

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



Mapesbury
Residents'
Association

Chair's Report

It is good to see community spirit alive and well in Mapesbury. The harvesting last year and winter fruit tree pruning are successful and enjoyable new initiatives to add to all the other community link activities.

However, there are other areas where we can work together to help people with minor problems; I commend the Good Neighbours Group idea – so that we can assess the full support, please fill in and return the survey (on the back of the membership insert): if we go ahead, we need to start with a decent core of helpers.

As usual we have included a membership form with this report. It is a great help to us if you can use the form to join or renew; if you are not sure whether you are paid up, check via the website contact email (or 020 8452 0649). More and more of our members are on our email network and this has been invaluable for passing on planning, parking, police information as well as news of community events. Our restored website (www.mapra.org.uk) is also providing community, campaign and other local information.

As we reported in the Christmas Newsletter our campaign to preserve back gardens within the conservation area rules was a success. The Brent Cross development protest was lost; however, it may still be early days. It is related to the new programme to improve Cricklewood as a viable and attractive area in which it is encouraging to see the way people across three boroughs, (Brent, Camden & Barnet) are working together to try to achieve this.

This is the year of our Open Gardens event. One of the great and enjoyable things about the day is the way it brings together contributions from so many of our members. I hope and trust you will support it as fully as before.

Before that we have our AGM, combined this year with a debate on the AV referendum. Because of the latter there may not be much time for questions about MapRA affairs. However, we will have the usual stalls with invaluable opportunities to pursue concerns with us and Brent Council officers directly; as well as the enjoyable social aspect. I invite nominations for Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee.

Gerry Weston, Chairman of MapRA

Important Events

Annual General Meeting 2010 and 'Yes' or 'No' to Alternative Voting Referendum on 5th May?

The AGM will be held on Tuesday 3rd May at St Gabriel's Church from 7.00pm. Stalls manned by Brent Police, Fire Brigade & Officers from Brent Planning, Streetcare & Environmental departments will be open from 7.00pm to 8.00pm, when there will be a short formal MapRA meeting. After this Brent Council's Leader, Cllr Ann John OBE and Lib Dems Party Leader, Cllr Paul Lorber, will give a brief explanation of the implications of the Alternative Voting Referendum on Thursday 5th May, 2011. You can also meet and chat to all your neighbours over refreshments, sign up for Mapesbury Activities and discuss any problems you may have in Mapesbury.

MapRA Open Gardens Day Sunday, 12th June, 2011 from 2–6pm

If you want a peek at some of the most beautiful gardens in Mapesbury get your discounted advance tickets (£3.00) to this year's most popular event at the AGM Gardening Stall. Otherwise contact Margaret Mann, Chair OGD, on 8459 5419

Collect your Awards for the best 2010 Front Gardens from the Mayor of Brent

The Mayor of Brent is looking forward to presenting the 2010 winners with their certificates. All Front Garden prizewinners please go to the Gardening Stall as soon as they arrive at the AGM.

First Green Fair in Willesden

Brent Friends of the Earth invite you to Willesden's first ever "Green Fair" on Saturday, 21st May 2011 outside the Willesden Green Library Centre, from approximately 10am - 5pm.

The aim of the event is to bring together local groups, businesses and individuals with an active interest in the environment and to show Brent residents the options for a low-carbon lifestyle in their area. Invitations for stalls have gone out to a bike-fixing charity, an energy consultancy business and a local honey maker. There will also be demonstrations, for example, of gardening in small spaces, as well as a discussion with local politicians.

The Green Fair is funded by money from the Neighbourhood Working Scheme. It will not aim to make a profit but to improve the network of Brent's vibrant green community.

The Greening of Blenheim Gardens

Blenheim Gardens is on the way to getting a whole new look. Inspired by the installation of attractive new footpaths by Brent Council, residents have got together to develop a project to enhance their tree-lined street even further. Starting with a Community Planting Day in April, they will plant selected tree pits (the areas around the tree bases) with low-growing hardy perennials. Later in the year spring-flowering bulbs will be planted, to give a colourful welcome to Spring 2012.

The group is working in partnership with the Council's Transportation Service Unit, who have prepared the tree pits and filled them with topsoil ready for planting.

The scheme has been generously supported by grants from Brent Council's Ward Working initiative and MapRA's Open Gardens Committee. Donations of plants from residents, and the time and work of the volunteers, will add substantial value. If MapRA members wish to pass on any surplus plants (low-growing hardy perennials) from their gardens, please contact Claudia 8208 3376

(ckerner@onetel.com). Or Mary 8208 2503 (maryalpert@maryalp.plus.com).

