Communion
11am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship

St Joan of Arc, Catholic Church, 60 Highbury Pk

Father Fred de l'Orme - Parish Priest
0171 226 0257
Tom Egan VG

Palm Sunday 5th April

8am, 10am, 12 noon
Blessing of the Palms at each service

Holy Thursday 9th April

8pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday 10th April

3pm The Liturgy of the Passion of Our Lord
7.30pm Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday 11th April

8pm Evening Vigil of the Resurrection

Easter Sunday 12th April

8am, 10am, 12 noon Easter Sunday
Celebrating

St Thomas's Church, St Thomas's Rd/Monsell Rd

Rev. Stephen Coles 0171 354 5741

Palm Sunday 5th April

10.30am Palm Sunday Procession

Maundy Thursday 9th April

7.30pm Washing of the Feet and Last Supper

Good Friday 10th April

12am Stations of the Cross for Children
2pm Solemn Liturgy of the Crucifixion

Easter Eve Saturday 11th April

9pm Vigil and First Mass of Easter

Easter Sunday 12th April

10.30am Parish Mass of Easter Day

For Sale or Exchange

Lovely, well-equipped 2 bed flat in Grasse. Elderly owner keen to return to Highbury. Would swap for studio flat, or sell cheap. Any suggestions? 0171-359 2287

Highbury Community Association

The HCA represents residents and businesses, on all aspects of living and working in Highbury, Stoke Newington and Finsbury Park.