As well as enhancing the appearance of Blenheim Gardens, the initiative will:

- Strengthen the local community by increasing social interaction and community spirit
- Improve biodiversity and environmental sustainability in a road where many of the front gardens are used primarily for vehicle parking
- Increase gardening skills and knowledge about environmental issues
- Provide opportunities for all ages to participate in a healthy outdoor leisure activity, especially for people living in upper flats without access to private gardens.

This is a 'flagship' project within Mapesbury which, it is hoped, will inspire other residents in the area (and in other parts of Brent) to undertake their own initiatives to improve the environment and quality of life in their neighbourhoods.

Meet the Brent Independent Advisory Group at its Stall at the AGM

The Brent Independent Advisory Group, (BIAG) is a community-led independent group chaired by Robert Quaye that acts as 'critical friend' to the Police within the London Borough of Brent. The group represents, and is made up of, local community activists within the borough; its remit is not to make Police policy, but rather to influence and offer advice to the Police on policies and matters of concern to the local community.

The BIAG works alongside the Police and offers its views on the provision of a guardian service, provided by the borough police, and ensures that community comments,

fears and ideas are aired and represented to Senior Officers before final decisions are made that may affect the community of Brent.

The BIAG also acts as a 'scrutiny panel' ensuring transparency and fairness within the decision-making process. It is able to provide critical information during serious incidents in the borough and offers assurance that the Police in the borough are working for the benefit of the community without discrimination or bias. The Group would like to hear about any problems you may have within your community. Meet members of the Group at the AGM.

Police Matters

Mapesbury Safer Neighbourhood Team, working with other Metropolitan police services, has undertaken a number of pro-active operations targeting drug users. These have proved very successful: a number of persons (including some who are wanted in outstanding investigations) have been arrested for offences such as the possession of drugs and/or offensive weapons.

The team continues to work with our colleagues from Brent Council to target fly tippers. Recent results have included the arrest of a disqualified driver and the issue of numerous fines as well as the impounding of uninsured vehicles. Police Community Support Officers continue to attend victims of burglary offering crime prevention advice in an effort to reduce burglaries.

Over the coming months we will be working with colleagues from Barnet and Camden Boroughs as well as enforcement colleagues from Brent Council. These will be

intelligence-led operations in which a locality will be identified and targeted over a period of days. A week of action will take place shortly in Cricklewood Broadway, during which we will be working in partnership with Camden and Barnet Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Also working with us will be departments such as the Brent Council Anti-Social Behaviour Teams utilising the Operation Payback scheme under which offenders on Community Service are brought into the area to clean it up.

If you see anything suspicious please don't hesitate to contact us. If an incident requires immediate police attention, e.g. there's the likelihood of physical harm or a criminal offence is taking place, always dial 999. For any other issues please call 030 0123 1212 or if you wish to speak to the team directly please call 020 8721 2962 or you can email the team at mapesbury.snt@met.police.uk. And, of course, visit them on their AGM stall.

MapRA Website (www.mapra.org.uk)

Our website has been successfully resuscitated and seems to be well received by members. It was originally developed with the aid of Pat O'Hara who was then our local Police Sergeant. However, it became moribund and last Autumn Pat helped us to revise it.

Although it is still far from state-of-the-art it is reasonably functional and up to date and we have several ideas for new things – any constructive comments gratefully received.

It covers all Community Link clubs as well as giving information on local campaigns and items of general local interest. We also plan soon to enable payment of membership via the website (using Paypal).

Raymond Cohen dies at 91

Many residents especially in Keyes Road will miss Raymond Cohen almost skipping down the road many mornings to visit the shops in Cricklewood Broadway. With a huge smile on his face and an infectious twinkle in his eye, he would stop and chat to passing neighbours. For many years, Raymond was a very active member of the community. He was a musician of the highest caliber: a classical violin soloist leading famous orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic.

Raymond was a committed family man, happily married for 58 years to concert pianist Anthya Rael, a hugely talented pianist, who had come from her native South Africa to study. They have two children: Gillian is a violinist and Robert, an internationally renowned cellist. Raymond and Robert have given

duo recitals and appeared together in Brahms Double concerto; Anthya joined them to form the Cohen Trio.

Raymond played solo concerts around the world and with the most renowned conductors of the time. He led the orchestra for Frank Sinatra when he was in London and also toured Europe, even Iran and Egypt.

In 1993 Raymond was featured in a BBC radio programme called "The Musical World of Raymond Cohen" in which the entire family took part.

Raymond was a devoted grandfather and many Sunday mornings were spent nurturing his talented grandchildren's love of music. His packed funeral showed clearly that he was a giant of a man both to his family, friends and his beloved music.

Cricklewood Improvement Programme

The aim of CIP is nothing less than to revitalise Cricklewood, developing a safe, healthy and vibrant neighbourhood in which the needs of residents are paramount. The programme is spearheaded by Danny Maher, Chief Executive Officer of Cricklewood Homeless Concern, who has recognised that a major problem lies in the fact that Cricklewood is served by three boroughs, Barnet, Brent and Camden. CIP has already encouraged the involvement of all three councils. From Brent, Cllr Ann John OBE (leader of the council) has pledged her support; so have Navin Shah, Brent's London Assembly member, as well as the councillors representing Mapesbury, Childs Hill and Fortune Green. Brent's Police Commander, Matthew Gardener, and the two commanders from Barnet and Camden are involved and motivated to help. The three SNT Police teams have had meetings with the CIP representative and are already working closely together.

Starting 4th April, a week of initiatives will see a "Clean up Cricklewood" week when the social problems of the Broadway will be targeted. Three boroughs will be working together for the first time

ever to tackle the Broadway in terms of both policing and Streetcare.

CIP will conduct a research study amongst residents and businesses to establish the community's needs and a website is already being designed, posters and flyers are printed and CIP will have a proper Constitution, dedicated to raise the profile with its website and recruit new supporters. Many residents are already on board but we are expecting many more.

To support this work a group is working on researching the history of the Broadway and the individual stories of the residents and traders living in and around it. Many people have arrived in Cricklewood from all over the world and have added a richness to the community. We are interested in hearing more about those who have moved here and who would like to tell us of their involvement. Contact history@cricklewoodcip.org.uk. If you are keen to help transform Cricklewood we would love to hear from you. Please contact Danny Maher, CEO of Cricklewood Homeless Concern 60 Ashford Road (danny@chc-mail.org) or Tim Evans on (tim.d.evans@btconnect.com) to get involved.

The Pakistani Workers Association (PWA)

has been involved in the Brent Winter Night Shelter project: Route 18 Winter Shelter from 24th to 31st December 2010. It was host to 32 people who had been identified by CHC as needing shelter. They were collected daily at 7 pm from Ashford Road and taken to the Community Centre where they were able to watch TV, eat and sleep. Sleeping bags, pillows and blankets were provided by the project. The men were assessed for the reasons for being homeless and some were able to receive dental care.

The project was launched on 24th December, and there was good coverage from the Muslim radio and national TV in Pakistan.

Whilst it is recognised that working with the homeless is CHC's continuing role, the Chairman of the PWA – Tariq Dar - explained how important it is that the Pakistani community understands the necessity of reaching out and working with the Christian churches, and encouraging others of the community to join in similar initiatives. All faiths should be educated to realise the need for this involvement.

Cricklewood Homeless Concern's Winter Shelter Project

CHC's Winter Shelter project was brought about by a chance conversation three years ago between Charlotte Curran at CHC and Marlon Nelson, who works for the Brent Deanery. Both had concerns about street homelessness particularly in the winter time. So they decided to do something about it and Route 18 Winter Shelter was born.

In its third year now and with growing success, CHC was privileged this year to be joined by the Pakistani Community Centre. It is important that the whole community, and in this case the faith community, be a partner in this project. We will be encouraging other faith groups to join next year to make this a truly inter-faith community project. This latest project has been the best so far. Out of 55 people who were supported, 33 have been housed, 12 have found employment and about 18 are in training courses.

Contact - Danny Maher info@chc-mail.org or at 60 Ashford Road, NW2

Mapesbury Planning

As new people move into Mapesbury to live we have been heartened by the number turning to MapRA for advice on appropriate design and construction on adaptations to their homes. Unfortunately, we are still having to deal with developers seeking to build on garden space. Three such applications last year were subsequently refused after intensive objection from MapRA and residents alike. Another matter of concern is the attempt by housing associations, other providers of social housing (such as BHP) and groups which own houses divided into bed-sitting rooms to replace windows or effect other works to properties under their control which are of unacceptable design and construction and even against

planning rules in a conservation area. We do not feel that exceptions should be made for these bodies just because they provide social housing. We trust that in future they will take a more responsible attitude and MapRA has offered to make itself available to various housing associations and organisations to discuss proposed works in advance of any application. So far this offer has not been taken up. Constant vigilance is also required by residents to report and tell us about breaches of planning requiring enforcement action. Brent's overstretched resources make it even more important that we should be the eyes and ears on the roads in Mapesbury.

Brent Council planners will be, as usual, in attendance at the AGM.

Mapesbury Planning Awards

Four houses in Mapesbury have been chosen to receive MapRA's Conservation award. Sheelagh Putnam, Chair of the Mapesbury Planning Group, will be introducing the winners at the AGM.

Three in the Mapesbury Conservation area

1. Ide & Mike Hughes, 3 Dawlish Road. This house has been totally restored over recent years by the owners
2. Gill & Paul Weiser, 42 Keyes Road. Award for dedicated window renovation.
3. Special Award to Pat Liston, 50a Keyes Road for transforming the garden frontage of the property to the highest standard.

One Conservation prize in a non-conservation area of Mapesbury
Sybil Goldfoot, 50 Chatsworth Road. The outside of this house has been completely refurbished to the highest standard.

Mapesbury Dell Awards & Gardening Club Information

Many of you will have visited our beautiful, tranquil Dell in Hoveden Road, perhaps when it is used as a tea garden for the Open Gardens Day.

We were proud to receive both a Green Flag, and (after a tour by eminent judges of the best gardens in other boroughs), we were awarded a "London in Bloom Gold Award" last year. The Gold Award is considered the Oscar of gardening so the Mapesbury Community should be very proud indeed of winning this coveted award.

Mapesbury Dell Trust works hard with locals organising events and continuing to improve the Dell. Already planned for this year are the Wild Day – Sunday 26th June and obtaining some additional land at

the back of the gardening club area. You can find out more at www.mapesbury-dell.org

To keep the Dell looking lovely we arrange gardening sessions occasionally, meeting on a Sunday afternoon at 3pm, working for an hour and then having refreshments, including homemade cake. It's not too demanding and it's a really good way to meet neighbours.

If you would like to join us, please contact Jill Rixon on 020 8208 0981 or by email - jill.rixon@tiscali.co.uk
For more information about the London in Bloom Scheme, please look at the website: <http://www.londoninbloom.co.uk/index.phtml>

Are You Keen to Plant Trees in Your Street?

Central government cuts to council funding will mean there will be less money available to plant new trees in our streets. The Council is actively seeking alternative funding for street tree planting but also welcomes residents who may wish to fund the planting themselves. For approximately £250, a tree can be planted in your street. For more information, come to the Brent Council 'Streetcare' Stall at the AGM and talk to Gary Rimmer.

Mapesbury Residents' Association

For the year ended
31 December 2010

INCOME	£
Subscriptions (for 2010)	473
Donations by film companies	400
Donations at AGM	336
Other donations	86
Sponsorship of AGM	260
Bank Interest	1
	1,556
EXPENDITURE	
Annual report	348
AGM expenses	1,001
Newsletter costs	413
Tree Pruning equipment	233
Other expenses	197
	2,192
Deficit for 2010	(636)

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2010

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES:

Bank balance on main accounts	8,233
Less: Owing to Exeter Rd residents re lighting	(1,633)
Less: Owing to St Gabriels Rd residents re lighting	(97)
<i>Subtotal after deducting the amounts for residents</i>	6,503
Bank balance on Open Gardens Day accounts	3,459
Cash	17
Less: Subscriptions in advance for 2011 to 2019	(1,491)
Less: OGD sponsorship for 2011 received in 2010	(550)
Less: Amounts to be reimbursed	(866)
Net Assets	7,072

Represented by:

UNRESTRICTED FUND

Accumulated surplus at start	4,326
Deficit for 2010	(636)
Accumulated surplus at end	3,690

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Net surplus from previous Open Gardens Days	1,790
Polio Concerts in 2005 & 2006 net surplus	637
Community Link fund	955
	7,072

Accounts prepared by: *A. J. A. Aiken, Honorary Treasurer*

Certified a true and fair view: *S. Jayaswal, Auditor*

Committee members attending in 2010

Gerry Weston (Chair), Judy Langley (Organising Secretary), Andrew Aiken (Treasurer), Rana Jayaswal (Auditor), David Gee (Deputy Chair), Sheila Lee (Membership), Sheelagh Putnam (Chair, Planning), Suzanna Burford (Community Link), Robert Afia, Margaret Chambers, Elayne & Jim Coakes, Claudia Evans, Lia Evans, Chris Gear, Cheryll Lewis, Margaret Mann, Niall McGinley, Angela Payne, Jacqui Pelham, Elizabeth Proud, Carol Reeman (NW2 Residents' Association), Jacob Sam, Belinda Syme,

Honorary Committee Members:

David Drown, Charles Boucher, Charlotte Curran, Derek Forsyth.

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Nathan@computerbloke.net

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If you need to get in touch with MapRA please contact one of the following:

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David Gee (Deputy Chair) 8452 0876 david.gee123@ntlworld.com
Judy Langley (Organising Secretary) 8452 7316 judymapra@googlemail.com
Sheila Lee (Membership & Database) 8452 1612 sheila.x.lee@gmail.com
Sheelagh Putnam (Chair, Planning Sub-Committee) 8208 2075
sheelagh@lending-law.co.uk